



**Statement by Mr. Gul Qaiser Sarwani, First Secretary, at the  
First Committee's Thematic Debate on Disarmament  
Machinery (27 October 2022)**

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**Mr. Chairman,**

The multilateral disarmament machinery remains in a state of paralysis for over two decades. This state of impasse is a function of ground realities as the machinery is affected by the international and regional security environment.

This paralysis is also both a cause and consequence of the competing strategic priorities, the relentless pursuit of maintaining military advantages and pursuit of discriminatory policies by some states.

The messianic zeal, arbitrary priorities and self-serving notions of ripeness that disregard the foundational arms control principle of equal security for all have reinforced the machinery's deadlock.

Pakistan reiterates its considered view that the arms control machinery remains sound in its design, procedures and methods of work. After all, the same machinery was able to conclude several landmark treaties in the past when fundamental principles were adhered to.

Solutions to the deadlock in the machinery lay within its respective constituents and compliance with fundamental principles of arms control enshrined in international law, the UN Charter and the Final Document of SSOD-1.

**Mr. Chairman,**

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*.

The fulfillment 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.

Some States are opposing the commencement of negotiations on new treaties simply because they clash with their strategic calculus. On the other hand, some of these very States champion cost free and inherently discriminatory proposals, which they know would naturally be rejected by States whose security such initiatives undermine.

The reality today is that there is no consensus on the start of negotiations on any issue on the CD's agenda. Among the oldest agenda items, 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 meaningful contribution to nuclear disarmament.

**Mr. Chairman,**

The challenges confronting the disarmament machinery are not exclusive to the CD. The First Committee and the Disarmament Commission face a similar polarisation in the face of the most pressing peace and security issues at the global and regional levels. The growing polarization and the ensuing breakdown of existing agreements is creating further burdens on the already stressed machinery.

Overcoming the impasse remains a challenging task. However, seeking pathways outside established forums, especially when pursued on a non-consensus basis and without the participation of all stakeholders, would be even more counterproductive. 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.

Pakistan has called for reviving arms control consensus and presented a detailed roadmap at the CD as well as this Committee. This revival must be anchored in faithful adherence to and respect of international law, based on non-discrimination and centered on the principles enshrined in the UN Charter and SSOD-1.

**I thank you, Mr. Chairman.**