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INDIA AND NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

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ABSTRACT

Nuclear Disarmament has become a vital concern of all nations. It is essential not only for humanitarian and moral but also for economic and military reasons. India has made significant contribution to disarmament in the United Nations (UN) in terms of ideas, resolutions, amendments and action plan. India is the only nuclear weapon state willing to accept total disarmament within the time framework and the one to provide an unconditional, unqualified and unlimited no-first-use pledge. This presented study entitled "India and Nuclear Disarmament" divided into four sections. The first section, being introduction, gives a brief outline of the study, relating the issues of disarmament and nuclear policy both national and international arenas. The second section concept and history explores various adverse situation and reaction of nuclear disarmament. The third chapter entitled India's nuclear disarmament initiative after 1998 elaborates with pertinent issues relating to nuclear proliferation with special reference to India. In addition, it focuses on the comprehensive initiatives taken by India for universal nuclear disarmament. The fourth section being a conclusion sums up of the study and summarizes the observations. Based on the study, it suggests twelve important steps to be considered for shaping up India's nuclear disarmament policy in a better way and for attaining nuclear weapons free world.

KEYWORDS: *Comprehensive, Disarmament, Nation, Nuclear, Policy, Weapons*

INTRODUCTION

Nuclear Disarmament has become a vital concern of all nations. It is essential, not only for humanitarian and moral but also for economic and military reasons. India has made significant

contribution to disarmament in the United Nations (UN) in terms of ideas, resolutions, amendments and action plan. India is the only nuclear weapons state willing to accept total disarmament within a time-table and the one to provide an unconditional, unqualified and unlimited no-first-use pledge. Since India received cool response with regard to nuclear disarmament, it deviated from the original stands. As a matter of policy, it is committed to disarmament and has actively been associated with efforts for nuclear free world at different times. Its stands for peace, considers reduction of weapons as essential tent for avoidance of war by ensuring security. It fully believes in total abolition of nuclear weapons; and does not favour Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) that permits existing nuclear powers to retain their weapons and prohibits other form of testing and acquiring such weapons in the future.

India is, therefore, a country that looks for attaining relatively quick action on global nuclear disarmament and support the Conference on Disarmament (CD), the world's only multilateral forum for nuclear disarmament negotiations. However, since the mid-1990s, the Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) and Non-Nuclear Weapon States (NNWS) in the CD have been unable to resolve some major conflicts on priorities and linkage. Lacking an agreed "program of work", the CD has been unable to convene an ad-hoc committee to negotiate a multilateral treaty for nuclear arms reductions. India supports for negotiating a multilateral nuclear disarmament treaty to be arrived at CD. In the mid-1990s, it linked its acceptance of negotiations on conventional arms limitations, the CTBT and progress on general nuclear disarmament. However, in 1998, India stopped requiring progress on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), and Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT), as a condition for nuclear disarmament talks. More recently India has called for early negotiations on a nuclear weapon convention to deal with the issue of nuclear weapons in a "global nondiscriminatory framework." In the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), India has regularly sponsored a resolution on reducing nuclear danger, addressing de-alerting options for nuclear weapons. Its initiatives can be stated as follow:

- Prohibition of the further use of fissionable material for military purposes [which would have amounted to a freeze on production of fissile materials for military use and a freeze on production of nuclear weapons];
- Prohibition of the transfer of fissionable material from civilian to military stocks;
- Non-export or conveying of nuclear weapons to other countries by those manufacturing such weapons.

Historical Background:

Since, Independence, India has been consistently pursuing the objective of global disarmament based on the principles of universality, non-discrimination and effective compliance. It always believes that the world free of nuclear weapons would enhance both global and national security. Thus, India has always advocated that the highest priority should be given to nuclear disarmament policy leading towards general and complete disarmament. As early as 1948, India called for limiting the use of atomic energy only for peaceful purposes and the elimination of atomic weapons from national armaments. The Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru called for immediate suspension of all nuclear weapon tests in parliament on April 2, 1954. Jawaharlal Nehru was the first states- man to draw the attention of the world to the problem. All concerned people warmly welcomed the proposal. Responding favourably to Prime Minister Nehru's call

for a 'standstill' agreement on nuclear weapon testing, the USSR on 10 May, 1954 came up with a proposal for a nuclear test ban as the initial step toward nuclear disarmament. But the US was not amenable to the proposal. Therefore, again on July 12, 1956, India placed before the UN Disarmament Commission another proposal for 'Cessation of All Explosions of Nuclear and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction'.

