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The Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the United Nations in New York presents its compliments to the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs in New York and with reference to the latter’s Note No.ODA/2021-00071/CAC dated 17 February 2021, has the honour to attach our views on the resolution 75/50 entitled “Conventional Arms control at the regional and sub regional levels”.

The Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, the assurances of its highest consideration.

New York, the 2nd June 2021

United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)
(Office of the High Representative)
New York

Attention:

i) Ms. Jenny Fuchs (fuchs@un.org)
ii) Ms. Maria T. Santos-Puma (santos-puma@un.org)
Pakistan’s views on
“Conventional Arms control at the regional and sub regional levels”

The resolution was first introduced by Pakistan in 1993 (resolution 48/75 J) as an effort to draw lessons from the success of the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty and apply it in the South Asian context.

2. The resolution recognizes the crucial role of conventional arms control in promoting regional and international peace and security; notes that balance in the preservation of defense capabilities of States at the lower level of armaments contributes to peace and stability and should be a prime objective of conventional arms control; notes with interest initiatives taken in various parts of the world, particularly the CFE Treaty in Europe, which is a cornerstone of European security.

3. In its operative paragraphs, the resolution requests the CD to consider the formulation of principles that can serve as a framework for regional agreements on conventional arms control.

4. Elaboration of these principles should include interalia:

- Guidelines on arms transfer with particular reference to regional strategic stability.
- Identification of destabilizing weapon systems and emerging technologies.
- Guidance on CBM’s on force postures, avoidance of arms race and optimal force ratios at minimum level of armaments.
- Guidelines on use of parallel processes for dispute resolution to strengthen the arms control objectives.
- Facilitate understanding between regional players on practical elements for possible regional arms control arrangements.
- Linkages between conventional and strategic stability and prospects for nuclear disarmament.

5. Pakistan believes that the destabilizing effects of conventional weapons on security and stability at the regional and sub-regional levels as well as their catastrophic humanitarian toll underscore the need for continued action aimed at controlling these weapons. There is a need of a comprehensive and equitable approach, which takes into account the priorities and security interests of all States and not give way to a destabilizing conventional imbalance. Disarmament measures should be based on the principle of undiminished security of the
parties with a view to promoting or enhancing stability at a lower military level, taking into account the need of all states to protect their security.

6. The UN General Assembly in its first Special Session on Disarmament (SSOD-I) in 1978 had agreed that “together with negotiations on nuclear disarmament measures, negotiations should be carried out on the balanced reduction of armed forces and of conventional armaments, based on the principle of undiminished security of the parties” and “these negotiations should be conducted with particular emphasis on armed forces and conventional weapons of nuclear-weapon States and other military significant countries”. The SSOD-I had also called for “negotiations on the limitation of international transfer of conventional weapons, based in particular on the same principle, and taking into account the inalienable right to self-determination”. In line with the SSOD-I’s recognition of inextricable link between stability at conventional and strategic level, the issue of conventional arms needs to be dealt together with nuclear disarmament. Creating a conducive environment for nuclear disarmament will require assessing security dynamics in various regions and the prevailing conventional imbalances.

7. Pakistan remains concerned over the growing transfers of conventional armaments especially in volatile regions that are inconsistent with the imperatives of maintaining peace, security and stability. This has the potential of fuelling instability and jeopardizing the delicate regional balance. The situation is rendered more complex due to the presence of longstanding disputes and stalled political dialogue, which hinders the realization of the goal of durable peace in our region. Pakistan, for its part, is committed to the establishment of a strategic restraint regime in South Asia, which includes an element of conventional force balance.

8. United Nations should make use of all its available mechanisms i.e. good offices, mediation, facilitation and dialogue processes to play an active role in resolving regional and sub regional conflicts that actually fuel arms race between countries. Effective parallel use of conflict resolution mechanisms would give an important boost to fulfill the objectives of this resolution.

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