



**Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN
Geneva**

**Statement by Ambassador Khalil Hashmi, Permanent Representative of Pakistan,
at the Plenary Meeting of the Conference on Disarmament
10 February 2022**

Mr. President,

Thank you for convening this plenary meeting and for providing members another opportunity to reflect on your Non Paper.

We appreciate the inclusive and transparent manner in which you are conducting your consultations. We welcome your outreach, including to our regional group.

Mr. President,

My delegation had shared our general views on the draft proposal during the last plenary meeting.

As you would recall, we had expressed our willingness to work with your clear and concise approach to the question of a Programme of Work, given that your draft was grounded in three principles i.e. accounting for new realities of international security landscape, practicing the cardinal principle of undiminished security for all states, and a comprehensive and balanced approach to all agenda items.

Despite our strong national priorities on what the Conference ought to pursue, and we have heard many delegations articulate their priorities. We would refrain from doing so at this stage. Positions of all of our delegations are well known. I just want to note however, that by any objective metric, the singular priority and the highest priority for this body remains nuclear disarmament.

Mr. President,

We also listened carefully to the views expressed by other CD members and note the general support extended to your idea of pursuing a clear and concise approach, treating all agenda items in a comprehensive and balanced manner.

We realize that this formula may be far from perfect, but at the same time it is a plausible option to move the Conference forward – particularly given the decades long impasse on the commencement of negotiations under any agenda item.

Mr. President,

Regarding specific elements of your proposal, we have the following comments.

On PP-4, we understand the rationale of the members who suggested bringing a slightly positive tweak to it. We also share the perspective of members who pointed out that the challenges of the current international security landscape should be an impetus for this body to respond to the urgent contemporary questions on disarmament.

However, we believe it is also important to recognize the decades long impasse and reflect it in the preambular paragraphs. Together with the contemporary challenges it also points to the necessity of agreeing on avenues that can move us forward. We would be flexible and willing to work with you and other members in finding a formulation that works for everyone.

Regarding the mandate of the proposed Subsidiary Bodies, as reflected in OP-2, we also share the perspective of members that the ultimate objective of the substantive work should be to develop and reach understandings that can eventually paves the way for negotiations, especially with a view to fulfilling this body's *raison d'être* and that is nuclear disarmament.

However, given the decades long impasse and the well-known divergence of views on all items, we are of the view that the task that we set for ourselves under the Subsidiary Bodies through OP-2 i.e. their mandate, must also be approached with a touch of pragmatic realism.

Regarding the mode of subsidiary bodies meetings, we remain flexible and can support the views expressed by members on convening formal meetings.

Mr. President,

Before addressing other elements, a fundamental point that we have to be clear on is that Subsidiary Bodies, regardless of what the final shape of OP-2 may look like, is as to what would constitute mandate of the proposed Subsidiary Bodies to ensure fulfilment of the requirement in paragraph 23 of the CD's rules of procedure.

As we see it, in clear compliance with rule 23, OP-2 that you have presented is the only paragraph in your draft proposal that provides that mandate. This is also evidenced by previous decisions and proposals on Subsidiary Bodies in this very body in recent years.

Let me cite two examples. Document CD/2119 which is the most recent example of establishing subsidiary bodies, set out the mandate of subsidiary bodies through its OP-1. As many would recall, the decision did not even have a timetable

with it, which was included as annex with a subsequent decision CD/2126. Surely the CD in adopting decision CD/2119 did not violate of its own rules of procedure.

The subsequent decision i.e. CD/2126 had a timetable annexed to provide planning and organizational guidance, not to fulfil any deficiencies of mandate. In the last column of this timetable, which only had the status of an annexure, a specific description or rather two topics were specified on the insistence of some members who wished that their preferred topics be examined under that specific subsidiary body and that they should be put on paper.

The second example of the Algerian and Belgian draft proposals of the last two years have followed the same general approach, setting out mandates in the operative paragraphs of the proposals in compliance with rule 23 and having a timetable for planning purposes.