Due to growing pressure from peace movements, especially from those in the US and Europe, US leaders were forced to begin test ban negotiations with their counterparts in the USSR. It may be recalled that after the failure of the UN General Assembly during 1946-49 to ban atomic weapons, in 1952, the UN set up a 11-member Disarmament Commission to prepare proposals for the regulation, limitation, and balanced reduction of all armaments, including nuclear weapons. The Commission was also to propose a system of international control of atomic energy so that it would be used only for peaceful purposes. When this Commission too did not make much headway, the UN in 1962 set up an 18-Nation Disarmament Committee to tackle the whole issue of general and complete disarmament. Unlike the US, India had been one of its most active members trying to promote the aims and objectives for which the Committee was set up. As it has been already mentioned, India was among the first countries to propose a treaty for a comprehensive test ban. It was also the first nation to propose a nuclear non-proliferation treaty. But when the treaties took their final form, crucial clauses that India had proposed had been deleted from them India was left with no option but to consistently oppose these treaties in their present form. The following section deal with major landmarks of agreements and treaties in the sphere of disarmament.

India's Nuclear Disarmament Initiative After 1998

Disarmament and promotion of world peace have persistently been the primary aims of India's foreign policy. The biggest threat that the world is confronted presently is the fear of the nuclear war. Disarmament, more specially, Nuclear Disarmament has consistently been an issues of anxiety to India. The very entity of nuclear arms and the maintenance of weapons race challenge the survival of mankind. Nuclear weapons neither can be granted to be weapons of war, nor should they be invested with a halo of peace process. India has always upheld that the proper orientation supervision and doctrine emanating from internationally harmonized goals and priorities in the field of disarmament ought to be rigidly obeyed or else the comity of nations would fail to accomplish the goal of disarmament.

India has the world's largest secular democracy. The preservation of its social, political, and economic wellbeing constitutes the primary focus of efforts of the government of India. To secure their well-being India must be able to seek resources and generate wealth on global scale to meet their needs. A global environment that is dominated by nuclear powers vying for controlling critical resources is not conducive to produce the peace and stability which is essentials for India's growth as a nation. It stands with the reason that verifiable, non-discriminatory, global nuclear disarmament is a natural goal of India's policy. This was the most dominated theme for India's government thinking and utterances on nuclear security issue.

International initiatives over the past fifty years have failed to end the global nuclear double standard. Not only a global nuclear disarmament a distant dream, the effects of rampant nuclear proliferation activities in past three decades simply alarming. Such factors create a difficult environment making on over political choice on the issues of nuclear weapons. The complicated

nature of these choices was the driving force behind India's strident utterances on global nuclear disarmament. India has been at the forefront of the International efforts to get the nuclear weapons banned and eliminated. As the Former Prime Minister Vajpayee observed in the parliament on 27 May 1998, from the early years of Independence, "our leaders..... realized that a Nuclear Weapon Free World (NWF) would enhance not only India's security but also the security of all nations. That is why disarmament was and still continues to be a major plank in our foreign policy".

The Former Prime minister of India Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee has reiterated, after the nuclear tests of May 1998, India's commitment to nuclear disarmament. He also said that India is keen on constructive dialogue for global nuclear disarmament. He has expressed readiness to discuss agreement on no-first-use with Pakistan, as with other countries, bilaterally or in a multilateral forum. India has a declared a moratorium on her tests (so has Pakistan) and has expressed her willingness to explore ways and means for the de-jure formalization of this moratorium. India has also announced her readiness to adhere to some of the undertakings of CTBT but has pointed out that such adherence cannot be in vacuum. India has also offered to join negotiations on fissile material cut-off. The NWSs have yet to react positively to this unilateral declaration of India.

