



## Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN Geneva

### Statement

#### FIRST COMMITTEE – 75<sup>TH</sup> UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSION

#### **Statement by Pakistan** ***Thematic Debate on Conventional Weapons*** **(October 2020)**

Mr. Chairman,

1. The destabilizing effects of conventional weapons on security and stability at the regional and sub-regional levels as well as their humanitarian toll underscore the need for continued action aimed at controlling these weapons.
2. A comprehensive and equitable approach is required which takes into account the priorities and security interests of all States. It is essential that the pursuit of nuclear disarmament does not give way to a destabilizing conventional imbalance of the type that spawned two World Wars during the last century.
3. The final document of SSOD-I provides clear direction in this regard, I quote, “Together with negotiations on nuclear disarmament measures, negotiations should be carried out on the balanced reduction of forces and of conventional armaments, based on the principle of undiminished security of the parties with a view to promoting or enhancing stability at a lower military level, taking into account the need of all states to protect their security”, unquote.

Mr. Chairman,

4. Several worrying trends are emerging on the conventional weapons horizon. The level and scale of global military expenditures tops the list. The present expenditure on international trade in conventional arms has reached unprecedented levels. Past year saw the largest annual growth in global military spending in a decade. Ironically, while the total budget of the United Nations is less than 1 percent of the world’s total military expenditure, close to 200 times more is being spent on fueling and exacerbating conflicts than preventing them.
5. The reflection of this troubling trend is mirrored at the regional level, in particular in South Asia, where one State’s military spending grossly and vastly outnumbers that of others. This has the potential of fueling instability and jeopardizing the delicate regional balance. The situation is rendered more complex due to the presence of longstanding disputes and stalled political dialogue, which hinder the realization of the goal of durable peace in our region.
6. We remain concerned over the growing transfers of conventional armaments especially in volatile regions that are inconsistent with the imperatives of maintaining peace, security and stability. Moreover, the increasing interplay of such

conventional technologies with strategic capabilities continues to complicate and undermine the strategic stability and security of our region. The policy of double standards towards South Asia, based on narrow strategic, political and commercial considerations, must be eschewed.

7. Pakistan, for its part, is committed to the establishment of a strategic restraint regime in South Asia, which includes an element of conventional force balance. Pakistan neither wants, nor is engaged in an arms race in the region.

Mr. Chairman,

8. Pakistan has developed the necessary legislative, regulatory, enforcement and institutional mechanisms to address the range of issues relating to conventional arms' regulation. Policy guidelines on exports are in place along with a national evaluation mechanism to regulate trade in these arms. We are taking additional measures to strengthen the enforcement regime, which covers imports and licensing as well.

9. We had welcomed the outcome document of the Third Review Conference of the Programme of Action (PoA) on Small Arms and Light Weapons. We participated actively and constructively in the review conference and remain committed to the implementation of the PoA and the outcomes agreed at its review conferences.

10. Pakistan voted in favour of the General Assembly resolution that adopted the Arms Trade Treaty. As we continue our national review of the treaty, we believe that the ATT's success, effectiveness and universality will depend on its non-discriminatory implementation, in particular the strict adherence by its State Parties to the Treaty's principles.

Mr. Chairman,

11. Pakistan is a party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and all of its five Protocols, and remains fully compliant with their provisions. We are proud of our active contribution to de-mining and ERW clearance efforts world over, particularly under UN peace-keeping operations, to which Pakistan remains one of the largest troop contributors. The success of the CCW lies in the delicate balance that it seeks to maintain between humanitarian considerations and the legitimate security interests of States.

12. CCW also provides the most appropriate forum for addressing the issue of Improvised Explosive Devices in a comprehensive and balanced manner. Pakistan shares the concerns about the acquisition and use by non-state actors and terrorists of IEDs as well as various types of conventional weapons.

13. Pakistan presided over the 5<sup>th</sup> Review Conference of the CCW in 2016 which took important decisions for dealing with several contemporary issues falling under the Convention's purview. As Chair of the 2019 Annual Meeting of CCW High Contracting Parties, we facilitated important substantive outcomes that strengthen the implementation and improve the financial sustainability of the Convention, including the renewal of the mandate of the Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) for two years and the establishment of a Voluntary Working Capital Fund under the Convention.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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