

Conference on Disarmament
Plenary Meeting, 28 January 2020

Statement by Ambassador Khalil Hashmi
Permanent Representative of Pakistan

Mr. President,

Let me begin by congratulating you on assuming the first presidency of this Conference. We commend the consultative, transparent and cooperative manner in which you are fulfilling your responsibilities. You can rest assured of our full cooperation.

We deeply appreciate the support provided by the Secretariat, ably led by Ms. Tatiana Valovaya, Secretary General of the CD, and her remarkable team. I also thank Ms. Valovaya for her thoughtful remarks today.

I wish to gratefully acknowledge the warm words of welcome by you, Mr. President, and all other delegations as Pakistan's new Permanent Representative to the UN and Ambassador to the CD. I consider it a great honour and privilege to represent my country in this august body. I look forward to working with all delegations and count on your support and cooperation.

Mr. President,

Pakistan views the CD as a vital organ of the multilateral security architecture; the world's single multilateral disarmament negotiating body and an indispensable part of the UN disarmament machinery. We attach very high importance to the CD and remain committed to its effective functioning. This is a unique forum where all militarily significant States participate on an equal footing to address a multitude of issues for the promotion of peace and stability through arms control and disarmament.

We are presently witnessing a significant shift in the global security dynamics. Certain countries are becoming increasingly focused on preserving or enhancing their military dominance at the cost of others' security. Such a posture and approach obviously has a direct bearing on multilateral arms control machinery, particularly the CD.

Double standards, discrimination and selectivity continue to shape policies of some major states, which in turn have eroded long-standing global non-proliferation norms and a rules-based international order. While novel and sophisticated technologies are being swiftly transformed into new types of

weapons and means and methods of warfare, the international regulations governing their use are lagging far behind.

In the South Asia region, one country continues to pursue a policy of establishing its hegemony. This is evident by several statements from people holding high offices and recent actions such as nuclearisation of the Indian Ocean; increase in the diversity, numbers, ranges and readiness of delivery vehicles for both conventional and nuclear weapons, the acquisition of anti-ballistic missiles and long endurance Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, and demonstration of anti-satellite weapons capability.

The policy pursuit of domination in South Asia has in large measure been enabled by some states through their supply of advanced military hardware and sensitive technologies. In doing so, the strategic and commercial considerations have clearly trumped the imperatives of regional stability.

The discriminatory revisionism of the global nuclear order through country-specific waivers and exceptions is adding to regional instability in South Asia. These waivers have allowed the freeing up of limited domestic uranium reserves of this country, for exclusive use in its strategic programme and a build-up of weapons-usable fissile material stockpile.

The cumulative effect of these generous supplies is development of aggressive doctrines, a destabilizing accumulation of arms, and a pervasive sense of impunity.

The Defence Minister of this country explicitly questioned the declaratory policy of the so-called “No First Use” in his official capacity on 16 August 2019.

Mr. President,

The unquestioned pursuit of a policy of domination, when combined with an acquired sense of impunity, has unleashed unprecedented dangers in South Asia. The obvious victims are the 8 million occupied people of Jammu & Kashmir, who have been kept in the world’s largest open prison for over five months by over 800,000 security forces.

The actions taken on 5 August 2019 constitute a deliberate defiance of international law and UN Security Council injunctions since the principal aim of these actions is to alter the demographic composition of the occupied territory and to deny the Kashmiri people of their inalienable right to self-determination.

These actions are illegal and unilateral since they clearly violate the Security Council resolutions under which the Jammu & Kashmir issue remains an internationally recognized dispute and its final disposition can only be carried out through a UN-supervised plebiscite.

These policies and actions that I have just outlined above entail a grave danger to peace and security in South Asia and beyond.

