Mr. Chairman,

Let me start by congratulating you and other members of the Bureau on assuming your offices and assure you of my delegation’s full cooperation.

Pakistan aligns itself with the statement delivered by NAM.

Mr. Chairman,

The international security environment has become even more fraught since this Committee last met.

We are in the midst of a phase of profound uncertainty in which strategic stability, both at the global and regional levels, is under great stress.

At the global level, the challenge to multilateralism and a rules based international order is being reflected in renunciation of existing treaties and rejection of previously agreed arrangements. This is happening against a backdrop of a renewal of East-West tensions and emergence of more intense competition in Asia and indeed elsewhere.
Strategic stability has been overtaken by strategic competition. Confrontation is increasingly eclipsing cooperation; and individual military capabilities are being prioritized over collective security. The institutions created in the aftermath of horrific global wars to preserve international peace and security have fallen victim to big-power politics. Double standards, discrimination and selectivity are challenging the non-proliferation regime and a rules-based international system.

The painstakingly achieved progress on disarmament is being halted and even reversed. Mistrust between States is growing. The quantity and quality of armaments continues to rise as does development of more lethal and sophisticated weapons. Boundaries are being pushed and new frontiers being explored, from cyber space to outer space, from weaponisation of Artificial Intelligence to novel types of strategic delivery systems.

There is increasing and widespread disillusionment with the lack of activity in the UN disarmament machinery primarily due to the absence of progress on nuclear disarmament.
The approach to only pursue cost-free, additional non-proliferation measures is no longer working. Potential arms control, non-proliferation or disarmament measures that do not meet the cardinal principle of “equal and undiminished security for all”, as enshrined in the SSOD-I consensus Final Document, remain stillborn.

There is a lack of leadership and commitment to pursue nuclear disarmament on an equitable basis, within the context of a re-energized collective security system.

Mr. Chairman,

These global trends are also pronounced in my region, South Asia, where one State unabashedly seeks to establish its dominance and hegemony - fueling insecurity among its neighbours. It is pursuing a massive build-up of its nuclear and conventional military forces and acquiring destabilizing capabilities. These include the nuclearization of the Indian Ocean and deployment of anti-ballistic missiles (ABMs); development and testing of debris-generating Anti-Satellite (ASAT) weapons; and a constant increase in the range, sophistication and diversification of all types of delivery systems and platforms.
Worse, this country also uses irresponsible public rhetoric to raise the specter of war. It has repeatedly signaled changes to its so-called “No First Use” declaratory nuclear posture while flirting with pre-emptive and counterforce posture. This is in addition to its already provocative military doctrines that envisage war-fighting below the perceived nuclear threshold. It refuses to engage in bilateral dialogue and rejects proposals aimed at confidence-building and nuclear and missile restraint.

These hegemonic pretensions, coupled with a history of aggression against its neighbours, present a clear and present danger to regional stability, and to Pakistan’s security especially as the bulk of this offensive capability is deployed against my country.

The world saw a demonstration of this belligerent military posture earlier this year, when in the wake of the Pulwama incident in occupied Kashmir, this country resorted to aggression against Pakistan on a completely false pretense.
The recent unilateral action by this country to further consolidate its illegal occupation of the internationally-recognized disputed territory of Jammu and Kashmir, in flagrant violation of multiple Security Council resolutions, has engendered further volatility in South Asia, posing a grave risk to regional and global peace and stability.

The supply of advanced military hardware and sensitive technologies from abroad is directly aiding the relentless accumulation of arms and aggressive policies of this country. Many supplier nations sacrificed long-standing principles to grant exemptions from non-proliferation norms citing strategic and economic interests with dire consequences for regional and international peace and security. Dubious concepts like “net-security provider” only seem to encourage this country to accumulate military capabilities way beyond its ostensible national security needs.

Mr. Chairman,

Pakistan desires peace and strategic stability in order to focus on its socio-economic development and the welfare of its people.
Our conduct continues to be defined by restraint and responsibility, and the avoidance of an arms race. But we cannot remain oblivious to the evolving security dynamics in our immediate neighbourhood.

Pakistan remains open to any initiative on arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament that is equitable and results in equal and undiminished security for all States. We seek resolution of disputes through dialogue and diplomacy. Peace and stability in South Asia cannot be achieved without resolving the core issue of Jammu and Kashmir; without agreeing on reciprocal measures for nuclear and missile restraint; and without instituting a balance between conventional forces. Our proposal for a strategic restraint regime in South Asia, based on these three inter-locking elements, remains on the table.

Mr. Chairman,

I take this opportunity to reiterate Pakistan’s commitment to the goal of a nuclear weapons free world that is achieved in a universal, verifiable and non-discriminatory manner. As recognized by SSOD-I, the objective of this process should be undiminished security at the lowest possible level of armaments
and military forces. However, any meaningful progress on disarmament requires concrete measures to address the regional and global challenges, which generate insecurities in states. Nuclear disarmament, therefore, needs to be pursued in a comprehensive and holistic manner in accordance with the principles agreed by SSOD-I.

We have to recognize and address the key motivations that drive States to possess nuclear weapons. These could include: one, threats from larger military forces – both nuclear and conventional; two, the existence of disputes with more powerful states and the failure of the UN to implement its own resolutions to resolve such disputes; three, the failure of the UN collective security system to deter aggression and military threats; and four, discrimination in the application of international norms and standards. These legitimate motivations are different from those States that retain nuclear weapons as a matter of prestige.

Pakistan also supports the commencement of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) to conclude treaties on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space and Negative Security
Assurances, as well as on other contemporary issues affecting international security such as chemical and biological terrorism, lethal autonomous weapons and cyber weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

Pakistan wants to contribute to the strengthening of the international non-proliferation regime, as a constructive partner, on an equal footing. Pakistan meets the international standards to gain access to civil nuclear technology for meeting its growing energy needs in a safe, secure and safeguarded manner. Through a series of actions in diverse areas, we have demonstrated our credentials to join the Nuclear Suppliers Group. We expect an expansion of the NSG’s membership based on non-discriminatory and objective benchmarks.

Mr. Chairman,

In this statement, we wanted to share our broad overview of the prevailing security situation, globally and in our own region. We will address in greater detail, during the subsequent thematic debates, the specific issues on the Committee’s agenda including nuclear weapons; other weapons of mass destruction; conventional weapons; other disarmament measures and
international security; regional security; and the disarmament machinery.

I thank you!