



**INDIA**  
**भारत**

**73<sup>rd</sup> UNGA**

**First Committee**

**Thematic Debate on Other WMD**

**INDIA STATEMENT**

**By**

**Mr. Sandeep Kumar Bayyapu, First Secretary**

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Mr. Chairman,

India associates itself with the statement delivered by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

India views the CWC as a unique, non-discriminatory disarmament instrument which serves as a model for the elimination of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction. India therefore attaches great importance to the CWC, and stands for its full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation.

It has been India's consistent position that the use of chemical weapons anywhere, at any time, by anybody, under any circumstances, cannot be justified and the perpetrators of such abhorrent acts must be held accountable. The use of chemical weapons is in complete disregard of humanity and is reprehensible and contrary to the provisions of the CWC as well as accepted international legal norms.

The delegation of India shares the wide-spread concern over the allegations on the use of chemical weapons in different parts of the world. All investigations of alleged use of chemical weapons should be conducted in an impartial and objective manner and strictly in accordance with the provisions of the Convention. It is important to maintain the credibility and integrity of the Convention.

India has the second largest number of declared facilities and receives among the largest number of industry inspections from the OPCW. India has a flawless track record of verification inspections. It is important that the provisions of the Convention should be implemented in a manner that does not hinder legitimate activities.

Mr Chairman,

With regard to the BWC, we were pleased that the Meeting of States Parties in 2017 could successfully deliver on its mandate, owing largely to the constructive engagement of all States Parties, which led to the adoption, by consensus, of an intersessional programme for 2018-20. The fact that we have had robust discussions on a range of issues under the Meetings of Experts this year has been a significant contribution towards strengthening the Convention.

India participated actively in all Meetings of Experts and looks forward to further constructive engagement over the next two years till the Ninth Review Conference in 2021.

India continues to place importance on the universalisation of the BWC. We have made significant strides towards this goal in the recent past, with Niue, the State of Palestine and the Central African Republic acceding to the Convention this year, taking the total number of States Parties to a noteworthy number of 182. The Sponsorship Programme, in our view, could make an important contribution in this regard, and India has been one of the countries that has been making a financial contribution to the Programme.

In the run up to the Eighth Review Conference, India submitted a Joint Working Paper with France on measures to strengthen Assistance under Article VII of the Convention as well as a Joint Working Paper with the United States on strengthening the implementation of Article III of the Convention, and we look forward to taking these important initiatives forward.

It is critical to ensure the financial health of the Convention by ensuring both stability and predictability of resources. We would urge all States Parties to ensure that their financial contributions are made in time which would help in addressing the severe challenges the Convention is currently faced with regard to its financial status.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman,

Under this cluster, India will be presenting its draft resolution entitled 'Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction', which has enjoyed strong support since it was first introduced in 2002. The large number of co-sponsors of this resolution reflect the continuing concerns of the international community with respect to the risks posed by terrorists gaining access to WMDs and sensitive materials and technologies. The resolution enumerates a number of measures at the national and international level to address this threat. We hope that, as in previous years, the First Committee will adopt this resolution by consensus.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.