Mr. President,

Pakistan yearns for peace. Pakistan desires strategic stability. Pakistan wants to focus on its socio-economic development agenda. We seek a normal, healthy relationship with all our neighbours and beyond, based on sovereign equality and mutual respect. Pakistan, however, cannot remain oblivious to the evolving security dynamics in its immediate neighbourhood. We have been compelled to take the necessary measures for ensuring our security and to credibly deter all forms of aggression. But our conduct continues to be defined by restraint and responsibility, and the avoidance of an arms race.

Peace and stability in South Asia cannot be achieved without resolving the underlying disputes; without agreeing on reciprocal measures for nuclear and missile restraint and risk reduction; and without instituting a balance between conventional forces through a sustained process of dialogue and confidence building. Our proposal for establishing a strategic restraint regime in South Asia is geared towards achieving these objectives. But we lack a willing partner.

Pakistan remains open towards any bilateral or multilateral initiative on arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament that is equitable and results in equal and undiminished security for all concerned States. It is unrealistic to aspire for absolute security and unrestrained freedom of action for oneself, while expecting others to compromise on their legitimate security interests.

Mr. President,

The situation in the CD is a reflection of the prevailing strategic realities. The blame for its impasse cannot be pinned on working methods, which successfully produced landmark instruments such as the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. The CD encompasses all relevant stakeholders, and its rules of procedure allow each member to safeguard its vital security interests – both essential prerequisites for concluding disarmament treaties.

Pakistan remains firmly committed to the goal of a nuclear weapons free world that is achieved in a universal, verifiable and non-discriminatory manner. Pakistan supports the commencement of negotiations towards that end in the CD. As recognized by SSOD-I, the objective of that process should be undiminished security at the lowest possible level of armaments and military forces. Nuclear disarmament is not only the *raison d'être* of the CD, but also a clear priority of the international community.

Pakistan also supports the immediate start of negotiations in the CD to conclude treaties on Negative Security Assurances (NSAs) and the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS). The latest developments add to the urgency of concluding such treaties. Following nuclear disarmament, the issues of NSAs and PAROS have been on the CD's agenda for the longest duration and are the most ripe for commencing negotiations.

Pakistan also stands ready to join substantive work in the CD on legally binding instruments on other contemporary issues affecting international peace and security. These include chemical and biological terrorism, cyber warfare, lethal autonomous weapons, and other types of destabilizing weapon systems.

As for the issue of fissile material, Pakistan believes that a treaty which ignores the asymmetries in fissile material stocks would be detrimental to international and regional stability and adversely affect our national security. A cut-off only treaty, as envisaged under the Shannon Mandate, would make a marginal contribution to nuclear disarmament. It would only serve to freeze the status quo to the perpetual strategic advantage of a select few.

The asymmetries in our region are being further accentuated by the discriminatory policies of certain major nuclear suppliers. Pakistan, therefore, supports a Fissile Material Treaty, FMT, that covers existing stocks. It is high time to discard the outdated Shannon Mandate and work towards developing a new basis for negotiations on a treaty whose scope expressly encompasses existing stocks and applies equally to all States without discrimination. A proposed treaty that is completely cost-free for its proponents, while being disproportionately detrimental to some, would remain a non-starter.

Mr. President,

The reality in the CD today is that there is no consensus on the commencement of negotiations on *any* issue on the CD's agenda. We can either sit idle and endlessly lament the deadlock, or be pragmatic and move towards the next best alternative. We could productively utilize the forum for structured discussions on all agenda items in a balanced and comprehensive

manner. Such discussions have been routinely held in the past under various formats and contributed to the development of a better understanding of the various perspectives. Given their proven value for making incremental progress on the substantive issues, such structured discussions could be revived again.

We thank you for the proposal for a draft Programme of Work. We will examine it with the seriousness that it deserves and will provide feedback in due course. We will engage with this exercise in a positive spirit.

Mr. President,

I would conclude by emphasizing that my delegation will continue to be an active and constructive participant in the CD's work. We fully recognize the benefits of cooperative multilateralism in the CD and hope that we would soon commence work on substantive matters.

I thank you, Mr. President.