**Statement by Ambassador D.B. Venkatesh Varma,**

**Permanent Representative of India to the CD,**

**During CD Plenary on 2 September 2014**

Mr. President,

We would like to convey our warm congratulations on your assumption of the Presidency of the Conference and our appreciation for the manner in which you have been conducting our work. You can be assured of the full support of the Indian delegation.

2. India associates itself with the statement made by Ambassador Rodriguez Camejo of Cuba on behalf of the G21. India attaches the highest priority to nuclear disarmament and therefore we have joined the call made by the G21 today and in the statement made on behalf of the G21 by the distinguished Ambassador of Chile on 26th March 2014 calling for the Conference to commence negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear weapons convention pursuant to UNGA resolution 68/32.

3. Without prejudice to the priority we attach to nuclear disarmament, we support the negotiation in the CD of a non-discriminatory and internationally verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices that meets India’s national security interests.

4. India is convinced that the goal of nuclear disarmament can be achieved by a step-by-step process underwritten by a universal commitment and an agreed multilateral framework that is global and non-discriminatory. There is need for a meaningful dialogue among all states possessing nuclear weapons to build trust and confidence and for reducing the salience of nuclear weapons in international affairs and security doctrines. India’s resolution in the UNGA First Committee on negotiations on a Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons (A/68/58) has been supported by a large number of States as an important step for the progressive de-legitimization of nuclear weapons of nuclear weapons and in raising barriers against their use, which could cause catastrophic humanitarian consequences. India’s working paper CD 1816 enumerated a number of steps for achieving nuclear disarmament. India also supported the G21 working paper on nuclear disarmament in CD 1959 submitted in 2013.

5. India considers the Conference on Disarmament as the appropriate forum for the commencement of negotiations on Nuclear Disarmament through the establishment of a subsidiary body with a mandate agreed by consensus as part of a comprehensive and balanced programme of work. India attaches importance to interactions with academics and NGOs active in the disarmament field, taking into account the CD as a negotiating forum of its member states.

6. We take this opportunity to welcome the participants in the 2014 Disarmament Fellowship Programme and extend to them our best wishes for every success during their stay in Geneva.

Thank you.