

Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction

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The pursuit of global peace faces unprecedented challenges from terrorism, which threatens to endanger the very foundation of democratic societies. On April 22 this year, tourists in Pahalgam in Jammu & Kashmir were the victims of a horrific terrorist attack, that claimed the lives of 25 Indians and 1 Nepali citizen.

India is gravely concerned by the increasing linkages between terrorism and weapons of mass destruction and is fully cognizant of the need to urgently address this grave threat to humanity through international cooperation and within the United Nations framework. Use of cross-border terrorism as an instrument of state policy, especially under the threat of nuclear blackmail can no longer continue with impunity.

Threats arising from terrorism transcend borders, necessitating a robust and coordinated response at the national and global levels. There is a need to hold perpetrators, organizers, financiers and sponsors of terrorism accountable. The international community must augment efforts to eliminate the risks of sensitive materials and technologies falling into the hands of covert networks, terrorists and armed non-State actors.

Having fought the menace of terrorism for many decades, India, through the annual resolution, adopted by the General Assembly, on measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction, has drawn the attention of the international community to the dangers of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the potential for their exploitation by terrorists and non-State actors for hostile purposes. In the resolution, tabled since 2002 and adopted by consensus, the Assembly calls upon Member States to support international efforts and urges them to take and strengthen national measures, as appropriate, to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. India is pleased that the resolution 79/42 was adopted without a vote and received the support of almost 90 sponsor and co-sponsor States.

India believes that it is incumbent upon every Member State to combat terrorism, dismantle its support infrastructure and curb its linkages with weapons of mass destruction. For its part, India has a comprehensive law in its domestic legislation, the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Act, 2005, which effectively translates at the operational level the firm commitment of India to preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and

their delivery systems. In 2022, India amended the Act to include the prohibition of financing for any activity prohibited under the Act and other relevant acts, and to enable financial and other measures to prevent such financing.

India believes that multilateral export control regimes contribute to the goal of non-proliferation through guidelines for export controls and lists of specific goods and technologies whose exports should be regulated. The national export control system of India is consistent with the highest international standards, and the national export control list of dual-use material, equipment and technologies is updated annually, to keep pace with the emerging trends and technologies.

India is a party to all 13 international instruments accepted as benchmarks for a State's commitment to combat all forms of terrorism, including chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear terrorism. India has also ratified instruments such as the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its Amendment.

Recognizing the role of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) in preventing the risk of access by non-State actors to weapons of mass destruction, India engages with the Committee's reporting and review process regarding national measures. India believes that outreach efforts under resolution 1540 (2004) to various countries and regions will also complement the implementation of the objectives of Assembly resolution 79/42. India fully supports the Committee's enhanced cooperation and coordination with international organizations such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), other relevant United Nations bodies such as the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Security Council's counter-terrorism committees.

India believes that government-industry partnership contributes to an effective export control system. The Government of India, along with its industry partners, engages in outreach activities comprising region-specific and sector-specific events. India actively participates across various multilateral forums, including through the United Nations, IAEA, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and other relevant forums to step up efforts and international cooperation to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction. India has regularly participated in the International Conference on Nuclear Security hosted by IAEA. India also participates in the IAEA Nuclear Security Guidance Committee for the development and review of nuclear security documents and is an active participant in the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and the Nuclear Security Contact Group. The Indian Global Centre for Nuclear

Energy Partnership conducts international training courses, workshops and technical meetings to strengthen global nuclear security.
