June 6, 1998

The following is the Ministry of External Affairs Official Spokesman's statement in response to the UN Security Council's Resolution adopted by the Council on June 6, 1998

We regret that the Security Council has acted in the way it has and produced a resolution which is coercive and unhelpful in respect of the objectives it seeks to address. The problem of non-proliferation cannot be arbitrarily confined to a narrow geographical segment, but can be addressed meaningfully only in a global framework. This narrow focus and approach by the Council will heighten tensions, not lessen them.

India has reiterated its commitment to non-proliferation frequently. India is conscious of its responsibilities as a nuclear weapon state. Our impeccable record speaks for itself and is better than that of many who have chosen to attempt to instruct us in the matter. India has proposed a series of measures, including no-first-use, moratorium on further testing and negotiations on FMCT. Attempts to coerce Member States to accede to international treaties is contrary to the norms of international law. The NPT represents an unequal world order. The Council's authority to decide on disarmament matters is questionable and not in conformity with the UN Charter.

The Security Council is strangely silent on many fundamental questions on its role under the UN Charter, raised by the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations in the letter addressed to the President of the Security Council on 4th June, 1998.

We find it grotesque that an organ of the United Nations should seek to address India in this manner - a country that represents one-sixth of humanity and is the world's largest democracy and a founder member of the UN and NAM, a country which has contributed significantly to the evolution and growth of the organisation. India has consistently supported an enlightened multilateralism and globalism and participated constructively in the UN's activities since its inception including UN Peace Keeping Operations.

In respect of the global situation created by presence of nuclear weapons, we firmly recommend a global and comprehensive approach, working towards adopting a Nuclear Weapons Convention, in the shortest possible time.

India is committed to fostering friendship and cooperation with all neighbouring countries. With Pakistan, we are determined to resolve all outstanding issues through direct bilateral dialogue and establish a mutually beneficial relationship. Our proposals for resuming the dialogue are with Pakistan. There is no place for third party involvement of any nature whatsoever in this process.