



PAKISTAN

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

8 EAST 65th STREET – NEW YORK, NY 10021 – (212) 879-8600

**Statement by
Ambassador Tehmina Janjua
Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the
United Nations in Geneva
and Conference on Disarmament
at the
First Committee Thematic Debate on
Outer Space (Disarmament Aspects)**

New York
23 October 2015

Statement by Ambassador Tehmina Janjua,
Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, Geneva
and Conference on Disarmament
during the Thematic Debate of the First Committee on
Outer Space (Disarmament Aspects)
(23 October 2015)

Chairperson,

Pakistan aligns itself with the NAM statement made under this cluster.

For over three decades, the international community has continued to make efforts to avert weaponization of outer space.

The Final document of SSOD-I contains more than 30 paragraphs that speak to the dangers, and urgency of preventing an arms race in its various aspects. Paragraph 80 of this document specifically recommended undertaking appropriate international negotiations on prevention of an arms race in outer space.

The Conference on Disarmament has long been seized of this issue. And the General Assembly has recognized, for over two decades, that prevention of an arms race in outer space would avert a grave danger to international peace and security.

Chairperson,

Space is no longer considered an exclusive preserve of a few developed States. Today developing countries are tapping into space technology in diverse areas ranging from meteorology and disaster management to economy and telecommunications. Their reliance on space technology will grow further in the years to come.

But this time, the developing countries will neither carry the burden of non-proliferation, nor will they accept any discriminatory restrictions which hamper their peaceful pursuits in outer space. The only answer is equal responsibility.

There is a growing use of outer space by many States, both for civilian and military purposes, enhancing the potential and risk of its weaponization.

The development and deployment of ABM systems and their integration into space assets has added a worrying dimension to the issues relating to outer space. An arms race in and weaponization of outer space would not only endanger its peaceful uses but also aggravate the intensity of conflicts on earth, with potentially disastrous consequences for international peace and security.

It is therefore an urgent imperative for the international community to preclude the possibility of weaponizing outer space, now. Further delay will be counter-productive. Let us avoid the mistakes made in the case of chemical weapons which witnessed decades of production before the CWC was concluded.

Chairperson,

The rapid growth and change in space technologies has widened gaps in the existing international regime pertaining to Outer Space, including the Outer Space Treaty of 1967 and the Moon Treaty of 1984. While the Outer Space Treaty prohibits placement of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction in outer space, it is silent on deployment of other types of weapons including conventional weapons. These gaps need to be filled by a new legal instrument.

It is against this backdrop that Pakistan has consistently opposed weaponization of outer space and called for negotiations in the CD on this contemporary issue of interest and concern.

There is a considerable body of existing knowledge on PAROS. Much work has already been done in the CD by the Ad-Hoc Committees on this subject from 1985 to 1992. Moreover, the draft text commonly known as PPWT, tabled jointly by Russian Federation and China in 2008, and updated in 2014, also provides a useful basis to commence negotiations. We, therefore, see no impediment in starting negotiations on such an important issue for international peace and security.

Chairperson,

Despite the growing dangers of weaponization in outer space and its attendant repercussions for international peace and security, some states continue to oppose commencement of negotiations on this issue in the CD. There can be no other explanation for such opposition except that these States seek to protect their monopoly on this technology and maintain their “full spectrum dominance”.

On the other hand, there has been a growing lament expressed over the CD’s deadlock in the past five years. Some States have found it convenient to attribute this stalemate to one of the four core issues on the CD’s agenda. Facts speak for themselves. And one inconvenient fact is that the CD, despite overwhelming support for negotiating a legal instrument on PAROS, has been prevented by a handful States from doing so.

The international community must therefore ask for a clear expression of the underlying reasons that oblige these States to oppose negotiations on PAROS. We have not heard a convincing case from these States as to how negotiations on PAROS would negatively affect their security interests. In any case, these states should acknowledge their responsibility in perpetuating the CD’s deadlock.

Chairperson,

Aside from efforts directed at PAROS and TCBMs in Outer Space, the ABMs systems' although inherently destabilizing and of dubious effectiveness at present; can have wide-ranging implications for regional as well as international security and stability. Therefore, it is essential to redouble efforts in evolving comprehensive, universal and non-discriminatory agreement that addresses concerns arising from development, deployment and proliferation of ABM systems.

Even though Pakistan did not have the opportunity to be part of the UN Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Transparency and Confidence Building Measures (TCBMs) in Outer Space, we take note of its consensus report and recommendations. We agree that TCBMs should be aimed at increasing the security, safety and sustainability of outer space. We particularly welcome the GGE's recommendation to further develop international cooperation between space-faring and non-space-faring nations in the peaceful uses of outer space for the benefit of all States.

We recognize the value of TCBMs as well as non-legally binding Codes of Conduct in promoting trust among states. While we see value in such efforts, we also believe that such initiatives should be pursued in an inclusive, universal and participatory manner, taking into account the security interests of all States. However, these voluntary measures cannot be a substitute for legally binding treaty based obligations.

Thank you Chairperson