Statement by
Ambassador Tehmina Janjua,
Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the
United Nations in Geneva and Conference on
Disarmament

at the

General Debate of the First Committee

New York
10 October 2016
Statement by Ambassador Tehmina Janjua  
Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations in  
Geneva and Conference on Disarmament

General Debate of the First Committee  
(10 October 2016)

Chairperson,

As I take the floor for the first time in this Committee, on behalf of  
Pakistan delegation, I would like to congratulate you and members of the  
Bureau on the assumption of your offices. I assure you of my delegation’s  
full cooperation. We also thank the Secretariat for their support.

Chairperson,

The international security environment continues to deteriorate. Inter­  
state relations are increasingly marked by mistrust and outright friction.  
The number and sophistication of all types of armaments including  
nuclear weapons, is on the rise. Most ominously, in certain cases, the  
unabashed pursuit of hegemonic policies, and efforts to achieve military  
domination are creating instability both at the global and regional levels.  

This is especially evident in our region. South Asia’s security  
environment is blighted by one power’s insistence on hegemonic policies,  
engaging in a relentless arms build-up, and a myopic refusal to engage in  
any meaningful dialogue on security issues. Pakistan’s security was  
fundamentally challenged by the introduction of nuclear weapons in our  
neighbourhood. We were left with no option but to follow suit in order to  
restore strategic stability in South Asia and deter all forms of aggression.  
At the same time, Pakistan made a number of proposals for keeping  
South Asia free of nuclear weapons and missiles. These included the  
simultaneous application of IAEA safeguards on all nuclear facilities and  
bilateral arrangement for their reciprocal inspections; simultaneous  
accession to the NPT; regional CTBT; Zero Missile Regime in South Asia;  
and the signing of a Non-Aggression Pact. Unfortunately, none of these  
proposals met a favorable response.

Just last month, our Prime Minister, in his address to the UNGA,  
underlined Pakistan’s resolve to maintain strategic stability in its region.  
Guided by our commitment to the principles of non-proliferation, and  
with the aim of maintaining peace and stability in the region, our Prime  
Minister expressed readiness to agree on a bilateral arrangement
between Pakistan and India on a nuclear test ban. We are awaiting a response to that proposal.

Peace and stability in South Asia cannot be achieved without resolving underlying disputes, agreeing on measures for nuclear and missile restraint, and instituting conventional forces balance. Our proposal for a strategic restraint regime, based on these three inter-locking elements, remains on the table. We have demonstrated our commitment to peace and stability in the region. Our conduct continues to be defined by restraint and responsibility, and avoidance of an arms race.

Chairperson,

The lack of progress on nuclear disarmament and frustration with the inactivity of the UN disarmament machinery is reaching a tipping point. The major divergences on the path towards nuclear disarmament have become starkly visible on two levels.

On the one hand, a group of States is attempting to divert attention from the fulfilment of their obligations and commitments on nuclear disarmament by proposing additional non-proliferation measures under the so-called step-by-step, progressive, and building blocks approach. Quite conveniently, they are only suggesting steps that are cost-free for them, but carry huge implications for other states' security.

On the other hand, there are moves to trivialize and exclude vital security considerations from the debate on nuclear disarmament, and to recast the discourse in exclusively humanitarian and ethical terms – supposedly paving the way for a ban on nuclear weapons. In addition to taking international peace and security for granted, these initiatives go against the agreed principles enshrined in the SSOD-I Final Document.

Both these divisive approaches – the so-called “building blocks” approach and the “Ban” approach – are not likely to succeed without bringing the major stakeholders on board. Nuclear disarmament cannot progress without addressing the existential security concerns of all States. We need approaches that unite us in our common endeavour towards a nuclear weapons free world based on the cardinal principle of equal and undiminished security for all states. Approaches that create additional fissures, are best avoided.
Chairperson,

While progress on nuclear disarmament remains deadlocked, the relentless pursuit of selective non-proliferation measures persists. After failing to develop consensus on a genuinely equitable and non-discriminatory Fissile Material Treaty in the CD, attempts were made, and continue to be made, to move the issue outside the CD.

