

**Statement by Ambassador Munir Akram, Permanent Representative of
Pakistan to the United Nations, at the UNDC Substantive Session
10 April, 2007**

Mr. Chairman,

The Pakistan delegation is pleased to see you preside over the second year of the Commission's substantive session. My delegation also extends felicitations to the members of the Bureau and to the chairs of the two Working Groups. We assure our full support and cooperation to you and the chairs of the two Groups.

2. We associate ourselves with the statement by Indonesia, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Mr. Chairman,

3. As we all know, the Disarmament Commission was created at the first Special Session on Disarmament (SSOD-I) to serve as a forum for all UN member states to "deliberate" on major disarmament issues. The concept was that the Commission could identify the issues and, if possible, to prepare the ground for multilateral disarmament negotiations.

4. Some may say that the Commission has not lived up to its potential role; but then this is so for the rest of the United Nations' disarmament machinery. And this is not a failure of disarmament machinery; it is a failure of political will to advance on the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda.

Mr. Chairman,

5. The impasse reflects the political reality. The consensus on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation has virtually broken down. The most visible and recent manifestations of this breakdown were the absence of any agreement on disarmament at the 2005 UN Summit, the absence of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament, and the absence of outcome at the 2005 NPT Review Conference.

6. The consensus on disarmament and non-proliferation has broken down, over time due to several negative developments:

One, none of the five Nuclear Weapons States appears ready to forswear nuclear weapons;

Two, some nuclear weapon states are seeking to develop new nuclear weapons, contravening their commitments and increasing the danger of the use of nuclear weapons;

Three, the CTBT which was supposed to be a central pillar for advancement of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation has no realistic prospect of coming

into force any time soon. If nuclear weapons are developed, resumed nuclear testing cannot be ruled out;

Four, the 3 Nuclear Weapon States, outside the NPT, are also proceeding with the development and deployment of nuclear weapons systems;

Five, a fourth State having left the NPT, has demonstrated its nuclear explosives capability;

Six, in this climate of eroding consensus, over 20 States possess technological capability to develop nuclear weapons within weeks or a few months;

Seven, other states have recently expressed new interest in nuclear technology. Some nuclear programmes of NPT States Parties are viewed with concern and suspicion;

Eight, large stockpiles of fissile material exist in varying degrees of State control in many countries, including NWS and the three ex-NPT States and NPT Parties;

Nine, there is growing fear that non-state actors and terrorist organizations may develop the organizational skills to steal, if not produce, fissile materials for use in a “dirty bomb”;

Ten, the discriminatory application of non-proliferation norms, eroding the diminishing commitment by States to these norms;

Eleven, the demonstrated failure of coercion (and even military intervention) as a tool to counter proliferation;

Twelve, the failure to take account of the underlying security preoccupation of States has propelled proliferation;

Thirteen, the accentuation of the asymmetries between the major powers and smaller States (e.g. through (i) development of ABM systems at tactical, theatre and, soon at the strategic level; (ii) steady militarization of Outer Space often in the guise of peaceful development; in fact space technologies are being integrated into strategic doctrines; and (iii) build-up of conventional forces by major powers) has reduced the disincentives against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and increased the incentives for threatened States to acquire nuclear or other WMD capabilities.

7. With the growth in number of States possessing nuclear weapons, rising regional tensions and reliance on doctrines justifying “battlefield” use of nuclear weapons; and the on-going development of “useable” weapons; the erosion of nuclear security assurances to non-nuclear weapon states and, with growing power asymmetries, the danger of the use of nuclear weapons today is as high as at any time during the Cold War.

Mr. Chairman,

8. It is in the above rather grim context that the Disarmament Commission could and should seek to reverse, if not halt, some of the negative trends. While recognizing that consensus building will be a difficult task, let me try to attempt an identification of some of the issues which the Commission could closely consider with a view to evolving a new consensus on disarmament and non-proliferation.

Mr. Chairman,

9. In evolving a new approach, we must start from a basic premise i.e. recognition of the right to equal security for all States. The Declaration of SSOD-I adopted the principle of “equal security” for all States, both in the non-conventional and conventional fields and at regional as well as international level.

10. Second, in our interdependent world, equal security for States can only be promoted collectively and multilaterally, not through national means, or within restricted groups, no matter how powerful.

11. Third, we must address the motives and compulsion, which drive States to acquire weapons of mass destruction. These motives include perceived threats from superior conventional or non-conventional forces; the existence of disputes and conflicts with more powerful States; and discrimination in the application of international norms and laws.

12. Fourth, it is in the long term interest of the nuclear weapon States to demonstrate a renewed commitment to achieve nuclear disarmament within a reasonable timeframe. Without this commitment, the NPT “bargain” will continue to erode. In any case, with large inventories of conventional weapons and no disputes between them, the possession of large arsenals of nuclear weapons is not essential for the major powers. The eventual objective must be the total elimination of nuclear weapons within the context of an invigorated collective security system.

13. Fifth, we need to evolve an agreed approach for the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy under appropriate international safeguards, in accordance with the international obligations of States and on a non-discriminatory basis. The advances in technology as well as an improved IAEA inspections regime have made it possible to promote “proliferation resistant” nuclear energy. However, in building a new inspections regime, it would be vital to ensure that it is applied equitably, both to nuclear and non-nuclear weapons states, in accordance with their obligations.

14. Sixth, until nuclear disarmament is achieved, non-nuclear weapon states should have the assurances that they will not be threatened with the use of nuclear or even conventional weapons. The security assurances offered by nuclear weapons states need to be translated into a universal, unconditional and legally binding treaty. At the same time, nuclear weapons States need to commit that they would not develop and deploy

“new” and “useable” nuclear weapons which will increase the nuclear threat and set off a new nuclear arms race.

15. Seventh, steps are needed to establish a stable and balanced security environment in sensitive regions such as South Asia, Middle East and North East Asia. This will involve: a) adequate nuclear restraints and non-proliferation measures; b) a stable conventional balance; and c) the resolution of underlying security problems and threats.

16. Eighth, all States must commit themselves to implement agreed measures to prevent non-state actors from acquiring WMDs and their means of delivery. UNSC resolution 1540 was a first and urgent step. It is important that the resolution as well as the restricted regimes such as the MTCR and NSG are universalized through elaboration of appropriate treaties.

17. Ninth, it is important to normalize the relationship of the three non-NPT States with the non-proliferation regime and secure their support for a re-vitalized regime. Reality and legality should be reconciled. Again, such normalization cannot be achieved by multiplying discrimination and double standards.

Mr. Chairman,

18. We hope that the Commission is enabled to reconcile and reverse the trends outlined above and would begin to evolve a new security consensus that addresses the issues of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in a balanced manner. A good example of building such a multilateral consensus has been demonstrated last year in Geneva when the Sixth Review Conference of the BTWC succeeded in agreeing on a substantive outcome, under the Presidency of Pakistan. We are equally confident that this Commission could also replicate the BTWC example in the nuclear area.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.
