



Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN Geneva

Statement

Statement by Ambassador Khalil Hashmi, Permanent Representative of Pakistan, at Plenary Meeting of Conference on Disarmament, 30 June 2020

Mr. President,

I congratulate you on assuming the presidency of this Conference. We appreciate your wide ranging consultations prior to this meeting. We thank the Secretariat also for its efforts.

Let me also join colleagues in extending a warm welcome to new Ambassadors from Republic of Korea, Argentina and Tunisia.

Mr. President,

You have invited this body to utilize the COVID-19 related break for reflection and explore a new approach. My statement will touch on these aspects.

We are meeting at a time of foreboding and turbulence, globally and regionally.

The global order founded on the UN charter principles 75 years ago is on the brink of a breakdown.

The international security environment is fraying. Even as old disputes fester, new conflicts have emerged among and between states.

Multilateralism is under assault. The United Nations is often ostracized on purpose. International law, norms and rule of law are deliberately undermined.

Unilateral and unlawful actions that contravene UN Security Council resolutions are pursued with impunity. Foreign occupation continues to be legitimized.

Mr. President,

There has been visible regression in the arms control approaches, agenda and mechanisms.

The global consensus on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation has further eroded.

Instead of fulfilling nuclear disarmament obligations, none of the major nuclear weapon states is willing to foreswear these weapons for the foreseeable future. The original bargain of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime for all intents and purposes seems discarded.

Not only is the arms control regime in retreat, there is resurgence in the global arms race, both in the conventional and non-conventional realms.

Nuclear dangers are on the rise. The prospects of the use of nuclear weapons and resumption of nuclear testing are growing.

The power asymmetries between established major powers and smaller states are accentuating. Powerful states are pursuing absolute security and domination through weaponization, integration and operationalization of space and cyber technologies.

Mr. President,

These dangerous developments are accompanied by continued policies of granting exceptions and waivers in complete disregard of long-held principles of the rules-based nuclear order.

Discrimination and double standards persist even as pretences over erosion of rules-based international order grow louder. Commitments to multilateralism ring hollow when long-standing non-proliferation rules are subordinated to strategic, political and commercial considerations.

As a result, the global peace and security landscape presents a grim picture, with its attendant negative fallout on various regions.

Mr. President,

Many of the negative developments that I have outlined are evident in South Asia where the largest state continues to pursue a strategy of coercion, hegemony and domination over its neighbours.

This region which is home to one fifth of humanity is being prevented from realizing its full socio-economic potential by the hubris of a regime, infused with religious supremacy. Proposals for dialogue and diplomacy to resolve disputes are rejected by its ruling clique.

The aspirations of South Asian people for sustainable development are being held back by its zero sum policy of my way or the highway.

The denigration of multilateralism is on full display. This country has continued its assault on international law and UN charter principles.

Some of the most obvious examples of wilful defiance of international law are visible in Indian Occupied Jammu & Kashmir.

Mr. President,

On 5th August last year, the self-professed largest democracy once again violated international law and 12 UN Security Council resolutions. Contrary to the provisions of Security Council resolutions, India resorted to unilateral and unlawful actions to change the demographic composition of the occupied territory.

India's deliberate defiance of international law continues through illegal award of domicile and residency to non-Kashmiris so as to convert them into a minority in their own homeland; through publication of new "political maps" laying claims not only to Indian occupied Jammu and Kashmir, but also Pakistan-administered Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan.

Under the garb of COVID-19 restrictions, the people of Kashmir have been subjected to a "double lockdown", enforced through several hundred thousands of Indian security forces.

India has dismissed the UN Secretary General's global call for ceasefire. Instead, it has intensified its violations of the ceasefire along the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir and the "Working Boundary".

Since 1 January 2020, India has committed 1440 ceasefire violations, deliberately targeting innocent civilians on the Pakistan side of the Line of Control, killing 13 and injuring 104 civilians.

India has cut the fencing in 5 places and deployed Spike anti-tank and Brahmos cruise missiles along the LoC.

Media reports emerging from Indian Occupied Jammu & Kashmir reveal that India is using Carl Gustaf M3 shoulder fired rockets, manufactured by SAAB, for demolishing civilian homes. We urge concerned countries to investigate these reports of use of the weapon in the light of respective Arms Trade Treaty obligations.

To divert world attention from its oppression in occupied Kashmir, India has in the past resorted to "false-flag" operations.

Given its past record, India may stage such an operation again or initiate another military adventure against Pakistan to avoid international scrutiny of its abuses of international law. There are growing signals of such aggressive Indian intent towards Pakistan.

Pakistan desires peace and development in the region. Pakistan does not want war or a conflict with India. However, as we demonstrated last February, if attacked, Pakistan has the will and capacity to defend itself and will respond resolutely to any act of aggression.

Mr. President,

Ultimately, such aggressive Indian behavior and posture has been enabled by lack of international accountability.

In fact, the absence of accountability, accompanied by generous supply of advanced conventional and non-conventional weapons and technologies, has imbued a sense of imperial hubris among the Indian ruling class.

The signals from India are unmistakable.

