



Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN
Geneva

**Statement by Ambassador Tahir Hussain Andrabi, Acting
Permanent Representative of Pakistan, at the Plenary Meeting of
the Conference on Disarmament, Geneva
28 May 2019**

Mr. President,

Allow me to begin by congratulating you on assuming the Presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. We are pleased to note that you have planned substantive discussions on the CD's agenda items during your Presidency. We appreciate the informal consultations undertaken by you and your team. Pakistan remains committed to the smooth functioning of the CD and always strives to contribute to its work in a constructive manner. We will continue to do so under your Presidency. You can rest assured of my delegation's full support, cooperation and active participation.

We regret that some Member States have chosen to absent themselves from the CD chamber. Their decision is based on matters not relevant to CD. We believe that the CD should operate in accordance with established rules and norms of accreditation and representation in multilateral bodies. The CD should focus on addressing the real issues that are preventing progress on fulfilling its mandate.

We hope that during your Presidency, the CD will continue its routine functioning in a productive manner. The CD should not become a victim of our posturing and politicking on issues that are not related to its substantive agenda items. Extraneous issues should neither divert the CD's focus from its core substantive items, nor undermine the important role and responsibilities entrusted to its President.

Mr. President,

I would also like to take this opportunity to announce a recent development related to the issue of Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space. On 22 May 2019, in Bishkek Kyrgyzstan, on the margins of the Council of Foreign Ministers Meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Pakistan and the Russian Federation signed a Joint Statement on “No First Placement of Weapons in Outer Space”. The Joint Statement was signed by our Foreign Minister, Shah Mahmood Qureshi, and the Russian Foreign Minister, His Excellency Mr. Sergey Lavrov.

In this Joint Statement, Pakistan and Russia have reiterated their commitment to refrain from the threat or use of force in Outer Space activities and have declared that “they will not in any way be the first to place weapons of any kind in Outer Space, that they will make all possible efforts to prevent Outer Space from becoming an arena for military confrontation and to ensure security in Outer Space activities”. This is a practical manifestation of Pakistan’s commitment to this goal. We also encourage other responsible space-faring nations to follow this example.

Outer space is being used by an increasing number of States. Pakistan has been consistently highlighting the risks of its weaponization, which threatens the long term sustainability of peaceful space activities. The use of force against space based objects, as well as the development and deployment of Anti Ballistic Missile systems and their integration into space assets, have added worrying dimensions to this issue.

There is an urgent need to address gaps in the international legal regime governing the exploration and use of outer space with a view to ensuring that no one threatens peaceful activities and applications of space technologies for socio-economic development. The draft Treaty on the Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space, the Threat or Use of Force against Outer Space Objects, tabled jointly by China and Russia, provides a useful basis for the commencement of negotiations in the CD – which we strongly support.

I thank you, Mr. President.