



EDITOR'S NOTE

There is a new global trend of eminent policy-makers of the past focussing on the need for the United States to take the lead in global nuclear disarmament. Well known Cold Warriors like Dr. Henry Kissinger have been publicly advocating the approach. In order to bring the Indian perspective into the emerging dialogue, our sister think-tank, the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (with no connection to the famous Washington-based major think-tank) organised an international conference in collaboration with the Indian Council of World Affairs on June 9-10 on the theme of "Toward a Nuclear Weapon Free World" which also commemorated the 20th anniversary of the comprehensive Action Plan proposed by (then) Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. We found enthusiastic support from the international experts and the government.

In his inaugural address, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh spelt out the policy of the government for future action in the following words, "India is ready to add its own weight and voice to the global debate on nuclear disarmament with a view to crafting such a consensus on disarmament and non-proliferation."

Global nuclear disarmament, of course, is a complex issue. The very term "disarmament" means different things to different people and implies innumerable actions ranging from winding down existing arsenals to non-proliferation and yet promoting nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, especially energy, in a world of impending climate change and global warming. The process would obviously take a long time. The dominant view of the conference—already named as the "New Delhi Conference"—was that India as a nuclear weapon state is in a unique position to actually take the lead in the evolving global discussions and debate and in concrete terms expressed the hope that a Working Group would be formed to soberly go into specific areas that need to be addressed. The Centre for Air Power Studies hopes to encourage the process under its project on nuclear security.