



Statement by Ambassador Munir Akram,
Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN
At High-Level Plenary Meeting to Commemorate and Promote
the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear
Weapons (26 September 2022)

Mr. President,

Let me at the outset thank you for convening today's High-Level meeting to commemorate and promote the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.

2. We also extend our gratitude to the Secretary-General and President of the General Assembly for their remarks.

3. It is unfortunate that despite the global challenges of the Covid pandemic, rising poverty and an existential climate crisis, we are witnessing renewed great power rivalry; proliferating conflicts; including a major war in Europe; new and expanding military blocs; a new and comprehensive arms race; erosion of long-standing arms control agreements; the development and deployment of huge arsenals of advanced conventional and strategic weapons; and doctrines which envisage the use of conventional weapons despite the danger of the use of nuclear weapons.

4. Under the weight of these developments, the world security and disarmament regimes are in danger of collapse. The danger of nuclear war is today closer than it has been since the Cuban missile crisis.

5. International efforts to achieve the goal of a nuclear-weapon (NW) free world face unprecedented challenges today. The largest nuclear powers have failed to fulfill their disarmament obligations. The global consensus on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation visibly has eroded.

6. This commemoration serves as a poignant reminder of the urgency of building a consensus to cooperatively advance the goal of nuclear disarmament and comprehensive international and regional security.

Mr. President,

7. Pakistan remains committed to the goal of a nuclear weapons free world, achieved in a universal, verifiable and non-discriminatory manner, which assures undiminished security for all States, at the lowest possible level of armaments, as agreed by SSOD-I.

8. Nuclear disarmament needs to be pursued in a comprehensive and holistic manner, addressing regional and global challenges, and conventional and non-conventional asymmetries.

9. To this end, it is essential to recognize and address the key motivations that drive States to possess nuclear weapons. These include (i) nuclear and conventional threats from larger military forces; (ii) the existence of disputes and the failure of the UN to implement its own resolutions to resolve such

disputes; (iii) the failure of the UN's collective security system to deter aggression, foreign intervention and the unilateral use of force; and (iv) discrimination in the application of international norms for arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.

Mr. President,

10. Despite continuing provocations and threats, Pakistan remains committed to the goal of a peaceful and stable South Asia. Over two decades, Pakistan proposed a number of initiatives to promote peace and security and prevent the emergence of nuclear weapons in South Asia. Unfortunately, none of our proposals elicited a positive response.

11. In South Asia, nuclear weapons capability was introduced by one state in 1974. That state also initiated the South Asia nuclear weapons explosions in 1998. Pakistan was compelled to follow suit in order to restore strategic stability and deter the aggression with which Pakistan was threatened immediately after our neighbor's nuclear weapons explosions of 11th May 1998.

12. Following the South Asia nuclear tests, Pakistan proposed the establishment of a Strategic Restraint Regime (SRR) in South Asia. The SRR is premised on three interlocking and mutually reinforcing elements of conflict resolution, nuclear and missile restraint and conventional arms balance. The proposal remains on the table. Pakistan's security policy continues to be defined by restraint and responsibility and avoidance of a mutually debilitating arms race in our region.

Mr. President,

13. Pakistan strongly supports all international efforts that seek to promote fair and equitable solutions to disarmament and non-proliferation challenges. Meaningful progress on nuclear disarmament can only be achieved by:

- Fulfillment of their obligations by the leading nuclear weapon States;
- Resisting global or regional dominance by any state or group of states;
- Addressing the threats to peace and security;
- Resolving outstanding regional conflicts;
- Building structures of regional stability;
- Avoiding military blocs; and
- Ensuring equal security for all States.

14. Discriminatory approaches, double standards and selectivity in the application of global norms not only weaken global disarmament efforts; they also undermine the non-proliferation regime and the international order based on the principles of the UN Charter and International Law.

I thank you.