India's Initiative after 1998

India has taken large number of initiatives aimed at nuclear disarmament over the last fifty years. These have been ignored or spurned by the five nuclear weapon states. Summarized these efforts, we delineate the dismal global environment in relation to the elimination nuclear weapons, as also the deteriorating nuclear security environment in India's neighborhood. India remains a firm and consistent proponent of general and complete disarmament and attaches the highest priority to global nuclear disarmament. India's policy on disarmament also takes into account changes that have taken place in the world, especially in the 1990s. The nuclear tests of May 1998 do not dilute India's commitment to this long-held objective. As a nuclear weapon State, India is even more conscious of its responsibility in this regard and, as in the past, continues to take initiatives in pursuit of global nuclear disarmament both individually and collectively. The steps that were announced after the tests and the initiatives that India has taken since, strengthen this commitment.

Towards a National Consensus

One of the drawbacks of the earlier national consensus was that it did not exert sufficient pressure to necessitate the building up of a strong and broad-based peace movement within the country. Consensus on all issues relating to nuclear disarmament was taken for granted. In the absence of a powerful peace movement it became relatively easy to break the prevailing consensus as it has happened with Pokhran-II. Yet the general sentiment in favour of global nuclear disarmament is still very high. Therefore, it is time that this vital issue is again brought into focus. The unilateral declaration of a moratorium on further nuclear weapon tests by the government of India is a welcome step. In fact the government of India has already announced its willingness to convert such an undertaking into a de-jure obligation. But, it has given the doubtful motives for doing so, it has to go further and continue to oppose the CTBT in its present form until the concerns expressed by India all this while are adequately addressed by the US and other nations supporting the present CTBT. One of the most appropriate ways of doing that would be to bring it up before the Indian parliament.

The parliament could pass a unanimous resolution regarding India's commitment to cease all further nuclear weapon tests and also reaffirm India's unflinching support to the goal of global nuclear disarmament in a time-bound framework. These goals, which India has time and again supported in the past, have also been reiterated by the present Indian government. Intervening in the general debate in the First Committee of the UN on October 15, 1999, India's ambassador and permanent representative to the UN Savitri Kunadi stated that:

"...there is no dilution of India's commitment to the goal of global nuclear disarmament. India...believes that its security would be enhanced in a nuclear weapons free-world and thus continues to press for negotiations on a Nuclear Weapons Convention that will prohibit forever the development. Production, stockpiling use and threat of use of nuclear weapons and provide for the elimination of all existing weapons under international verification".

No First-Use Pledge

The very first step by nuclear weapon states towards the goal of global nuclear disarmament has to begin with a no-use (of nuclear weapons) pledge against non- nuclear weapon states and a no-first-use (of nuclear weapons) pledge against other nuclear weapon powers. A no-first-use pledge, at the very least, is just a hypothetical guarantee - merely an expression of good faith. It does not involve verification, dismantling or freezing of nuclear weapons stockpile. But still it is the key element in advancing the cause of nuclear disarmament because it significantly contributes to de-freezing all rigid and inflexible mental attitudes regarding the issue. It also helps a great deal in adopting a saner approach towards the problem. All previous governments in India have staunchly supported this proposal. The BJP government too has reiterated the unilateral pledge. Making a statement before the lower house of the Indian parliament on 4 August, 1998, the then prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee said:

"We have stated that we will not be the first to use nuclear weapons. We are also willing to strengthen this by entering into bilateral agreements on no-first use or multilateral negotiations on a global no-first-use. Having stated that we shall not be the first to use nuclear weapons, there remains no basis for their use against countries which do not have nuclear weapons".

India has been one of the consistent champions of the abolition of nuclear weapons since the 1950s. For India, nuclear disarmament was almost a matter of national faith. As part of that campaign India has been strongly supportive of the idea of no-first-use and non-use of nuclear weapons as valuable milestones on the way towards the longer term goal of total nuclear disarmament. India has the only one among the states in possession of nuclear weapons to adopt a nuclear strategy is based on no-first-use of nuclear weapons. Unlike some of the five NPT nuclear weapon powers that have declared supported to the concept of no-first-use, for India it is an integral part of its doctrine. This is rooted in a variety of considerations, including survivability, safety and the costs of managing its nuclear arsenal. India has also strongly supported international efforts to reduced reliance on nuclear weapons as well as the institution of a norm among the nuclear weapon powers in favour of a collective understanding on no-first-use, which in effect would also become a non-use pledge against non-nuclear weapon states. Yet, paradoxically, despite this record in favour of nuclear abolition and no-first-use, there are strong indications that India's political enthusiasm for these ideas is beginning to wane.

