



PAKISTAN

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**STATEMENT BY
H.E. MR. RIAZ H. KHOKHAR
FOREIGN SECRETARY
TO THE
CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT**

22 MAY 2003

Madam President,

It is a privilege to address the Conference on Disarmament under your Presidency. You represent a country known for its principled and forthright positions on arms control and disarmament issues, undeterred by the considerable unease this often causes amongst Ireland's closest friends and allies. I assure you of the fullest cooperation and support of Pakistan to any initiative which seeks to advance the consensus priorities in disarmament.

Madam President,

2. The immobility of the Conference on Disarmament is disconcerting but not entirely surprising. This Conference is impelled by global dynamics. It is part of an international system that itself is undergoing serious metamorphosis. Disarmament, non-proliferation and security are an integral part of this process.

3. Pakistan's interest in the effectiveness of the CD is not academic or peripheral. While it is an international forum to negotiate arms control and disarmament agreements of a global nature, the regional impact and importance of such instruments for South Asia has always been crucial. The Chemical Weapons Convention- a major achievement of this Conference, unearthed a clandestine chemical weapons programme in our neighbourhood. The CTBT could have prevented nuclear testing in South Asia in 1998 had one regional country not blocked its adoption in the CD. Similarly, there is a general expectation that the future fissile materials treaty is likely to have an important effect on nuclear developments in South Asia.

4. What happens in this forum, therefore, has a direct bearing on Pakistan's security. We have a vital stake in CD's success because equitable arms control and disarmament is good for our region besides being good for the world. My presence here today is meant to underline our support for this important body and its objectives of promoting multilateral disarmament and international security. We have always been and will continue to be an active and dependable Member of this unique forum.

Madam President,

5. As nation-states, we have come a long way from the 1648 Peace of Westphalia. Still, true and lasting peace continues to elude the human race. No international system, whether based on the concept of balance of power,

bipolarity or unipolarism has been able to suppress the impulse for war. Conflict, forever lingers in the background of interstate relations. War, in the words of an insightful commentator remains the "the greatest unresolved riddle in politics."

6. War needs no argument or documentation to prove its horrors. Its growing lethality has made it unspeakably ruinous. It extinguishes innocent life, destroys the fruits of long years of endeavour and causes economic retrenchment. Above all it endangers the freedom of everyone.

7. In this age of nuclear and sophisticated conventional weapons, war imperils man's very existence on this planet. Had he lived today, a wise man like Clausewitz might not have defined war as "nothing but a continuation of politics by other means." War may still be an option for achieving political goals. But it is now fraught with untold horror and destruction irrespective of it being symmetrical or asymmetrical.

8. It took centuries of sustained commitment and painstaking exertion to build the present edifice of International Law based on justice and equity. Admittedly legal norms evolve to reflect the particularities of each epoch. Their continuous development is inevitable. Nevertheless, wrapping trite and dangerous security notions and doctrines of the past in new jargon and their indiscriminate application will pull us back into the times of anarchy. Chaos is in no one's interest.

9. It is true that the Charter of the United Nations is not the finality in good behaviour. But neither is it an ordinary document. It encapsulates the accumulated resolve of the international community, steeled in the cauldron of deadly conflict, to avert its scourge for all times. It beckons us to conduct ourselves in peace in order to avoid the sadness of war.

10. The United Nations is a sui generis institution. It has proved its relevance even in situations of marginalization. Its founding vision and the principles which underpin it, must be preserved.

11. Pakistan, as a current member of the Security Council would continue to play its modest role in upholding International Law and its continual evolution in the right direction. We will also spare no effort towards making the UN the central determinant of inter-state behaviour.

