



Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN Geneva

Statement

FIRST COMMITTEE – 75TH UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSION

Statement by Pakistan **Thematic Debate on Disarmament Machinery** **(-- October 2020)**

Mr. Chairman,

1. The General Assembly, at its First Special Session on Disarmament in 1978 (SSOD-I), established the UN Disarmament Machinery by consensus. The key principle set forth by SSOD-I in the context of this machinery is, *I quote*, “The adoption of disarmament measures should take place in such an equitable and balanced manner as to ensure the right of each State to security and to ensure that no individual State or group of States may obtain advantages over others at any stage.” *Unquote*.

2. The fulfilment of this cardinal objective requires that any legally binding measures be considered and agreed strictly on the basis of consensus, with the participation of all stakeholders, allowing all States to safeguard their vital national security interests. Working on this basis, the UN disarmament machinery has produced significant treaties, including those that have comprehensively prohibited two entire categories of weapons of mass destruction.

3. Since 1996, the UN Disarmament machinery has not been able to produce a legally binding instrument. This is a consequence of the competing priorities of different member states. Some States are opposing the commencement of negotiations on new treaties simply because they clash with their strategic calculus aimed at perpetuating their military advantage and preferential positions. Other States are rejecting certain instruments – which because of their inherent discriminatory nature – would negatively affect these States’ security disproportionately.

4. At the same time, there are some States that want progress at any cost, irrespective of the impact that it would have on international and regional peace and security, and regardless of whether it would lead to equal and undiminished security for all.

Mr. Chairman,

5. The interplay of these factors has resulted in a deadlock of the disarmament machinery. Pakistan shares the disappointment and frustration felt by many over

this state of affairs. However, the disarmament machinery is only a symptom of the malaise, not the cause.

6. The present situation is but a result of the prevailing strategic realities, marked by a lack of political will. It has nothing to do with procedures and methods of work. After all, the same disarmament machinery has been able to produce landmark treaties in the past when the conditions were more propitious.

Mr. Chairman,

7. The situation today is that there is no consensus on the start of negotiations on any issue on the CD's agenda. Among the so-called four core issues, the vast majority supports substantive work on the over-ripe issues of Nuclear Disarmament, Negative Security Assurances, and PAROS. A handful of states seem obsessed with a partial non-proliferation measure in the form of a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty that, without addressing existing stocks, will make no contribution to nuclear disarmament.

8. The challenges confronting the disarmament machinery are not exclusive to the CD. The First Committee and the Disarmament Commission face a similar polarisation and lack of consensus to deal with the most pressing issues confronting international peace and security. The growing trends of polarization within the overall arms control and disarmament landscape and the ensuing breakdown of existing agreements is creating further burdens for the overall disarmament machinery.

9. The solution to the impasse of the disarmament machinery cannot be found by seeking action outside established forums, especially when pursued on a non-consensus basis and without the participation of all stakeholders. It is only the CD – where all militarily significant states participate on an equal footing and are able to protect their vital security interests under the consensus rule – that meaningful progress can be achieved.

10. Instead of selective, piecemeal and partial solutions, Pakistan calls for evolving a new consensus. During this year's CD Session, we presented a detailed roadmap for achieving such a consensus, anchored in a rules-based international order, with respect and adherence to international law and through upholding of the principles enshrined in the UN Charter and SSOD-1.

11. My delegation was pleased with the successful outcome of the OEWG mandated to agree on the agenda and objectives of SSOD-IV. A successful SSOD-IV would be an important step towards the revival of the global consensus on general and complete disarmament while taking into account the security concerns of all States.

12. The real challenge, in our view, is how to deal with the political dynamics and developments outside UN conference rooms. As long as the quest for attaining equal security is trumped by hegemonic designs at the regional and global levels, real headway will continue to elude us. Discriminatory revisionism of the global nuclear order, exercise of double standards, and carving of waivers and exceptions driven by strategic and economic motivations, will continue to stand in the way of progress. We must return to consensus-based, cooperative and non-discriminatory approaches that lead to equal and undiminished security for all.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.