India has a declared nuclear no-first-use policy and is in the process of developing a nuclear doctrine based on "credible minimum deterrence." In August 1999, the Indian government released a draft of doctrine which asserts that nuclear weapons are solely for deterrence and that India will pursue a policy of "retaliation" only. The document also maintains that India "will not be the first to initiate a nuclear strike, but will respond with punitive retaliation should deterrence fail" and that decisions to authorize the use of nuclear weapons would be made by the Prime Minister or his 'designated successor.

The importance of a no-first-use pledge also lies in the fact that once all the nuclear weapon states have given a similar pledge, it automatically attains the form of a no-use pledge. This would in turn help the adoption of measures for the prohibition of use of nuclear weapons and for the prevention of nuclear war. Once this stage is reached, progress towards nuclear disarmament would proceed at a rapid pace. Precisely because of its inherent potential to advance the cause of nuclear disarmament, the proposal for a no-first-use pledge is inflexibly resisted by the US. While Russia, Great Britain, France, Israel and Pakistan have chosen to follow the US lead, China's position on the issue is very similar to that of India. A no-use pledge by the US way back in 1946 could have, in all probability, averted the nuclear arms race, but it was its obstinacy that thwarted such a possibility. It is its obsession with the policy of first-use of nuclear weapons that has forced the world to witness a costly and mindless nuclear arms race. It may seem shocking that the US has not formally given a no-first-use pledge even to its nuclear allies - Great Britain and France. Such a policy is becoming unpalatable to some of the closest allies of the US. For example, at the NATO Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Brussels on December 8, 1998, Germany and Canada questioned the NATO policy of first-use¹. However, the differences within NATO over this issue for the time being at least have been brushed under the carpet. Despite this latest development, India has been reticent in its criticism of the US policy. All that it has stated regarding the policy of first-use and the decision of the US to continue to station nuclear weapons abroad is the following:

Doctrines of first use of nuclear weapons have been revalidated even though the threat perceptions that originally gave rise to those doctrines which have long disappeared. The only remaining military alliance with transcontinental dimensions continues to assign nuclear weapons the highest priority, with several of its member's ostensibly non-nuclear weapon states, permitting peace-time deployment of nuclear weapons on their territories and given war-time access to those very weapons, in violation of treaty obligations undertaken by them.

India has to forthrightly condemn this adamant stand of the US. If, as per its professed policy, the Indian government is genuinely committed to achieving the goal of global nuclear disarmament, and also if it is seriously concerned about preventing nuclear war, and if it firmly stands by its no-first-use pledge, it has to demonstrate its commitment by actively campaigning for that cause. To begin with, India has to insist that all other nuclear weapon powers too have to give a no-first-use pledge forthwith. By giving a no-first-use pledge the other nuclear weapon powers stand to lose nothing materially, all they would have to sacrifice is their aggressive intentions. Now it is appropriate time for India to make its move. It has to assert that India's acceptance of the CTBT shall be linked to a decision by all nuclear weapon states to give a no-first-use pledge as an initial step towards prevention of nuclear war and a time-bound global nuclear disarmament programme. Once this condition is accepted, the problems with the present CTBT can be sorted

out without much difficulty. Until and unless the nuclear weapon powers lower their aggressive posturing, the threat of nuclear war will remain ever imminent. If it is not possible for them to take the very first step towards nuclear disarmament, how will they ever take the next one? So, if at all India makes any move to accede to the CTBT without this simple and least difficult condition being conceded, it would be to a betrayal of India's own vital security interests and the cause of global nuclear disarmament and peace.

Thus, a no-first-use pledge can no longer remain a cover for building a so-called second-strike capability. Adherence to a no-use pledge would also necessarily lead to adoption of steps for prevention of nuclear war. India had not only supported a no-first-use pledge but it had also vociferously pleaded for taking all steps for prevention of nuclear war. India's stand was that: "The use of nuclear weapons will be violation of the Charter of the United Nations and a crime against humanity; the use of nuclear weapons should therefore be prohibited pending nuclear disarmament. In addition, India was of the view that the member-states of the UN should "solemnly undertake not to use or threaten nuclear weapons under any circumstances. Even the present Indian government has not been found in upholding this stand.