India's External Affairs Minister has publically bragged that India will, one day, take "physical control" of Pakistan-administered Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan.

The Indian Army Chief has claimed the “right” to a preemptive attack against so-called Pakistan “terrorist camps”.

On 16 August 2019, the Indian Defense Minister held out a thinly disguised threat of a preemptive nuclear strike against Pakistan, discarding even the fig leaf of its dubious “No First Use” policy.

India’s military doctrine is no more a secret. It envisages fighting a “limited war (with Pakistan) under the nuclear overhang”. India has built the capacity for a so-called “Cold Start” (surprise) attack across the Pakistan-India border.

These belligerent statements and offensive doctrines cannot be dismissed as mere bluster and bravado. They need to be seen in the light of the increasingly militarized mindset that grips India today.

Left unchecked, such doctrinal shifts, steady build-up of arms and advanced war-fighting platforms carry grave implications for peace and security in South Asia and beyond.

Mr. President,

The fundamental question before this Conference is how and whether it is possible to reverse these troubling developments within the larger global security context?

Even as this Conference has the mandate to negotiate treaties, it has not been able to do so for several decades. Some of its oldest agenda items, that have far-reaching significance for international security, have yet to see any progress.

Since its inception, the Conference has been able to deliver on its mandate and produced landmark treaties, with its existing rules of procedure or methods of work.

Yet, this progress was only possible when the interests of major powers so dictated or when they assessed that agreeing to treaties would be compatible with their respective national security interests.

The on-going impasse in this chamber is shaped by developments, approaches and policies pursued by its members. Put simply, this body does not and cannot remain immune from the external geopolitical environment.

It is this rather gloomy but realistic context that this Conference is confronted with and is obliged to operate in.

Mr. President,

In a world beset with challenges to multilateralism and rule of law, we have no choice but to go back to the fundamentals i.e. to re-commit faithful adherence to the principles and purposes enshrined in the UN Charter.

This reaffirmation must recognize that these principles are universal, timeless and adherence to these principles by all States, big or small is central to the integrity of the rules-based international order. It must also include a renewed commitment and faithful compliance with international treaties, UN Security Council resolutions and international law.

Taking this framework as a baseline, efforts must commence for a revival of a global consensus on arms control and disarmament on the basis of equity, balance, restraint and cooperation among states.

We are mindful that consensus building will be difficult but given the daunting challenges as also the dividends that may accrue, it is a task that we ignore to our collective peril.

Let me present some of the essential ingredients of consensus building:

First, start from the same basic premise, i.e. recognition of the right to equal security for all States. The SSOD-I unanimously agreed to the principle of “equal security” for all States, both in the non-conventional and conventional fields and at regional as well as international levels. This is an essential prerequisite for progress in the areas that this Conference is seized of and can work on.

Two, we must address the motives which drive States to acquire weapons to defend themselves. These motives include perceived threats from superior conventional or non-conventional forces; the existence of disputes and conflicts with more powerful States; and discrimination in the application of international norms and laws.

Three, the nuclear weapon states must demonstrate a renewed commitment to achieve nuclear disarmament within a reasonable timeframe to revalidate the original bargain. Without this commitment, the “bargain” of the non-proliferation regime will continue to erode. The eventual objective must be the total elimination of nuclear weapons within the context of a reenergized collective security system.

Four, as a pragmatic step towards disarmament, the nuclear weapon states need to halt future production and eliminate all existing stocks of fissile materials through a non-discriminatory Fissile Material Treaty.

Five, until nuclear disarmament is achieved, non-nuclear weapon states should be given assurances that they will not be threatened with the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. The security assurances offered by nuclear weapons states need to be translated into a universal, unconditional and legally binding treaty.

Six, we must evolve a universal and non-discriminatory agreement for addressing concerns arising from development, deployment and proliferation of Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) systems, which are inherently destabilizing, while being of dubious reliability.

Seven, we must strengthen the international legal regime in order to prevent the militarization of outer space.

Eight, an agreed, criteria-based and non-discriminatory approach must be evolved for the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy under appropriate international safeguards, in accordance with the international obligations of States.

Nine, the development and use of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) need to be brought under international regulation.

Ten, regional security issues must be addressed through dialogue and diplomacy; the creation of a WMD-free zone in the Middle East, and a denuclearized Korean Peninsula.

Lastly, given the direct causal relationship of conventional weapons with the continuing reliance on nuclear weapons and in view of the increasing number and sophistication of conventional weapons, it is essential to pursue balanced reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments, especially at the regional and sub-regional levels.

Mr. President,

The fragility of global security order demands that the arms control architecture is enabled to prevent outbreak and intensification of tensions at land, sea, space and cyberspace.

Global, regional and sub-regional approaches towards arms control would therefore require a mutually reinforcing framework – a framework that is anchored in the UN charter, international law and the SSOD-I final document principles.

The rules-based international order and multilateralism are not a simple aggregation of national interests. No such aggregation is possible given the varied interests of states.

What is and should be possible is to shape the global order and multilateralism in our “enlightened self-interest” that fosters diplomacy, negotiations, and demonstration of political will to abide by the rule of law.

I thank you, Mr. President.