

L-49 Rev -1 : Measures to Prevent Terrorists From Acquiring Weapons of Mass Destruction

Statement by Mr. Rakesh Sood, Permanent Representative to the Conference on Disarmament, October 18, 2002.

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to introduce the Resolution entitled "Measures To Prevent Terrorists From Acquiring Weapons of Mass Destruction" contained in document L-49 Rev -1 under Agenda item 66 , co- sponsored by Afghanistan, Bhutan, Fiji, Georgia, Nauru, Papua New Guinea , Sri Lanka.

Mr. Chairman,

The profoundly tragic events that preceded our meetings at this very time last year and subsequent attacks, most recently in Indonesia, have dramatically affected the nature of disarmament and international security approaches. There is a growing realisation of the grave potential of terrorists or non-State groups, spanning national boundaries, to create terror and devastation whose reverberations would affect life all around the civilized world if these individuals or non-State actors used a weapon of mass destruction.

Mr. Chairman, at national, regional and global levels, there is an urgent need to deal with this threat in a meaningful and collective manner. The UN Secretary General, addressing the General Assembly on October 1, 2001, said "While the world was unable to prevent the 11 September attacks, there is much we can do to help prevent future terrorists acts carried out with weapons of mass destruction. The greatest danger arises from a non-State group – or even an individual – acquiring and using a nuclear, biological, or chemical weapon. Such a weapon could be delivered without the need for any missile or any other sophisticated delivery system".

The General Assembly and the Security Council have adopted a number of resolutions in recent months conveying the determination of the international community to combat terrorism (A/55/158, A/56/24T, S/RES/1373 and 1377).

The Durban Communiqué of the Ministerial meeting of the Coordination Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement as well as Summit of the G-8 recently held in Canada are some of the *fora* where serious concern has been recorded about the growing evidence of possible linkages between terrorism and weapons of mass destruction.

The International Atomic Energy Agency has set up an Advisory Group on Security in view of the growing concern regarding the possibility of nuclear terrorism.

The UN Secretary General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters considered the issues related to weapons of mass destruction and terrorism and recommended certain steps.

It cannot be ruled out, Mr. Chairman, that terrorists and non-State actors in networks that span the globe, may have access to technologies and know-how relating to weapons of mass destruction. Since this is not a problem specific to a particular country or region, and has global implications, we need to address it in the UN framework. A truly multilateral approach would have the best chance of being widely accepted and supported - and, as such, be eminently more effective.

Recognising the determination of the international community to combat terrorism, India proposes to introduce draft resolution entitled "Measures To Prevent Terrorists From Acquiring Weapons of Mass Destruction". Delegations are aware of the extensive consultations that have preceded the introduction of this draft resolution. I would, therefore, urge all delegations to support this initiative and hope that this may be adopted without a vote.

Thank you.

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