When as early as 1973 there was a bilateral agreement between the US and the USSR to prevent nuclear war, it is incomprehensible, why no progress has been achieved till date in broadening that agreement into a multilateral one. The past attempts by India and several other countries to do so have met with little success so far. At the General Debate in the First Committee of the UN on October 15, 1999, India has again placed its views before the Committee on this issue. While doing so India's representative said:

India has viewed the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons as the bedrock of Negative Security Assurances (NSA) which is comprehensive, legally binding and irreversible step towards delegitimising nuclear weapons. India along with several co-sponsors, who extended invaluable support as in previous years, intends to table a resolution on this subject.

According to the National Research Development Corporation (NRDC) despite the escalation of tensions between India and Pakistan in 2001-2002, India remains committed to its nuclear no-first-use policy. But an Indian foreign ministry official told Defense News in 2000 that a "no-first-strike" policy does not mean India will not have a first-strike capability."

Conventional Nuclear Disarmament and Peace (CNDP)

November 11, 2000, the 600-plus delegates to India's first ever National Convention for Nuclear Disarmament in Peace held in New Delhi. Comprised, as former chief of naval staff L Ramdas put it, "a veritable peace fest..... and an altogether exciting historic landmark". The convention was the culmination of one-year-long process of meeting and consultations involving nearly 120 groups and organizations, as well as individual peace activists, in more than 10 Indian cities, it was also the beginning of new phase in India broad based movement for nuclear weapons abolition. The convention offered Indian peace activists the first national-level opportunities to debate a range of theoretical and political issues, exchange experiences, and achieve a degree of clarity on aims and methods. It established India's first-ever Coalition for Nuclear Disarmament and Peace (CNDP), a network with a 50-members coordination on committee.

The coalition gives India's peace movement an organized national presence and profile. This fills a major void. Since the 1998 nuclear tests, there have been sustained-and growing-protests in more than 40 cities against weapons of mass destruction and India's nuclear policy volte-face. These tended to be discrete, and unconnected to a coalition structure with a national (International) presence, profile and perspective. Matters change with networking among different groups early in 2000 and the holding of preparatory meetings in Nagpur and Delhi. Three fourths of the convention delegates came from outside Delhi. There were 50 delegates from Pakistan, 15 for the rest of South Asia, and about 20 peace activists from Australia, North-East and South-East Asia, Africa, Europe and America. They include experienced campaigners from the British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), representatives of the abolition 2000 network, and Japanese activists besides the Pakistan peace coalition.

The plenary established a Coalition for Nuclear Disarmament for Peace (CNDP) based on the principle contained in the draft chapter and plan of action. The Coalition for Nuclear Disarmament and Peace has undertaken the implemented over the coming year ending December 31, 2001, the following programme:

- Establish a central clearing house for information to help individuals and group wishing to get necessary materials to generate popular awareness about nuclear weapons and lack of safety and transparency of the nuclear power sector.
- Coordinate ongoing efforts towards regional and national convention of anti nuclear weapon activists. Such regional meeting in the north, south, east, west and central India to be convened over the next six months. There will be separate conventions for trade unions Scientists, doctors, journalist, artists, lawyers, musicians.
- Will press for institutionalization of "Nuclear Disarmament and Peace Week" during August 4-11 every year in as many schools and colleges as possible.
- Will actively engage in dialogue at an official level with all political parties and mass organizations as well as with professional associations of all kinds, including industry, religious bodies.
- Undertaken to support organization in Jharkhand fighting the cause of victims of nuclear radiation in whatever way possible to highlight their plight including official dialogue with the new state government of Jharkhand.
- Will support of efforts of concerned people in Rajasthan regarding secretive government nuclear-related activity including possible dumping of radioactive wastes in their areas.
- Liaise with the Pakistan Peace Coalition (PPC) to bring out with in a few months a report on joint Indo-Pakistan civil society initiatives that should be carried out to highlight the dangers posed by nuclearisation of South Asia.
- Help to set up within one year a national federation of radiation victims.
- Work with the PPC to identify 10 schools and 10 colleges in India and Pakistan which will be termed as "sister schools and sister colleges".

- Work fraternally with all other genuine nuclear disarmament groups and individuals globally as well as establishing links of mutual support with the Indian and South Asian Diaspora in Europe, North America and elsewhere

In this first convention for nuclear disarmament and peace in New Delhi, US President Bill Clinton has warned India that Indo-US relations cannot reach their full potential without progress on non-proliferation and regional concerns. In a letter addressed to the house speaker, covering US policies in various regions and dealing with nuclear and missile issues, mainly relating to India and Pakistan, President Clinton said Washington feels that there are no encouraging signs of resumption of talks between India and Pakistan soon.

