Statement by Mr. Amandeep Singh Gill, Minister and Acting PR, Permanent Mission of India to the CD, at the closing session of OEWG on Taking Forward Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament Negotiations

Mr. Chairman,

Let me first of all thank you for your diligent efforts in organizing the work of this Open Ended Working Group on taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations. We also appreciate the contribution of the Friends of the Chair appointed by you during the course of our meetings as well as other experts and civil society representatives.

Mr. Chairman,

India has been unwavering in its support for universal and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament and for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. As such, despite our vote of abstention on the UNGA resolution establishing this OEWG, we participated actively and constructively in the meetings of this Group. We made a number of proposals on nuclear disarmament through our detailed statement at the beginning of this OEWG and during the subsequent meetings. We are satisfied that some of our proposals are reflected in Section 4 of the report of the Group, which we have just adopted.

At the heart of our approach to the work of this Group was the recognition that currently there is no universal commitment and no agreed global and non-discriminatory multilateral framework to achieve the goal of nuclear disarmament. We had hoped that this Group would look to a new beginning in this regard and some of our colleagues here would not insist on approaches such as universalization of the NPT which clearly have not worked and would not work. We are ready to wait patiently till an agreed global and non-discriminatory multilateral framework to achieve the goal of nuclear disarmament emerges.

Mr. Chairman,

The mandate of this Group was to reflect all proposals made to this Group. In our view, it was also to help build trust and confidence among all states in order to advance multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations. We hope that as we reflect back on this exercise we also reflect on the need to build trust among all of us – non-nuclear and nuclear weapon states – as well as among and with nuclear weapon states. As a nuclear weapon state, India believes that all states need to work together to build trust and confidence and come onto a common platform to achieve nuclear disarmament. We would keep these factors in view when we evaluate the work of this Group. Naturally, India cannot be bound by any outcome of any discussion in this OEWG which may be prejudicial to our national positions.

Thank you.