12. It is encouraging to see that the relevance of the CD for international peace and security remains unchallenged. Its role in negotiating arms control and disarmament instruments continues to be underlined by the international community.
13. The Conference is the sole multilateral forum mandated to negotiate and conclude, on the basis of consensus, legally binding arms control and disarmament instruments. It symbolizes multilateralism based on the notion of interdependence. Security is a relative phenomenon. It cannot be achieved in abstraction. The CD contributes to the maintenance of peace at the minimum level of armament on the basis of undiminished security for all. The fate of nations is more fully entwined than ever before. There is no escape from the reality or the virtue of multilateralism. Interstate relations must return to its fold.
14. Pakistan is deeply concerned at the continuing gridlock in the Conference. An idle CD is in no one's interest. If we fail to move decisively towards arms control and disarmament now, this task will become more difficult tomorrow as we muster new technologies and conquer distant frontiers in space. We should not place ourselves in an irretrievable situation. Viable security is unachievable except through cooperation and accommodation, that is, through credible multilateralism.
15. We must not let the spirit of collective action dissipate. It should be preserved to address new challenges and threats that are capable of wreaking unacceptable devastation. New security challenges do not diminish the overriding necessity of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all aspects. They reinforce these objectives. There cannot be an enduring condemnation of weapons of mass destruction by some but not others who themselves choose to retain these for perpetuity and even affirm a right to use them.
16. Lately, it has become de rigueur to look at the entire disarmament process solely through the prism of terrorism. Such an approach, in our view, is fraught with risks. Disarmament and non-proliferation are necessary not just to address new threats stemming from terrorism, but for the more vital goal of maintaining peace and promoting security among States.
17. The issues of nuclear disarmament, outer space, negative security assurances and a fissile material treaty, cannot be put on the back burner. These remain of considerable significance for international peace. Substantive

work on these and other issues should begin in the CD without further delay within the framework of a balanced and comprehensive work programme. For this purpose, Pakistan will continue to play an active and constructive role.

Madam President,

18. There are some issues that are conspicuously missing from the CD agenda, notwithstanding their undeniable importance to global security. For instance, the issue of missiles and conventional arms control at the regional and sub-regional levels. Pakistan has proposed that these two items be given due consideration by the Conference.

19. All of us agree that the proliferation of missiles in all its aspects is destabilizing. Yet, for inexplicable reasons, some of us resist to address this issue comprehensively and non-discriminatingly, in accordance with the established United Nations rules of transparency and consensus.

20. The initiatives so far taken on the issue of missiles lack the stamp of universality. In the case of ICOC even its proponents see it as just the first step. The Conference should address this issue comprehensively on the basis of the established principle of undiminished security for all States.

21. Another issue, which we believe to be of utmost importance to international peace and security is "Conventional arms control at the regional and sub-regional level". Interminable arms races, especially in the tension-ridden regions of the Middle East and South Asia, are not only impeding the peaceful resolutions of disputes, but also undermining their socio-economic efforts.

22. It is the legitimate right of States to acquire the means to protect their independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. The right of self-defense is enshrined in the United Nations Charter. But this right is not without limitations. Self-defense should not aim to render others defenseless. It must be defined and shaped by prevalent international norms and legitimate security requirements. Predominance should not be its goal. Military acquisitions fuelled by this ambition spawn ruinous arms races to the detriment of peace, stability and economic advancement.

23. The principle of undiminished security at the lowest possible level of armaments and military forces offers the best framework for developing binding guidelines for States, taking into account the peculiar security

result oriented measures for arms restraint and promotion of security in our region". (Unquote)

27. We wish our region to be identified not as a dangerous place but one where the two nuclear neighbours can indeed coexist as responsible nuclear states. There are several measures which Pakistan is prepared to discuss and reach agreement on. Both Pakistan and India are observing a moratorium on nuclear testing. This can be formalised. An agreement on non-deployment of nuclear weapons based on agreed definitions will be a major factor for stability.

28. A formal agreement to notify each other of ballistic missile tests, would constitute an important confidence building measure. A conventional military balance in South Asia is critical to prevent the use of force which could escalate unpredictably. The recent military stand-off in South Asia has effectively debunked the falsehood of nuclear sabre rattling by Pakistan. Our conventional means of defence were sufficient deterrence.

29. In preserving this conventional balance a major responsibility rests with states which are large exporters of conventional weapons. Most of them are ardent supporters of non-proliferation. They also subscribe to prescriptions calling for non-transfers of weapons to regions of tension. Yet there is a pattern of these words not matching deeds. Already there are forecasts of conventional weapons transfers to our neighbourhood which could seriously erode the conventional balance and generate instability and insecurity. Transfers of anti-missile systems, airborne early warning capabilities and major naval capabilities including nuclear propulsion craft will be viewed by Pakistan with utmost seriousness and we will be obliged to take counter measures. We believe that an arms race in our region is avoidable and unnecessary and those who wish to see South Asia emerge as a peaceful and prosperous region will underscore their goodwill through prudent decisions as regards transfers of destabilising weapons systems.