Towards Nuclear-Weapon-Free and Non-Violent World Order:

India is now a Nuclear Weapon State (NWS). Further, it has affirmed its intention to maintain a credible minimum nuclear deterrent. How does it affect the Action Plan for a Nuclear-Weapon-Free and Non-Violence World Order submitted by the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to the third special Session on Disarmament of the United General Assembly at New York on 19 June 1988? Soon after the nuclear weapons test Pokharan-II in May 1998, the Indian National Congress affirmed that the Rajiv Gandhi Action Plan remained the “sheet anchor” of the external dimension of the party’s nuclear weapon policy. The party then undertook an exercise to update and present in treaty language a draft convention incorporating the Rajiv Gandhi Action Plan. This draft was formally submitted to the Secretary General of the United Nations by the congress president in 2001.

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh in his statement on 29 July 2005, said that “our committed to work for nuclear disarmament, so passionately espoused by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, in the long run remain our core concern”. August 17, 2005, Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh subsequently, replying to a debate in the Rajya Sabha (upper house) said that “our commitment towards non-discriminatory global nuclear disarmament remain unwavering in line in the Rajiv Gandhi Action Plan. There is no dilution on this count. We do not accept proposals put forward from time to time for regional non-proliferation or regional disarmament. Pending nuclear disarmament, there is no question of India joining the NPT and non-nuclear weapons state, or accepting full scope safeguards as a requirement for nuclear supplies to India, now or in the future”. He further added:

“Our support for global nuclear disarmament remains unwavering. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi had put forward an Action Plan in the 1988 United Nation General Assembly (UNGA) Special Session on Disarmament. We remain committed to the central goal of this Action Plan that is complete elimination of nuclear weapons leading to global nuclear disarmament in the time-bound frame work”.

Minister of External Affairs, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, in an interview to the Hindu, 21st November 2006, said that we were committed to non-proliferation and disarmament. What Rajiv Gandhi said that special session on disarmament of the United Nations (9 June 1988) is the guiding principle of our foreign policy. He told that we would not graduate ourselves from the threshold level-that was our position then before 1998. We want that those who have nuclear weapons should stop proliferation-vertically, horizontally-reduce stockpiles and a time-bound action plan (for disarmament). In between, of course, we have gone for the (May 1998 nuclear)

explosions. There have been development and that can't be erased. It has already taken place-but even in that context we are serious and we are engaging ourselves. In this United Nations Session, we are going to move a resolution to this effect (for time-bound disarmament)". He also said that it will thus be seen for Sixty Years, India has been consistent is pleading for universal disarmament. This is the sought for the 27 years between 1947 to 1974 when India had not undertaken nuclear tests. It remains so after the first serious test at Pokhran in 1974 which established India as a threshold NWS. And it has remained so since India became an NWS in 1998.

Nuclear Disarmament and Peace: The Recent Initiatives:

The Third National Convention of the Coalition for Nuclear Disarmament and Peace (CNDP), India was held from 1st to 3rd February 2008 in Nagpur, which has a glorious tradition of mobilising for peace and justice. In a landmark declaration, India as a nuclear weapons state formally proposed two multilateral agreements and two global conventions in a detailed framework for nuclear disarmament at the Conference on Disarmament in February 2008. India's seven point's agenda for disarmament was delineated as the following:

- ❖ Reduction of the salience of nuclear weapons in security doctrines
- ❖ Negotiation of an agreement on no-first use of nuclear weapons among nuclear weapon states
- ❖ Negotiation of a universal and legally binding agreement on non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon states
- ❖ Negotiation of a convention on the complete prohibition of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons
- ❖ Negotiation of a nuclear convention prohibiting development, stockpiling and production of nuclear weapons, moving towards a global, non-discriminatory and verifiable elimination of these weapons.
- ❖ Unequivocal commitment of all nuclear weapon states to reduce risks and dangers arising from possibility of accidental use of these weapons.
- ❖ Adoption of additional measures by nuclear states to reduce risks and dangers arising from possibility of accidental use of these weapons.

