

## **Group of Scientific and Technical Experts on Nuclear Disarmament Verification**

### **A/RES/79/240**

India supported General Assembly resolutions 71/67 and 74/50, which led to the establishment of the Groups of Governmental Experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament, and India welcomed the reports (A/74/90 and A/78/120) produced by the Groups, which were adopted by consensus.

India is unequivocal in its commitment to universal, non-discriminatory and verifiable nuclear disarmament. In its working paper (CD/1816), submitted to the Conference on Disarmament in 2007, India envisions a step-by-step process towards nuclear disarmament underwritten by a universal commitment and an agreed global and non-discriminatory multilateral framework.

India acknowledges the utility of technical work on verification. Our future work, if required, should build upon the reports of the Group of Governmental Experts, past work conducted by the Disarmament Commission on the subject of verification, and in accordance with the principles enshrined in the Final Document of the First Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

Such work, however, cannot prejudge the nature and scope of any eventual nuclear disarmament instrument, which would in turn have an impact on the verification elements to be agreed and specific to that instrument.

It is India's view that a substantive consideration of this issue should be in the context of the negotiation of a Nuclear Weapons Convention prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons and on their destruction, leading to the global, non-discriminatory and verifiable elimination of nuclear weapons with a specified time frame.

Nuclear disarmament verification must be universal and non-discriminatory.

A nuclear disarmament verification regime must strike a balance, inter alia, between providing assurance about compliance, national security concerns, protection of confidential information, proliferation concerns and costs.

Relevant verification experience from a treaty banning an entire category of weapons of mass destruction and providing for their internationally verifiable elimination, namely the Chemical Weapons Convention, could be usefully studied in the context of nuclear disarmament verification.

Any role for organizations such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) would be limited to what is specified in the IAEA Statute.

International and effective verification is also an important aspect of the agreed mandate for a future treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

India, in principle, remains open to considering the concept of GSTE as a means to advance technical work on nuclear disarmament verification. The GSTE, if established, would serve to consolidate work on nuclear disarmament verification under the UN, providing a platform for concerted technical discussions.

India underlines that verification arrangements typically stem from specific treaties. In the absence of a clear treaty framework, the scope of scientific and technical work on verification may be limited. Further, while scientific and technical efforts are distinct from political processes, they are inter-related. In addition, more deliberations are required to arrive at a clear and a specific mandate as well as the objectives for a possible GSTE.

The historical precedent of the Group of Scientific Experts (GSE) offers valuable lessons for possible establishment of GSTE. The potential modalities of GSTE may include: -

1. GSTE should be established as an Ad-hoc body of the Conference on Disarmament.
2. GSTE should be a technical body with the aim to deepen understanding on technical aspects of verification.
3. GSTE should be composed of technical experts of a manageable size, nominated by governments.
4. GSTE should be a deliberative body, with the mandate to produce non-binding recommendations. GSTE would not negotiate any specific treaty on nuclear disarmament.
5. GSTE should operate under consensus-based decision-making rule. The detailed rules of procedure would be developed by the group upon its establishment.
6. GSTE should submit its findings and recommendations to Conference on Disarmament, which can seek clarifications, request additional studies, revise mandate of GSTE, extend the mandate's duration, when required.

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