



**Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN
Geneva**

**Statement by Ambassador Khalil Hashmi, Permanent Representative of Pakistan, at
the Plenary Meeting of the Conference on Disarmament, Geneva
24 January 2023**

On behalf of Pakistan delegation, I congratulate you on assuming the first presidency of this Conference.

We deeply value your wealth of experience and foresight. We are confident you will steer the work of this Conference very ably and wisely.

We welcome your constructive engagement with members of this body and thank you for sharing your plans for our work in the coming weeks. We assure you of our full cooperation and support.

I take this opportunity to welcome the new Ambassadors of Sri Lanka, Ecuador, Iran, United States and Republic of Korea. We look forward to working closely with them.

May I take this opportunity to bid farewell to Ambassador Li Song of China. I pay tribute to his sterling leadership and distinguished diplomatic career. We wish him every success as he leaves Geneva and assumes his new responsibilities.

We thank the CD Secretariat for its support under the skilful leadership of Secretary General Valovaya.

In line with the general format of today's meeting, let me share Pakistan's perspective on the drivers and impacts of the contemporary global security landscape and how this Conference could organize its work this year.

Mr. President,

Our world today is adrift, geo-politically, economically and ecologically. In the security and military domains, the risks are multiplying rapidly across various regions.

Inconsistent application of the UN Charter principles has perpetuated existing conflicts, while driving new ones. Strategic asymmetries are widening; renewed and expanded global arms race, particularly in the strategic realm, is underway.

Military expenditures have surpassed those of the cold war era. Nuclear dangers are rising and the prospects of a nuclear war, as the UN Secretary General warned are "back within the realm of possibility".

Amidst this worsening international and regional security environment, a handful of states seem determined to perpetuate the status quo to their continued strategic advantage.

The global arms control landscape, similarly, presents a precarious picture normatively, institutionally and operationally. The divisions in approaches, perspectives and priorities are sharpening. The international consensus reached at SSOD-I to systematically pursue nuclear disarmament has broken down. Key arms control agreements have been discarded.

Nuclear disarmament obligations remain largely unfulfilled as evidenced by constant shifting of goalposts towards additional non-proliferation measures.

The impacts of these troubling developments are obvious on the machinery of disarmament, particularly this body.

Mr. President,

Many of these worrying trends are amplified in the South Asian region. The regional security environment continues to deteriorate primarily because of the hegemonic policies of the largest State.

These policies draw strength from the generous supplies of conventional and non-conventional weaponry, technology and platforms from multiple sources. They are also inspired by the nuclear exceptionalism afforded to this State in contravention of long-standing non-proliferation principles, norms and rules.

The net effects of these developments in South Asia are clear: strategic stability in the region is eroding. The largest State continues to relentlessly pursue strategic domination and operationalize dangerous doctrines. Even more worryingly, these developments are accelerating the pace of defiance by this State of international law, particularly the UN Security Council resolutions.

Pakistan cannot remain oblivious to the evolving security dynamics in our immediate neighbourhood and the clear and present dangers to our security due to these policies, actions and developments. Pakistan will do whatever it takes to defend itself from all forms of aggression while remaining resolute in pursuing peace, development and strategic stability in South Asia, based on the universal principles of sovereign equality and equal security.

Mr. President,

Let me now turn to some of the new and emerging drivers of the global and regional strategic environment.

Nuclear weapons and their delivery systems no longer exist in isolation. These weapons and platforms co-exist with other advanced weapon systems in different domains.

Military capabilities are assuming a force multiplier character due to growing weaponization and integration across nuclear, outer space, cyber, conventional and AI domains. The pursuit of and advocacy for aggressive war fighting doctrines, including those for the use of nuclear weapons, is growing.

Therefore, the conversation on nuclear disarmament can no longer ignore the mutually reinforcing relationship between various weapon systems and their collective impact on the security of states, particularly in situations of conventional and nuclear asymmetry.

Given this state of affairs, rebuilding durable and more equitable international security architecture has become an urgent imperative. It must be anchored in the following fundamental principles:

One, universal and consistent respect for and application of the principles and purposes of the UN Charter, UN Security Council resolutions, and international law, especially the non-use of force and peaceful resolution of disputes;

Two, implementation of the assurance in the SSOD-I Final Document that “every state has an equal right to security”;

Three, faithful compliance with and fulfillment of nuclear disarmament obligations by respective states;

Four, reinvigorating conventional arms control at regional and sub-regional levels;

Five, eschewing double standards and pursuing non-discriminatory measures in the nuclear and other realms.