Towards a World Free of Nuclear Weapons

Indian Council of World Affairs and the Centre for Strategic and International Studies were jointly organized an International conference on "Towards a World Free of Nuclear Weapons" at New Delhi, on 9-10 June 2008. It commemorated the 20th anniversary of the presentation by Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi of a proposal on "A world Free of nuclear weapons" at the United Nations General Assembly, New York, on 9 June 1998. It took place against the backdrop of heartening development that after twenty long years of Indian's presentation of an Action Plan towards a nuclear weapons free world; strategic thinkers from the U.S.A. and other have revived the debate on nuclear weapons and are willing to envisage a nuclear weapons free world. The conference was inaugurated by Prime minister of India Dr. Manomohan Singh who in his inaugural address spoke that disarmament, in particular nuclear disarmament, was essential

to usher in a safe and non-violent world. He said that Rajiv Gandhi Action Plan was a comprehensive exposition of India's approach towards global nuclear disarmament and continuity in India's thinking since 1954 when India pioneered the call for a complete ban on nuclear testing. He emphasized that the essential feature of the Action Plan continued to be valid even today and India as a nuclear weapon state now it fully committed to the nuclear disarmament that is global, universal and non-discriminatory in nature. The pursuit of this goal will enhance not only India's security but the security of all other countries. He cautioned that this objective can't be achieved through partial method and approaches and it is not possible to "regionalize" nuclear disarmament. He drew attention to the working paper on Nuclear Disarmament proposals submitted to the conference Disarmament in Geneva.

In the International conference Prime Minister Dr. Manomohan Singh delivered the inaugural speech and said that we take great pride in hosting this International conference on a subject that touches upon the very survival of humankind. Twenty years ago, on this day, our former Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi addressed the third special session on Disarmament of the UN General Assembly. He is speaking on the theme of "A World Free of Nuclear Weapons", he introduced an Action Plan calling on the International community to negotiate a binding agreement on general and complete disarmament. As the heart of the Action Plan was a commitment to eliminate all nuclear weapons in three stages by 2010. Rajiv Gandhi believed that disarmament, in particular nuclear disarmament, was essential to usher in a safe and Non-Violent world. He had the deep insight in to the nature of the evolution of technology; it is potential for advancing human welfare as also for unleashing destruction. In this context he was actively aware of the power of the atom. He wished that it should again never be used for destructive purposes.

The keynote address of the conference was delivered by H.E. Sergio Duarte, High representative for Disarmament Affairs, United Nation. He shared the view of Rajiv Gandhi Action Plan which deserves to be remembered both for its wisdom and for the abiding relevance of its powerful vision of a path towards a safer and more peaceful world. He reminded the audience that this year also marks the youth anniversary of the signing of the NPT which included a legal commitment "to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament and on a Treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective International control".

He expressed the view that disarmament was not just a dream, but a practical means to achieve security-one that is more reliable than its alternatives including deterrence, the balance of power or self help. He added that nuclear disarmament unities what is right with what works and that is why and it is "strategic necessity of our times" and stated in the initiation letter by the organizers of the conference. He concludes that there was need to reshape human perception on the inherent dangers in possessing nuclear weapons and perception of the concrete security benefits that would flow from their global elimination. He called upon the participants to recommit and to achieve the great and historical goal of nuclear disarmament.

The vice president of India Dr. Mohammad H. Ansari delivering his valedictory address he referred to General Omar Bradley's view that "the only way to win an atomic war is to make it never starts". He said that Rajiv Gandhi sought "not a marginal adjustment in the machinery of nuclear conformation, nor a partial or temporary scaling down of the arm race "but "a world

which is aid of nuclear weapons". He expressed the regret that the argument for outlawing chemical weapons under the universal and non-discriminatory chemical weapons convention has not been extended to nuclear weapons. Alluding to the change in the nuclear matters which the world has witnessed over the past decades and a half, he mentioned of UN General Assembly resolutions which reaffirm that use of nuclear weapons is a crime against humanity and proliferation of nuclear weapons is a threat against International peace and security. However, it was ironic that the production, possession and threat to use nuclear weapons have so far not been perceived to constitute a threat to International peace and security. He conclude that hither to nuclear disarmament has become almost synonymous with nuclear non-proliferation and the transform the vision of nuclear disarmament in to reality, a plan and a timely approach on the Rajiv Gandhi plan would be essential.