The proponents of such approaches need to accept the reality that fundamental differences continue to exist on the very objectives and scope of the treaty. These are based on fundamental security concerns which can neither be glossed over nor wished away by creative drafting or innovative procedures. Absolute clarity is required on the objectives and scope of a treaty before starting substantive work on it.

Pakistan is not in a position to accept any conclusions or recommendations produced by the ill-advised GGE on FMCT. The substantive work on a treaty has to be undertaken in the CD on the basis of an acceptable mandate. A treaty that does not address the asymmetries in existing stockpiles of fissile material would adversely affect Pakistan's vital security interests.

Pakistan's proposal on a Fissile Material Treaty that includes existing stocks was circulated as an official document of the CD last year. It seeks to address the regional and global asymmetries in fissile material stockpiles and can make a genuine contribution towards the goal of nuclear disarmament. It does not discriminate between any category of States and provides a practical way forward out of the impasse.

Chairperson,

The existing and emerging challenges to arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament need to be tackled collectively on the basis of cooperative multilateralism. The fundamental prerequisites for global security need to be appropriately addressed, including:

One, recognition of the right to equal security for all States.

Two, addressing the motives driving States to acquire weapons, including perceived threats from larger military forces; the existence of disputes with more powerful States; and discrimination in the application of international norms and laws.
Three, a renewed commitment by the Nuclear Weapon States to achieve nuclear disarmament within a reasonable timeframe, within the context of a re-energized collective security system.

Four, evolving an agreed, criteria-based and non-discriminatory approach for the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy under appropriate international safeguards, in accordance with the relevant international obligations of States.

Five, pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, provision of effective guarantees to non-nuclear weapon states against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons through the conclusion of a universal, legally-binding and non-discriminatory treaty in the CD.

Six, evolving a universal and non-discriminatory agreement for addressing concerns arising from the development and deployment of Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) systems that are inherently destabilizing, while being of dubious reliability.

Seven, strengthening the international legal regime to prevent the weaponisation of outer space by undertaking negotiations to this effect in the CD.

Eight, as a fundamental and pragmatic step towards nuclear disarmament, addressing both the past as well as future production of fissile materials through the conclusion of a non-discriminatory Fissile Material Treaty in the CD.

Nine, bringing under appropriate international regulations and prohibitions the development and use of cyber weapons, armed drones and Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems (LAWS).

Ten, addressing regional security issues through dialogue and diplomacy, including the establishment of a Strategic Restraint Regime in South Asia; the creation of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East; and a Korean Peninsula free of nuclear weapons.

Finally, pursuing the balanced reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments. The disturbing trend of increasing number and sophistication of conventional weapons needs to be arrested due to its direct causal relationship with the continuing reliance on nuclear weapons.
Chairperson,

Pakistan has positioned itself as a mainstream partner in the international non-proliferation regime as well as the global efforts to strengthen nuclear security and safety. We have instituted a stringent national export control system and a robust nuclear security regime that are at par with the best international standards.

Pakistan was an active and constructive participant in the Nuclear Security Summit process and has fulfilled all requirements of UN Security Council resolution 1540. We will be hosting international workshops and meetings next year in Pakistan on UNSCR 1540, and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) of which Pakistan remains an active member.

Safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear energy, without discrimination, is essential for economic development. Pakistan meets the international standards and criteria to gain full access to civil nuclear technology for meeting its growing energy needs and for continued economic growth.

Through a series of actions in diverse areas, we have demonstrated our credentials and eligibility to join the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG). We expect that a non-discriminatory, criteria-based approach is followed for expanding NSG’s membership, which would strengthen the non-proliferation regime in an equitable and credible manner.

Chairperson,

Pakistan is a party to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC). By banning entire categories of weapons of mass destruction, we value the contribution made by these two instruments to international and regional peace and security. Pakistan is actively engaged in strengthening both these regimes.

Pakistan will preside over the 5th Review Conference of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) being held in December of this year in Geneva. We are counting on the support of all States Parties in arriving at robust and forwarding looking outcomes from this Conference.

I thank you.