Mr. President,

Pakistan considers the CD a vital organ of the international security architecture and an indispensable part of the UN disarmament machinery.

As the only multilateral institution where all militarily significant States participate on an equal footing, the CD’s role and place remains unique.

The Conference has its own role and responsibility within the larger global security edifice. It must be nurtured, preserved and enabled to work to respond to the foremost contemporary security challenges. Approaches and proposals that ignore the effects of policies and actions undertaken outside this body have not worked in the past. Nor will they work in the future.

Ascribing arbitrary priorities and repeating the self serving mantra of ripeness continue to be deliberately employed to stall the Conference from negotiating some of its oldest agenda items, in particular its fundamental item i.e. nuclear disarmament.

In our view, critique of the CD’s rules of procedure or methods of its work does not stand the test of facts either, given that the very procedures and methods enabled the successful negotiation of several important treaties by this body.

Mr. President,

It was the pursuit of a balanced and comprehensive approach, in letter and spirit, which enabled the Conference to break its deadlock last year. Unfortunately the larger geo-political environment prevented the Conference from agreeing on substantive reports. This notwithstanding, the efficacy and effectiveness of last year’s model remains unquestionable.

While by no means a substitute for the CD's true mandate i.e. negotiations on nuclear disarmament, last year's decision stands out as the most practical least common denominator, particularly in the absence of a more conducive environment and an agreed mechanism to acknowledge and address the vital national security interests of States.

Mr. President,

Pakistan remains committed to the goal of a nuclear weapons free world that is achieved in a universal, verifiable and non-discriminatory manner. This objective can best be advanced by faithful adherence to and implementation of the cardinal principles enshrined in SSOD-I i.e. the primary responsibility of militarily significant states, pursuit of disarmament measures in an equitable and balanced manner to ensure that no individual state or a group of states obtain advantages over others at any stage, and undiminished security at the lowest possible level of armaments and military forces.

Towards this end, Pakistan also reiterates its call for the immediate commencement of negotiations on a comprehensive Nuclear Weapons Convention, without further delay

Pakistan also supports the immediate start of negotiations in the CD on a Convention on legally binding Negative Security Assurances (NSAs) and a Treaty on Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space (PPWT).

Proposals for Negative Security Assurances (NSAs) have been on the CD's agenda for the longest duration. Pakistan believes that the issue is most ripe for treaty negotiations and has the significant potential to create the necessary environment for confidence building and easing of tensions.

Mr. President,

The tumultuous security environment, the build-up of advanced weapons, platforms and means of delivery, in combination with rising tensions, make work on the agenda item Prevention of Nuclear War, a high area of priority for this Conference.

Should there be consensus, Pakistan stands ready to also join substantive work on other contemporary issues such as chemical and biological terrorism, weaponization of cyber space, lethal autonomous weapon systems and other types of destabilizing weapon systems, including delivery systems.

Mr. President,

As regards fissile materials, the ritual calls by a handful of States for a production cut-off only treaty or a so called FMCT, as envisaged under the Shannon Mandate, remains at best a diversionary tactic. A treaty that ignores huge asymmetries in fissile material stocks diminishes rather than promotes stability and security at global and regional levels.

That these asymmetries in the South Asian region are being further accentuated by generous external support and supplies speaks to the flawed and untenable nature of this outdated proposition. Proposals that are cost free for the proponents but disregard the legitimate security needs of others will remain a non-starter.

The time for FMCT that seeks to freeze existing asymmetry in nuclear arsenals and fissile material stocks held by some nuclear weapons States, has long past. This outdated proposal does not have any added value for nuclear disarmament either, as is

evident from increase in nuclear arsenals by states ostensibly committed to the so-called moratoria on fissile material production.

For these reasons, Pakistan will continue to oppose such a discriminatory proposal.

Pakistan has instead proposed a Fissile Material Treaty that addresses the issues in all dimensions, comprehensively, effectively and verifiably and which explicitly incorporates in its scope fissile material stocks. We reiterate our call for starting work in earnest towards developing a new basis for negotiations on a treaty whose scope expressly encompasses existing stocks and applies equally to all States without discrimination.

Mr. President,

Finally, the CD has and should resume substantive work on all its agenda items in a balanced and comprehensive manner.

Therefore, unless some members withdraw their opposition to commencement of negotiations on NSAs, PAROS or nuclear disarmament, last year's approach to substantive work remains a realistic option.

My delegation will continue to engage with you and other members of the CD to explore the possibilities of fulfilling its mandate, or at the least resume substantive work on all agenda items and where agreeable, on new and emerging issues.

I thank you.