



**Statement by Ambassador Khalil Hashmi, Permanent
Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations and
CD in Geneva at the First Committee's Thematic
Debate on Conventional Weapons,
(20 October 2022)**

Mr. Chairman,

Even though conventional armaments were the first category of lethal weapons, efforts to regulate them have been only partially successful so far. There are three major factors impeding progress.

First, the pursuit of a partial approach i.e. attempts to separate motivations for arms production from the controls of their trade and transfer.

Second, an exclusive focus on managing the effects of trade in arms, without adequately addressing the causes that propel such a trade in the first place.

Third, lack of faithful implementation of existing international, regional or national commitments and obligations.

This state of affairs is further exacerbated by the increasing sophistication in and growing integration of artificial intelligence into the conventional weaponry.

There are other troubling trends.

Global military expenditures have exceeded the cold war levels and for the first time crossed two trillion dollars mark. The entire UN budget constitutes less than 1% of world's military expenditure, around 150 times more funds are being spent on fuelling and exacerbating conflicts than preventing them.

The trade volume in these weapons continues to grow. Huge quantities of arms are supplied to the like-minded or exported to those who have the financial means to purchase them. Arms sellers often encourage both sides in a conflict to buy more such weapons. The urge for profits remains irresistible, often ignoring international arms trade treaty provisions or national transfer policies.

Developing countries remain the primary recipients and favoured destination of these weapons. New markets continue to be explored, created and sought after, with little regard to the destabilizing impact on regional security and stability. The result is a series of regional arms races mostly in volatile parts of the world including non-state actors wreaking havoc on civilian populations. Senior officials of the selling

countries often market their weapons even as they seek to mediate peace or ease tensions.

Ironically the weapons that propel and sustain conflicts often originate from areas that enjoy peace and stability. On the other hand, the demand for weapons emanates from either insecurity or ambition. Some states are seeking to build up their national armed forces on land, in the air, and at the sea, with pretensions of a global power and often with the self-proclaimed intent to dominate their own region. Other states affected by the imbalance are then obliged to acquire weapons to ensure a minimum capability to deter aggression.

Mr. Chairman,

Many of these destabilizing developments are evident in South Asia where one State's military spending vastly outnumbers that of all others. The generous supply of conventional weaponry to this state, together with its strategic capabilities, is fueling instability, jeopardizing the delicate regional balance, hindering resolution of longstanding disputes, reinforcing its sense of impunity and hegemonic designs and impeding the realization of durable peace and sustainable development in the region.

The policy of double standards towards South Asia, based on narrow strategic, political and commercial considerations, must be eschewed.

Pakistan, for its part, remains 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.

For over three decades, this Committee has adopted Pakistan's resolution on promotion of conventional arms control at the regional and sub-regional levels. This resolution is anchored in the core SSOD-I principles of undiminished security of all States, and balanced reduction of forces and of conventional armaments. We look forward to its adoption with widest possible support this year.

Mr. Chairman,

Pakistan has developed the necessary legislative, regulatory, enforcement and institutional mechanisms to address the range of issues relating to conventional arms' regulation, including exports, imports, licensing and a national evaluation mechanism to regulate trade in these arms.

Pakistan attaches great importance the Programme of Action (PoA) on Small Arms and Light Weapons and International Tracing Instrument (ITI). We remain committed to their full and effective implementation.

Even as we continue to vote for the resolution on the Arms Trade Treaty, we continue to believe that the Treaty's success, effectiveness and universality remain dependent on its non-discriminatory implementation, in particular the strict adherence by its State Parties to the Treaty's principles.

Mr. Chairman,

As a party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and all of its five Protocols, Pakistan remains fully compliant with their provisions. We have actively contributed to strengthening its implementation, improving its financial sustainability and steering its high level meetings.

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.

We share concerns over the possibility of acquisition and use of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) by non-state actors and terrorists. The CCW remains the most appropriate forum to address the issue of IEDs in a comprehensive and balanced manner.

Lastly, Mr. Chairman, we are deeply concerned over attempts to impede progress towards development of an international legal framework on LAWS. We call for immediate commencement of negotiations to regulate the production, deployment and use of these weapons.

I thank you.