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Statement

by

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of Pakistan

at the

General Debate of the First Committee
(66th Session of the UNGA)

New York, 11 October 2011
Mr. Chairman,

I would first like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your election as the Chairman of the First Committee. We are confident that your able leadership would ensure success in our work. Towards that end, my delegation assures you of our support.

Mr. Chairman,

2. In order to make our journey towards our shared goal of achieving global peace and security through disarmament initiatives, it is imperative for us to make an objective analysis of the current state of affairs and its underlying causes. While various member states were quick to appreciate the positive trends in the international environment, the fact remains that a genuine “conducive international environment” in the field of disarmament emanates from “actions” rather than “words” and through sincere efforts, not opportunism.

3. It was hoped that the end of cold war would usher in an era, in which the major nuclear weapon states would lead the efforts towards nuclear disarmament. What we witnessed instead was their continued adherence to the doctrines of nuclear use and the never-ending pursuit of the modernization of nuclear weapons. Not only did they choose to cling to their strategic nuclear advantages, they also undermined any chance of progress in the field of disarmament by pursuing discriminatory policies that destabilize the military balance in regions of conflict. They embarked on this policy despite agreeing in SSOD-I (Para-37) that “significant progress in disarmament, including nuclear disarmament, would be facilitated by parallel measures to strengthen the security of States and to improve the international situation in general”. Given these powers’ discriminatory actions in the past few years, their call for progress in disarmament is hollow, if not insincere.

Mr. Chairman,

4. This state of affairs and its causes are the real reasons why our efforts to achieve nuclear disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation bear no fruit. As long as the major powers continue to shelve a comprehensive approach towards nuclear disarmament and promote only non-proliferation, we would continue to face insecurity and instability. As an integral component of complete nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation is a noble cause, fully supported by Pakistan. However, if non-proliferation is pursued in isolation as a substitute to nuclear disarmament, it only serves to perpetuate the interests of a few powerful states and further strengthens the existing discrimination that exists between the nuclear have-nots.

Mr. Chairman,

5. In the last two years, we have witnessed a growing debate on the need to revitalize the international disarmament machinery. This machinery, of which the Conference on Disarmament and the UN Disarmament Commission are important parts, was created by the First Special Session on Disarmament (SSOD-I). While both these institutions for some may have performed less than expected, it is interesting to note that only the CD is being singled out for its inactivity. It is also interesting to note that the issue of Nuclear Disarmament, the raison d'etre of the CD, still remains an unfulfilled goal despite being on the CD’s agenda for 32 years. One cannot help
wondering as to why the leading critics of the CD do not find it important to break the three
decade long deadlock on Nuclear Disarmament.

6. The reason are self-evident. These countries are themselves responsible for dragging their
feet on the most important issue of Nuclear Disarmament, CD’s inactivity for decades and stalled
discussions in the Disarmament Commission. Their concerns are limited to progress on a single
issue in the CD, with utter disregard for other three core issues on the CD’s agenda. It, therefore,
becomes apparent that the reasons for lack of progress are multifarious, rooted in the continued
lack of political will of states and are not related to the working methods of the CD.

Mr. Chairman,

7. The CD has negotiated landmark instruments like CWC and the CTBT and, therefore,
there cannot be a problem with its rules of procedure. The fact is that CD’s work or inactivity is
nothing but a reflection of prevailing political realities as it does not operate in a vacuum.
Moreover, no treaty can be negotiated in the CD, which is contrary to the security interests of its
member states. This principle, endorsed by SSOD-I, is the basis on which the States agreed to
respect the Rule of Consensus in the CD.

8. Any solution to the current stalemate in the international disarmament machinery,
including the CD, should be comprehensive and applicable to all aspects of this machinery, not
just the issues that are of priority to some delegations. It should also address the real underlying
causes of the stalemate. Pakistan strongly believes in the need for preserving this machinery that
has been developed with consensus. Any effort to bypass this machinery would undermine
consensus and legitimacy. Pakistan would never be part of any such efforts.

9. We should also not forget that the stalemate in the Conference in terms of its Programme
of Work existed for more than a decade during which the major powers did not allow any
consideration of the FMCT or any other core agenda item of the CD. Now, with sufficient stocks
available, a FMCT has become cost free for some of the major powers and hence the mantra
about it being the “next logical step” and a “ripe” issue for negotiations. Their logic follows the
dictates of “convenience” and not the needs of global peace and security. And if time is any
measure of judgment for ripeness or importance, we must be aware that the issue of Nuclear
Disarmament and Negative Security Assurances are facing stalemate for over two decades.

