Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN, Geneva

Statement by Pakistan at Plenary Meeting of Conference on Disarmament

02 June 2026

Agenda Item 4: Effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons

Mr. President,

Thank you for convening a plenary meeting on the important issue of negative security assurances.

Mr. President,

The question of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons has been before the international community for close to six decades. It is one of the three "original nuclear issues" before this Conference — alongside nuclear disarmament and the nuclear test ban — and remains among the oldest unresolved items on its agenda.

Pakistan's position on this issue is long-standing and principled. As a non-nuclear-weapon State from the late 1960s, we sought legally binding assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, and in 1979 we tabled at this Conference a draft "International Convention to Assure Non-Nuclear-Weapon States against the Use or Threat of Use of Nuclear Weapons," contained in document CD/10. The failure of the international community to provide such assurances — at a time when nuclear weapons had already been introduced into our region — left Pakistan with no choice but to develop its own deterrent; yet even after acquiring that capability, our advocacy for NSAs has never wavered.

We have held out a voluntary pledge not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against any non-nuclear-weapon State, and we stand ready to transform that pledge into a multilaterally negotiated, legally binding instrument. Our continued

commitment is reflected in the resolution on NSAs that Pakistan has tabled annually at the UN General Assembly since 1990 — most recently adopted without a single negative vote.

Mr. President,

In 2023, Pakistan submitted a detailed working paper on a legally binding instrument on NSAs, contained in document CD/2317. That paper set out our considered views on the core elements of such an instrument — by whom the assurances should be given, to whom they should be extended, and how they should be codified — and it remains our reference contribution to this debate. We highlight it once again to the attention of the membership.

Mr. President,

Our position rests not on aspiration alone but on what this Conference has itself demonstrated. The deliberations of recent years have confirmed that there are no insurmountable legal, technical, or financial obstacles to negotiating and concluding a legal instrument on NSAs. An overwhelming majority of the membership supports this path. NSAs remain the lowest-hanging fruit before this body; a subject ripe for immediate negotiation, and the one issue on which agreement is most within reach.

That this is not mere assertion was borne out last year. In the work of Subsidiary Body 4 in 2025, the degree of convergence reached on NSAs was greater than on any other agenda item. Had its adoption not been conditioned on — and held hostage to — parallel progress across the other subsidiary bodies, this Conference would have had before it an agreed outcome on NSAs. The opportunity was not lost on its merits; it was lost to linkage.

We would caution, once again, against holding the issue on which the membership is closest to agreement hostage to those on which it remains divided. To do so penalizes the very convergence this Conference exists to build. NSAs should be allowed to advance on their own footing.

Mr. President,

The case for doing so has only grown more compelling. We meet at a moment of mounting geopolitical conflict, eroding strategic restraint, and evolving nuclear doctrines that appear to lower the threshold for the use of these weapons. In such an environment, a legally binding instrument on NSAs would be far more than a procedural breakthrough for this Conference. It would constitute a major confidence-building measure between nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon States — bridging the security divide between them, reducing tensions, averting costly arms races, and addressing the concerns arising from these doctrinal shifts. It would

build trust at precisely the moment trust is in shortest supply, and strengthen a non-proliferation regime whose credibility suffers in the continued absence of such assurances.

Such an instrument would not impinge on the security of any State possessing nuclear weapons as it entails no elimination, reduction, or freeze of any arsenal. Its absence, by contrast, diminishes the right to equal security of those States that have renounced nuclear weapons and stand outside the alliances of nuclear-armed States.

Mr. President,

Pakistan remains ready to commence negotiations on a universal, legally binding International Convention on NSAs, and we support the establishment of an appropriate negotiating mechanism to that end. This Conference has the mandate, the institutional memory, and the responsibility to deliver on this issue. As long as the security of non-nuclear-weapon States rests on political goodwill rather than legal obligation, the promise of a fair and balanced non-proliferation order will remain unfulfilled.

I thank you.

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