

**Statement by Ambassador (Dr.) Pankaj Sharma,  
Permanent Representative of India to the Conference on Disarmament  
during the Plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament  
on June 28, 2019 with a substantive focus on Agenda Item 4**

Mr. President,

I would like to thank you for convening today's session of the Conference on Disarmament on the important theme of Negative Security Assurances.

I would like to express our appreciation and gratitude to the Distinguished Minister of Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs of Austria, H.E. Mr. Alexander Schallenberg for addressing the Conference and sharing his valuable thoughts and ideas in the context of international security and disarmament.

Let me also thank our distinguished panelists, Ambassador Li Song, Ambassador Peter Beerwerth and Mr. Marc Finaud from GCSP for their excellent presentations and laying the ground for today's discussions.

The issue of Negative Security Assurances has been on the Agenda of the Conference of Disarmament since its very inception. The Final Document of the SSOD-I called upon nuclear weapons States to take steps to assure non-nuclear weapons States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Non-nuclear weapon States have a legitimate right to be assured against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

As also said by speakers before me, nuclear weapons pose the gravest challenge to the humanity and the best assurance against their use/or threat of use is their complete elimination. India has been consistent in its support for global, verifiable and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament.

As part of our doctrine of credible minimum nuclear deterrence, India has espoused a policy of "No first Use" against nuclear weapons States and non-use against non-nuclear weapon States. We are prepared to convert these undertakings into multilateral legal arrangements.

It may be recalled that India had presented in 2007, a Working Paper on Nuclear Disarmament to the CD, as contained in CD/1816 which had made a number of proposals. One of the proposals in this paper was to undertake negotiation in the CD of a universal and legally-binding agreement on non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon States.

This proposal remains as valid today. India has supported the resolutions in the UNGA recommending that the CD actively continue intensive negotiations on the issue of Negative Security Assurances.

As part of the G-21, India has supported the conclusion of a universal unconditional legally binding instrument on security assurances to non-nuclear weapon States as a matter of priority. The negotiation of such an instrument in the CD will complement other measures to reduce the salience of nuclear weapons in security doctrines and improve the international climate for promoting nuclear disarmament and non-negotiation in all its aspects.

The discussion of Negative Security Assurances cannot be limited to the context of a single treaty or confined to nuclear weapon free zones. The two UNSC resolutions – UNSCR 255 and UNSCR 984 have not been able to fulfil the expectations of the international community.

India has been actively participating in the work of the CD to establish an agreed Programme of work to negotiate legally binding instruments on the core issues of the CD, including one on Negative Security Assurances. With this objective in mind, India participated constructively in the work of the Subsidiary Body 4 last year. We regret that the CD could not adopt a report by consensus. However, non-adoption of the report does not diminish the value of work undertaken by the member States.

India maintains that the CD is the most appropriate forum for negotiating a legally binding instrument on negative security assurances and stands ready to participate in such a negotiation, as soon as CD commences negotiations on this matter.

Thank you.

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