



## Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN Geneva

### Statement by Mr. Muhammad Omar, First Secretary, at Third Meeting of Subsidiary Body 4, Conference on Disarmament, Geneva 09 June 2022

**Mr. Coordinator,**

Thank you for convening this meeting.

We appreciate your efforts in providing a structure for our discussions. In my remarks today, I shall endeavour to address the feasibility of an international legally binding instrument on NSAs, in line with your proposal.

The overall position of my delegation on NSAs as well as specific issues such as nuclear weapon free zones and existing assurances, among others, has been elaborated in detail during the previous two meetings of this Subsidiary Body. Given the nature of this subsidiary body's work, however, some overlaps are inevitable.

**Mr. Coordinator,**

During the course of our work, we have examined the different aspects as well as approaches to NSAs. Delegations have pointed out the salience and urgency of concluding an international legally binding instrument on NSAs, including as the next essential and logical step on the pathway to nuclear disarmament.

We agree that steps complementary to an international instrument on NSAs have an important role in fostering a more peaceful and stable environment globally and regionally, and also contribute to the objectives of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. However, the real impact of NSAs is only achievable when NSAs are codified through an international legally binding instrument.

My delegation, like many, considers such an international legal instrument a low hanging fruit that does not impinge on the security interests of any state possessing nuclear weapons.

We have also listened carefully to the views of some who oppose such an international legal instrument. What we haven't heard is the rationale for such an opposition. To us it seems more like a political position than an opposition based on genuine security concerns.

**Mr. Coordinator,**

It is clear from the deliberations that the overwhelming majority of CD members want an international legally binding instrument on NSAs. This subject remains one of the three 'original nuclear issues' and one of the oldest items on the CD's agenda.

From our perspective, calls for an international instrument are consistent with the noble aspirations for a "rules based international order". Arguably, such international order cannot be excluded from developing new rules in the nuclear domain. We therefore urge states opposing legally binding NSAs to revisit their stance and forego their opposition.

At the least, if some states believe their security would be undermined by such a legal instrument, they should allow commencement of negotiations on NSAs and have their concerns addressed during negotiations in the CD.

Decades of conversations on this topic have made it clear that there is no insurmountable legal, technical or financial obstacle to such an instrument either.

To answer your original question then, the feasibility of an international legal instrument on NSAs is evident and not questionable.

The CD has a wealth of work already undertaken in this regard, including Pakistan's proposal on an international convention on NSAs contained in documents CD/10 and CD/25. We stand ready to update these proposals to match contemporary realities and undertake further work towards elaborating an international legally binding instrument on NSAs.

We therefore, once again call upon States that continue to block commencement of negotiations on NSAs in the CD, including those enjoying nuclear umbrellas, to lift their opposition and allow the CD to take the first step in delivering on the CD's mandate via this over-ripe low hanging fruit.

**Mr. Coordinator,**

As I pointed out in our earlier meeting, both the hindsight and prognosis of nuclear disarmament make the case for a legal instrument on NSAs all the more eminent and urgent.

The G-21 has repeatedly called for the establishment of a subsidiary body to negotiate NSAs in the CD.

My delegation supports such a recommendation and echoes the call for establishing an Ad Hoc Committee on NSAs next year. If not a consensus recommendation from this subsidiary body, at the least the CD deserves to hear the rationale for opposition to legally binding NSAs and the possible security concerns that are impeding creation of such an Ad Hoc Committee.

**I thank you.**

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