CONCLUSION:

The destructiveness of nuclear weapons is immense. Any use would be catastrophic. However, the more recent events indicate that nuclear weapons are being endowed with strategic-rational roles. Considering the peace of major global development, the coming decade of the new millennium would be really indecisive with regards to Nuclear Disarmament. International relations would be stratified on power and force. National interest will continue to override international interests. Whether are likes it or not, WMD capabilities will remain the essence of military power. Unless and until, the military utility and the political role of nuclear weapons get diminished, nothing would be achieved and the question of realizing of NFWF does not arise.

Recent developments are a wake-up call to the world on nuclear disarmament. India still can play meaningful role in the movement for nuclear disarmament. It is being suggested that the need of hour is to revise the version of 1988 Action Plan for ushering in a nuclear-weapon-free and non-violent world order and then table it before the UNGA. The Rajiv Gandhi Action Plan needs to be updated, time table needs to be updated and the technical aspect to be worked out in greater detail². It is now strongly believed among analysis and researchers that a revised action plan may finally help in creating a nuclear-weapon-free and non-violent planet.

Historically, India's nuclear narrative has moved back and forth between Nehru's idealistic world view and the realistic-driven international system. New Delhi has been unable to resist the temptation to assert its states as a nuclear weapon power, while campaigning the case of global disarmament. Hence, India has positioned itself as a "reluctant nuclear power". The process of developing an ideology is part of the evolutionary process of a nation state; hence there is nothing wrong with India's struggle to locate itself within Nehru's idealism or the West's realism. The problem, however, is that by claiming to be a reluctant nuclear power, India cannot become a global power. Does this mean India should unequivocally clarify its position? There are two ways possible. The classic response would be for India to give up its call for disarmament and commit to it in real terms rather than follow a dual policy. Another way to consider is that perhaps in India's rhetoric lies it's real politic.

In Post-1998, however, there has not been any serious domestic political debate on disarmament. The debate countered largely around the CTBT. While there was strong consensus before the 1998 tests against joining the CTBT, after pokhran this debate has fragmented. Now, one thing is clear that India should sign the CTBT provided by the US and China ratifies the treaty. A variant

is that India should oppose the CTBT because it aims at non-proliferation rather than disarmament, while providing a technological edge to the P-5 states especially the United States.

It is in keeping with this view that India has recently submitted a working paper on nuclear disarmament to the UN General Assembly, containing concrete initiatives on nuclear disarmament. India hopes to stimulate a debate and promote consensus on the way forward. These proposals were also submitted before the Conference in Disarmament in Geneva. They are a set of practical measures for working towards the goal of a nuclear weapons free world. Hence, based on this study, the following suggestions may be made for attaining nuclear weapon free world:

1. All people in India must come together and spread knowledge relating to the process of nuclearization process either for peaceful purpose or for defense;
2. It should be our primary goal to know in details about the hazardous effects of nuclear power plants, the plan for the disposal of nuclear waste, the effects of nuclear tests on the lives of the people of the region;
3. Formulation of a time bound program not exceeding a decade for gradual reduction of the stockpile with a view to achieving total elimination of all nuclear weapons;
4. There is an urgent need for all of us to learn from the experiences of other countries, e.g. the downfall of Russian economy due to nuclear arm-race during the cold war;
5. Reaffirmation of the unequivocal commitments of all nuclear weapons states to the goals of complete elimination of nuclear weapons;
6. Reduction nuclear weapons to reduce nuclear danger, including the risk of accidental use of nuclear weapons;
7. Adoptions of measures by nuclear weapons states to reduce nuclear danger, including the risk of accidental use of nuclear weapons;
8. Negotiation on a global agreement among nuclear weapon states and on 'no-first-use' of nuclear weapons;
9. Negotiation of a universal and a legally-binding agreement on non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapons states;
10. Negotiations for a convention on the complete prohibition of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons;
11. Negotiation for a nuclear weapons convention to prohibit the development, production, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons leading to the global, non-discriminatory and verifiable elimination of nuclear weapons with in a specified timeframe; and
12. The last but not the least if at all India needs to match the West, it should do so in the field of medical research, social awareness, and education and it should not let its people victims of the same mistakes community during the cold war period of former superpowers.

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