10. In any case, the CD was not created to negotiate a FMCT only, as there are a number of
equally, if not more, important issues on its agenda. Moreover, if there is no consensus on one
issue due to security concerns of states, other issues can and should be taken up.

Mr. Chairman,

11. Pakistan’s opposition to negotiations on a FMCT is not out of choice but compulsion. No
country can be expected to compromise on its fundamental security interests. In the last few
years, the discriminatory policies of some major powers regarding nuclear cooperation have
accentuated the asymmetry in fissile material stocks in our region. These powers have pursued
these policies in utter disregard for international non-proliferation goals and indeed their own
non-proliferation commitments. Despite loud voices of concern and grandstanding in the
international media and fully cognizant of the impact of these policies on regional security
situation, they have continued their policies of exceptionalism for their pursuit of power and profit. As such they have no moral authority in calling for strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime when they are themselves responsible for undermining it. We would also like to ask the members of the Nuclear Suppliers Group that when they endorsed these discriminatory policies, were they not aware of the adverse consequences to our region and to the disarmament and non-proliferation regime. If those members chose to abet the policies of discrimination and, thereby, undermined international non-proliferation goals, why are they now most vociferous in bemoaning the “lack of progress” in the CD?

Mr. Chairman,

12. Before international disarmament treaties are negotiated, they are long nurtured in good faith, confidence and mutual trust. Unfortunately, in the absence of these elements, Pakistan has been compelled to take a stand against nuclear selectivity and discrimination.

13. In Pakistan’s view, any fissile material treaty should deal clearly and comprehensively with the issue of asymmetry of existing fissile material stocks. Only then will it be a treaty that would contribute to nuclear disarmament, ensuring equal security of all states. In this regard, we must bear in mind one of the cardinal principles of disarmament negotiations, as enshrined in Para-29 of SSOD-I, which states:

“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.”

Mr. Chairman,

14. Pakistan, along with 120 members of NAM, is ready to support commencement of negotiations on Nuclear Disarmament, an issue that has been a priority for the Non-Aligned Movement for decades. We also support negotiating a legal instrument on Negative Security Assurances that has been on the CD’s agenda for many years. It is a question worth asking as to why the CD cannot negotiate a legally binding instrument on NSAs as it would not compromise the security of any state. Intransigence on achieving progress on this issue is tantamount to supporting a morally reprehensible policy of using nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon states. Another issue on the CD’s agenda that merits urgent attention is the need to develop concrete steps towards Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS). These steps are vital to ensure the peaceful uses of outer space, on which the international community relies heavily for economic and scientific development.

Mr. Chairman,

15. In view of the existing problems besetting global security and the need to revitalize the international disarmament machinery, it is imperative to develop a new consensus to deal with the current stalemate. In this regard, Pakistan fully supports the call of NAM countries to convene the Fourth Special Session on Disarmament (SSOD-IV). This session would contribute positively towards finding ways to achieve the goals of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in a balanced and non-discriminatory manner, keeping in view the security interests of all states.
Mr. Chairman,

16. Pakistan remains firmly committed to the Biological and Toxins Weapons Convention. Our commitment to the BWC is evident from our deep involvement in enhancing its implementation. We are hopeful that the Seventh Review Conference later this year would further strengthen the Convention. While Pakistan accords importance to strengthening implementation of all articles of the Convention, it attaches priority to developing an effective mechanism on implementation of Article X of the Convention, dealing with the issues of cooperation and assistance under the Convention.

17. Pakistan believes in strict adherence and respect for all provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention. We are concerned that two major possessor states have declared their inability to comply with their obligations to completely destroy their chemical weapons by the final deadline of April 2012. We urge them to intensify their efforts to comply with their obligations.

Mr. Chairman,

18. Pakistan supports the framework of the Convention on Prohibitions and Restrictions on Certain Conventional Weapons which may be deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects (CCW). Pakistan is a party to all five protocols in the CCW framework. We are also supportive of dealing with the issue of cluster munitions within the CCW framework while striking a balance between military and humanitarian considerations in a non-discriminatory manner.

19. We share the international concern over the ill effects of the illicit trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons. We believe that focus should be on strengthening the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, which is a consensual framework, rather than trying to supplant it with other mechanisms or creating parallel instruments.

20. As regards a potential Arms Trade Treaty, for which the Small Arms and Light Weapons problem is highlighted as the main justification, Pakistan is in favor of a step by step, inclusive, and consensual approach with due regard to every state’s right to self defense, as enshrined in the UN Charter.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.