

(Mr. Sharma, India)

... We firmly believe that the time has come for the international community to engage in collective introspection on our present predicament. Serious consideration needs to be given to the attitudes, policies, doctrines, institutions and instruments required for a nuclear-weapon-free world, which it is in our hands to realize. In particular, the misplaced faith in the relevance of nuclear weapons for keeping peace and enhancing security needs to be speedily discarded. An air of cautious optimism and hope is all that we can allow ourselves at this stage. The recent signs of a turning-point that we have perceived are vulnerable. These cannot be nurtured in a world order based on any form of domination or divisiveness, whether political, economic or military. At SSOD-III, India proposed the outline of a nuclear-weapon-free and peaceful world order in the form of an action plan, which called upon the international community to negotiate a binding commitment to general and complete disarmament under effective international control. While nuclear disarmament constitutes the central motif in each stage of the plan, it is supported by collateral and other measures to further the process in a comprehensive manner that would enhance global security. It includes proposals for banning chemical weapons and other weapons of mass destruction,

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bringing to a halt and reversing the arms race, using scientific and technological developments for the benefit of mankind and reducing conventional arms and armed forces to the minimum levels required for defence purposes, and sets out principles for the conduct of international relations in a world free of nuclear weapons. The action plan has been tabled in the Conference on Disarmament as CD/859 of 15 August 1988. We believe that the action plan will always be relevant in a world which seeks an alternative structure of inter-State relations.