

STATEMENT BY MR. JAISHED HARKER, LEADER OF PAKISTAN
DELEGATION TO THE COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT - 14.8.1979

Mr. Chairman,

At this last meeting of the 1979 session of the Committee on Disarmament, the Pakistan Delegation would wish to add a few supplementary remarks to the statement made on behalf of the Group of 21 -- a statement with which, needless to say, my delegation concurs fully.

Mr. Chairman,

It was the hope of the world community, following the special session on Disarmament, that the agreement reached on a specific Programme of Action and priorities for disarmament, together with establishment of new and more representative disarmament machinery, would lead to rapid progress towards the objectives of disarmament. The first session of the Committee on Disarmament is coming to an end and stock must be taken whether our hopes and expectations were real or illusory. I think no one will argue that the results of the 1979 session of the Committee on Disarmament are certainly less than the objective requirement of halting and reversing the global arms race. Our discussions and negotiations this year have not led to the dismantling of any weapons, or to reduction in military budgets, or de-escalation in the tensions and conflicts which plague many parts of the world. But, perhaps the harsh reality of this judgement is related less to the vigour of our efforts in this Committee, and more to the grave problems of security and insecurity which pre-occupy States today. If the Committee has been unable to achieve concrete results on the major items of its agenda, this is not due to the lack of negotiating machinery or because of technical difficulties; it is perhaps primarily due to the absence of sufficient political determination, on the part of most governments, and especially the major powers, to take the first bold steps towards the goal of disarmament.

As far as the work of the Committee is concerned, I believe that there were several positive developments during the current year. Among these, the Pakistan delegation considers the adoption of the rules of procedures and the agenda of this Committee as important pioneering work. Certainly, the record would show that the more representative character of the Committee has enriched its deliberations; and greater democracy in its procedures, as compared with

its predecessor body, has also contributed to more effective methods of work. I think it would be appropriate to reiterate, at this point of time, that if the CD is to fulfil its unique responsibilities as the single multilateral negotiating body, every State member must be enabled to participate in its work on a basis of equality, and its rules and practices must be applied equally to all States members.

Mr. Chairman,

The Committee has worked very actively during its first session. The pace of its meetings, the depth of its discussions and the interest and wide participation of members are encouraging signs of the great interest in disarmament negotiations and the priority attached to the functions of this body, by our respective Governments.

At the same time, Mr. Chairman, I do not think that we can claim that the CD has achieved any major breakthrough in disarmament negotiations. Two items were referred for this body for priority negotiations: the comprehensive test ban and a CW convention. On neither of these matters have substantive negotiations been initiated. The sequence of events on these items are outlined in the Group of 21 statement and I need not repeat it here. But, I think, it is clear that the Committee's work at this session will be judged largely by the progress, or lack of progress, on these priority issues. It is, therefore, unfortunate that we could not move further towards elaborating the conventions either on the nuclear test ban or on the prohibition of chemical weapons. It is not without significance, of course, that these two items are also subject to separate negotiations by two or three States outside this forum.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation considers the progress made on the question of security assurances to non-nuclear States as the major substantive achievement of the first session of the Committee on Disarmament. The main conclusion of these deliberations is that an international convention to assure non-nuclear weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is necessary and feasible. The Committee has agreed that there is no objection in principle to such a convention. Of course a common formula for security assurances must be devised, and this can be done through further negotiations within the Committee. In approaching this task, the premise should not be that while the security of the major nuclear powers, and even their minor preoccupations,

should receive full reflection, the security concerns of non-nuclear States, particularly the countries of the third world, are of marginal importance. The need for security against the nuclear threat arises from the possession of nuclear weapons by the nuclear powers. Until these weapons are eliminated, the nuclear powers have an obligation to assure the non-nuclear States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Nor should this question be approached merely as another device for non-proliferation; rather, it should be conceived in the larger context of international peace and security and promotion of the goal of nuclear disarmament.

Mr. Chairman,

Our discussions on nuclear disarmament were of interest, and helped to clarify the different approaches to this question. It is unfortunate that we were unable to reach more concrete conclusions on this subject, especially as regards the primary role of this Committee in negotiations on nuclear disarmament, and on the various elements that will have to be covered in such negotiations. Pakistan continues to believe that nuclear disarmament will be a step by step process, and that in this process the contribution of each nuclear power will be determined by the level and sophistication of its nuclear arsenals. We also concur with the view that nuclear disarmament must be achieved in a balanced manner, without prejudicing the security of any State.

It is axiomatic that disarmament is the most serious and most complex form of negotiations that has ever been undertaken, and that the purpose upon which we are now engaged is of historic importance. We appreciate that the task of the super powers has been rendered immeasurably more difficult by the onerous responsibilities of national and international security with which they are obliged to concern themselves, and by the enormous complexity and sophistication of modern armaments. But, in turn, we hope that they too will appreciate that our concerns are not motivated by a mere desire to meddle in their bilateral or trilateral efforts, but by an acute and compelling realization of the brutal fact of our vulnerability. Bilateral failure in this field carries multilateral consequence of the most horrific proportions which is why we believe that meaningful progress in nuclear disarmament is unlikely so long as security is perceived in terms of narrow mathematical equations of defensive and offensive potential. The SALT II agreement, and the debate which it has evoked, demonstrates the difficulty of establishing an understanding of what constitutes

an equitable balance of power, or, as some would say, a balance of terror. We have been told that to expect more rapid progress in the complex task of nuclear disarmament is unreal or utopian; but can it be contested that with each day's delay this process becomes more and more complex as additional and more terrible systems of arms are developed to maintain a tenuous balance of power between major nuclear States. Let us not wait until this task becomes completely beyond the capacity of the international community to control. As Alexander Heren once said, "we are not the doctors, we are the disease". This is a sombre reflection which my delegation, at least, will keep in mind as we conduct our future negotiations on disarmament.

The work of the Committee on Disarmament for the current year will be considered by the forthcoming session of the United Nations General Assembly. The deliberations in the Assembly, which will take place in a different atmosphere and in a broader framework, will provide an opportunity to consolidate the achievements of the Committee and to renew efforts to overcome the difficulties which we have encountered. We hope, therefore, that the General Assembly will give indepth consideration to the work of this Committee and adopt considered and far-reaching recommendations for our future work.

As for the continuation of the negotiations in this body next year, we can but hope that we shall be able to devote greater time to substantive negotiations on various issues, particularly on those items which have been repeatedly accorded priority by the international community. If we are to be successful in achieving real and substantive progress on these major issues on our agenda, it is necessary that those powers which have special responsibilities in the field of disarmament, should repose increased confidence in the negotiations in this body. The Committee is not a clearing house for agreements worked out in more restricted forums; it is the principal multilateral body, and must be involved actively in the work on disarmament problems at each stage of their negotiation. Equally implicit, of course, is the need for all the other member States to display the requisite realism and appreciation of the difficulties. Unless this new approach, and greater pragmatism as well as democracy in our procedures guide our work, the CD may well regress into a forum for sterile debate and disputation. It is the responsibility of all member States to ensure against such a possibility. It is a responsibility

which is imposed because of our membership in this body, and by the interests of our peoples and of all the peoples of the world who desire to live in a climate of genuine peace and real security.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I would like to express the sincere thanks of my delegation to yourself and your distinguished predecessors for the very skilful manner in which you have guided the deliberations of our Committee, and to the distinguished Secretary and the Secretariat of the Committee, as well as our superb interpreters for the able manner in which they have carried out their demanding task.