30. South Asia needs a new architecture of security based on agreed tenets. This must, in the minimum, include the following: -

- a. Foreswearance of the use or the threat of force in settling disputes.
- b. Full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all States of the region.

- c. A permanent mechanism for bilateral dialogue and consultations for disputed settlement.
- d. Initiation of result oriented talks for devising mutually acceptable confidence building measures in the nuclear field.
- e. Stabilization of conventional forces at levels consonant with the legitimate security needs of all States of the region.
- f. Renewed commitment to jointly combat the true enemy of South Asia i.e. poverty, hunger, illiteracy and disease.

31. It is now time that the history of South Asia, checkered by mistrust and division, should take a new course. Immediate agreement to act on these general principles could constitute the starting point of this new beginning.

Madam President,

32. Pakistan's nuclear capability is purely for self-defense and the consequence of singular historic and strategic factors. The experience of South Asia need not be replicated in other parts of the world. We, therefore, firmly share the international community's commitment to non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Pakistan's commitment to non-proliferation is a result of its own conviction and manifest in its actions. We are a party to both the BWC and CWC and are stringently adhering to the obligations assumed under the two treaties. Our nuclear assets are under a strict physical protection regime and elaborate custodial controls. A rigorous security and monitoring system rules out any danger of transfers of sensitive materials, equipment, technology or information. With a blanket prohibition against any exports whatsoever, our export controls go even beyond the standards of supplier control regimes.

Madam President,

33. Itself a victim of terrorism Pakistan is actively cooperating with the international community to combat this scourge. We have taken a number of far-reaching concrete measures, which have been widely acknowledged.

34. Pursuant to Security Council resolutions, Pakistan has developed a legal and practical mechanism to effectively ~~halt~~ financial and other support to

terrorist organizations and groups. Several sectarian and extremist groups have been banned and their assets frozen. Pakistan has signed or ratified eleven out of the twelve anti-terrorism instruments. We have also signed the OIC Convention on Combating Terrorism. This clearly reflects our commitment against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.

35. While our resolve to fight terrorism without exception is unflinching. We will oppose, with equal determination, any attempt that seek to belittle the principle of self-determination, as enshrined in the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The struggle for self-determination is neither unlawful nor terrorism. On the contrary, the international community is duty bound to support this just and legitimate cause. Foreign occupation is inimical to a world, which cherishes freedom. The major powers bear a special responsibility in rising about political and commercial expediencies, to restore dignity to those who remain deprived of it.

36. In our region the denial of the right of self-determination to the people of Jammu and Kashmir remains an acute source of tension. It is indeed the underlying cause of the South Asian dilemma. In a nuclear environment the continuation of this dispute rightly worries everyone. The goal of achieving true and lasting peace in our region will remain elusive unless this dispute is resolved in a just manner in accordance with the wishes of the people of Kashmir.

37. Prime Minister Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, soon after assuming office last year, reiterated Pakistan's sincere desire to resolve the Jammu and Kashmir dispute through negotiations, inviting India to respond positively to our call for the commencement of a sustained and meaningful dialogue on all outstanding bilateral issues. The recent initiatives between the two countries including are encouraging. It was important to break the ice accumulated over the last 18 months.

38. The decision to restore diplomatic relations at the level of High Commissioners and communication links to their normal levels is a step in the right direction. Pakistan is ready to commence a new journey, which will finally break the shackles of mistrust and malevolence, which have marred our bilateral relations for the past several decades. War and conflict should not be the fate of the people of South Asia. The bounty of peace must be preferred to the insanity of war.

Madam President,

39. Let me conclude with the earnest hope that this forum will not fail to make its own contribution to the achievement of this objective globally. We would not like to believe that its current state of remission is a permanent one. The issues, which it is mandated to resolve, are real, serious and urgent. Their effective redressal requires multilaterally negotiated universal norms, which would not materialize without the full and continuous engagement of this forum. We are confident that accelerated effort in this direction, despite the current impediments, would eventually restore its vibrancy, which had in the past accounted for the formulation of valuable legislation in the vital areas of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation.

Thank you, Madam President.