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**Statement by Ambassador Farukh Amil,
Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations
and Other International Organizations in Geneva**

At the General Debate of the First Committee

72nd Session of the UN General Assembly

(10 October 2017)

Mr. Chairman,

I congratulate you and other members of the Bureau on the assumption of your offices. You can rest assured of my delegation's full cooperation. We also thank the Secretariat for their support.

Mr. Chairman,

The international security situation is deteriorating. Mistrust between states is growing. Old disputes continue to fester while new conflicts are on the rise. The quality and quantity of armaments is steadily increasing. More sophisticated and deadly weapons are being regularly developed and deployed. An insatiable desire for military domination by a few countries is affecting strategic stability at the global and regional levels. Discrimination and double standards are putting the non-proliferation regime under a great deal of stress.

Outside of any formal military alliances, Pakistan has had to take steps to ensure its security. We, however, remain open towards any bilateral or multilateral initiative on arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament that is equitable and results in undiminished security for all the concerned states. Our conduct continues to be defined by restraint and responsibility, and the avoidance of an arms race.

Following Pakistan's long-standing tradition of bilateral engagement on strategic issues, and undeterred by the lack of a favourable response, our Prime Minister in his address to the UNGA last year, expressed Pakistan's readiness to agree on a bilateral arrangement in South Asia on a nuclear test ban. The proposal was guided by our commitment to the principles of non-proliferation, with the aim of maintaining regional peace and stability. We renew our commitment towards this proposal.

Our proposal for a strategic restraint regime in South Asia based on reciprocal measures for nuclear and missile restraint and instituting a balance between conventional forces, also remains on the table. Peace and stability is our objective.

Mr. Chairman,

The growing dissatisfaction with inactivity of the UN disarmament machinery due to the lack of progress on nuclear disarmament is reaching a tipping point.

The self-serving attempt by some states to divert attention from the non-fulfilment of their nuclear disarmament obligations, by proposing additional non-proliferation measures – that are completely cost-free for them, but carry huge implications for other states' security – is no longer going to work.

On the other end of the spectrum lies another divisive approach that trivializes security considerations and excludes them altogether by banning nuclear weapons on humanitarian and ethical grounds. While we understand the sense of frustration that propelled this initiative, and empathize with its supporters, the fact is that nuclear weapons cannot be eliminated without addressing the concerns of States that rely on them for their security.

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 enshrined in the SSOD-I Final Document.

Pakistan remains committed to the conclusion of a universal, non-discriminatory and verifiable, comprehensive nuclear weapons convention in the CD. Pakistan also supports the commencement of negotiations in the CD on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space and Negative Security Assurances, as well as on contemporary issues such as chemical and biological terrorism, lethal autonomous weapon systems (LAWS), and cyber weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

While progress on nuclear disarmament remains deadlocked, the relentless pursuit of selective and cost-free non-proliferation measures persists. After failing to develop consensus on a genuinely equitable and non-discriminatory treaty on fissile material in the CD, attempts are being made to force progress on this issue outside the CD.

The proponents of such approaches need to accept the reality that major differences continue to exist on the very objectives and scope of

the treaty, based on fundamental security concerns, which cannot be wished away by creative drafting and need to be tackled upfront. Pakistan did not accept the conclusions and recommendations produced by the ill-advised GGE on FMCT in 2015. Nor will we accept any recommendations that might emanate from the so-called High Level FMCT Expert Preparatory Group.

The substantive work on a fissile material treaty must be undertaken in the CD on the basis of a universally accepted mandate that explicitly addresses the asymmetries in existing fissile material stocks and genuinely contributes to nuclear disarmament. Pakistan's detailed proposal in this regard remains on the table. We need to reconsider the negative effects on the treaty's prospects generated by the misguided exercise of double standards, manifest in the conclusion of discriminatory bilateral civil nuclear cooperation agreements, the grant of inequitable waivers, and the continued pursuit of the creation of additional country-specific exceptions in multilateral export control regimes.

Mr. Chairman,

Progress on CD related issues can neither be achieved by changing the format or forum, nor by imposing solutions that exclude major stakeholders. The challenges to arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament need to be tackled on the basis of certain fundamental requirements, which have been elaborated in my detailed statement available on paper smart.

Mr. Chairman,

Pakistan has positioned itself as a mainstream partner in the international non-proliferation regime and the global efforts to strengthen nuclear security and safety and strategic export controls.

Pakistan was an active participant in the Nuclear Security Summit process and has fulfilled all requirements of Security Council resolution 1540. We hosted an international workshop on UNSCR 1540 in Islamabad earlier this year, and will be hosting another one on the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) of which Pakistan remains an active member.

Pakistan meets the international standards for gaining 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 (NSG). We expect that NSG's membership will be expanded in a non-discriminatory manner.

Mr. Chairman,

Pakistan is 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 was proud to have presided over the Fifth Review Conference of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) last year which resulted in a robust and forward looking outcome document.

I shall address these issues in detail during the forthcoming thematic debates.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.