STATEMENT BY
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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF PAKISTAN
AT THE
CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT (CD)

Geneva,
27 August 2009
Mr. President,

I congratulate you on assuming the Presidency of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) as we enter the final and crucial phase of our deliberations for 2009. Your country and your delegation has always demonstrated a strong commitment to the objectives of this august body. Your personal commitment, dedication and diplomatic skills are going to be especially important at this stage of our work.

I would also like to express our deep appreciation to the outgoing President, the Ambassador of Australia, for the commitment and dedication with which she conducted the deliberations of this Conference. My delegation is grateful for the cooperation and understanding she extended to us.

I take this opportunity to welcome the Ambassador of Kazakhstan to the CD and look forward to working with him in the best traditions of the friendly relations between our two countries.

Mr. President,

I am addressing the CD at a critical time. The only way for us to move forward is on the basis of consensus – by recognizing and accommodating the interests of all delegations.

As is the case of every country present here, the policies we pursue in the CD are guided by our supreme national interest.

During the last few plenary sessions a number of delegations have expressed their views on the prevailing situation in the CD. We have listened carefully to their statements and deeply respect their views.

Mr. President,

Pakistan is committed to the goals of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We attach great significance to the work of the CD, which is the sole negotiating forum on disarmament issues in the United Nations. We would like to see the Conference on Disarmament make meaningful progress on all the four core issues.

We joined the consensus on CD/1864, despite substantive difficulties with the text, in good faith to enable the CD to make across the board progress on all the core issues. It was our expectation that these issues will be addressed in the implementation of the decision.
But immediately after adoption of the Programme of Work we were confronted with disappointing and alarming maneuvers even on procedural issues on the part of some delegations. We, therefore, remain concerned over efforts to ensure that the mandates of the Working Groups would remain static without progressing towards negotiations on all four core issues in the future. We are alarmed by arguments that rotation of chairs of all bodies can not be accepted as a principle and that there can be no understanding on the time frame for rotation either. Similarly, our rules of procedure which require negotiating the programme of work at the beginning of every year were sought to be bypassed, with suggestions that the present programme should be rolled over for next year and perhaps beyond.

Mr. President,

Some delegations have even gone to the extent of proposing that the fundamental basis our work, the principle of consensus, may have to reconsidered if they don't get their way. Equally alarming has been the implied threat that if the CD does not make progress as defined by some delegations, it may be necessary to take negotiations on issues such as fissile materials out of the CD. These are ideas and propositions that are firmly opposed by Pakistan and we will continue to do so.

For these reasons, in the discussions on the implementation of CD's Programme of Work, Pakistan has proceeded on the basis of principles to ensure that deliberations on the four core issues are meaningful and are taken forward in a manner that is conducive to assuring substantive outcomes on all core issues. We have sought to address our concerns by constructively engaging with the President and other members of the CD and will continue to do so.

For us, as for many other delegations, substance and procedure are inseparable, since issues of substance and procedure are inextricably interlinked. This principle was clearly established when the CD's rules of procedure were formulated in 1979. Hence, it follows that the rule of consensus must be applied on both issues of procedure and substance.

The four core issues on the CD agenda are all crucial to the disarmament agenda and global peace and security. The demand for balanced progress on all the four issues is not an extraneous negotiating link but normative, legal and substantive correlation established freely, voluntarily and collectively. Our position is based on principles espoused by the international community.
Mr. President,

The objectives of international peace and stability can be achieved only by a non-selective and non-discriminatory approach in addressing the sensitive and substantive issues. Pakistan has always believed in equal and undiminished security of all states. Security is indivisible. Asymmetries in the levels of security need to be addressed at all levels: sub-regional, regional and global.

Mr. President,

It is the right of every delegation in the CD to have its concerns reflected in any decision adopted. And, it is for CD member states to discuss these amendments in open-ended, informal consultations. The issues on the CD agenda are relevant to the collective as well as individual security interests of all states. Therefore, all states should have an equal voice and should be able to exercise their right to have their concerns addressed.

Pakistan will continue to exert every effort to build consensus or at least an understanding of the necessity for measures to adopt goals that we all espouse.

Mr. President,

As a measure to our flexibility and constructive approach, Pakistan accepted most of the amendments proposed by the previous President and responded by putting forward a minimum request to reflect our views in revised sub-paragraph d of the chapeau as originally drafted and circulated by the previous President. Allow me to read for the benefit of all member states the text of our revised sub-paragraph d. It reads: The Conference will ensure, without any discrimination, balanced outcomes in the consideration of all agenda items, particularly the four core issues, while recognizing the principle of undiminished security for all.

From the discussions that we have held with a number of delegations we understand that this formulation is acceptable to several of them. Unfortunately, our revised text as I have just read out, has not yet been formally shared with all delegations and no effort has been made so far to determine whether and which delegations have any objection to this formulation.

Mr. President,

One delegation stated in the previous plenary that outcomes could not be predicted. Our response to this contention is that in CD/1864 the chapeau clearly outlines the possibility of negotiations on all core issues. The CD therefore being a negotiating forum must ensure outcomes that would balance the interest of all member states.
Moreover, paragraph 29 of the final document of SSOD1 reads as: 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. At each stage the objective should be undiminished security at the lowest possible level of armaments and military forces.

Clearly, Mr. President, the formulation we have used is not our invention but based on principles that have been clearly accepted by the international community.

Moreover, Mr. President, another delegation has claimed that national security does not exist in isolation and could not be invoked to undermine or affect that for others. I would respectfully like to point out that my delegation has repeatedly called for recognition of the principle of equal and undiminished security for all states. I think this clearly speaks for itself.

Mr. President,

Great impatience has also been expressed over the loss of eight weeks time since adoption of CD/1864. Perhaps these colleagues could attempt to revive the same level of patience that they demonstrated over the past twelve years when the CD had been in a state of stalemate due to the policies of some delegations owning to which there was no consensus on the programme of work.

Mr. President,

Allow me to conclude by reiterating the willingness of my delegation to seek consensus even at this late stage. We have, in a spirit of flexibility and compromise, accepted several of the amendments proposed to us. We have a right to ask for similar flexibility from others. The absence of such flexibility can only lead us to the conclusion that our concerns which we have tried to address, are justified.

I thank you, Mr. President.