The key point being, **Mr. President**, is that this modality of adding descriptions or topics to the timetable has no relation to compliance with Rule 23. Suggesting so otherwise simply doesn't stand the test of the very rules and decisions of the CD. At the same time, rule 23 remains unaffected by an understanding that delegations may or may not reach in adding such topics to timetables. Regardless of the merits or otherwise of OP-2, or its final shape, that paragraph sets out the mandate in full compliance with rule 23.

And certainly, to our mind, this suggestion to add topics to timetable detracts from the clear and concise approach that you have set out for the membership. It would have the undesirable, but a predictable consequence of other members proposing their priorities and preferences to be listed as topics in the timetable.

Mr. President,

Let me also address two final points, which in our view the Conference should look at objectively in pursuit of its PoW.

We have already drawn attention to the need for following the well-established principle of rotation of the subsidiary body Coordinators among regional groups. This body must also seriously consider the amount of trust and confidence it has among its membership if certain groups feel so attached to certain agenda items that they must continue to coordinate. No CD member is being asked to change their national positions or priorities.

However, if even giving up coordination of some items by some regional groups is too difficult, it only goes to further highlight the gap between what we say from the floor in this body and what we practice. Therefore, we would request you to kindly give this simple principle due consideration as you lead our efforts.

Finally, **Mr. President**, let me address a point that has been raised by some delegations i.e. the messianic zeal of some to try portray the so called FMCT ripe or as a panacea to deal with contemporary international security challenges. In its most innocuous form, these calls are just self serving and a convenient ploy to deflect and a deliberate attempt to block the work of this Conference.

The idea of only halting the production while insisting on the retention of thousands of tonnes of stockpiles of fissile material neither serves the goal of enhancing international and regional security nor does it promote strategic stability. We have yet to hear the rationale from countries on their opposition to incorporation of these fissile material stocks into the scope of a treaty on this subject.

Focusing solely on what has not been produced yet and ignoring thousands of tonnes of what is already there is simply unrealistic.

Any potential nuclear war would not be fought with what is going to be produced in the future, but most likely with what is possessed, stockpiled and deployed already.

It is also abundantly clear that despite assertions of some regarding such an instrument capping nuclear weapons globally, the real world developments and facts on the ground vividly illustrate that it would not prevent many members of this body from expanding their nuclear arsenals at will, even if such a hypothetical instrument existed.

On our part, **Mr. President**, not only have we elaborated in painstaking detail, time and again, the implications of the so called FMCT on our core national security interests, we have also presented a viable formal proposal to pursue work in this area.

What is evident is that our proposal has resonance with a large number of CD members, except those who wish to hide behind ritualistic calls on FMCT to avoid pursuing any meaningful disarmament measures. The five decades old track record of unfulfilled nuclear disarmament obligations speaks for itself.

More importantly, we have also not heard from these very states how commencing negotiations on nuclear disarmament impacts their fundamental security interests. Or for that matter how formalization of NSA commitments into a legally binding instrument undermines the core national security interests of these states.

To us, then, this deflection in the garb of priorities and ripeness is clearly aimed at only perpetuating strategic advantage of a select few, at the detriment of others.

Mr. President,

Issues such as Negative Security Assurances are beyond over ripe and should certainly be considered as an option. We are fully aware that by no means would it be an easy task and would entail intensive efforts. Yet, as a low hanging fruit, NSAs represent a realistic opportunity for progress at this body and at the same time to tangibly respond to the increasing dangers of the complex international security situation.

Therefore, should there be consensus, Pakistan stands ready to join substantive work on these and other contemporary issues that I had outlined in my statement in the past week as well.

However, **Mr. President**, even if such over ripe items, which do not impinge on the vital security concerns and interests of members, still remain a bridge too far to cross, the larger point must always remain forefront, and it is that proposals designed solely to protect the interests of and dominance by a few at the cost of others would not work.

The only option is to take on board the genuine concerns of all states and pursue nuclear disarmament in good faith.

My delegation will continue to engage with you, Mr. President, and other members of this body in a constructive and pragmatic spirit to resume substantive work on all agenda items in a comprehensive and balanced manner.

I thank you.
