



# PAKISTAN

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## STATEMENT BY

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SECOND SECRETARY**

at the

**Plenary Meeting of the  
Conference on Disarmament (CD)**

**Devoted to Discussions on  
Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS)**

**Geneva,  
9 March 2015**

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Mr. President,

We are pleased with this opportunity to hold focussed discussions in the CD on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS). With the ever growing use of outer space by an increasing number of states both for civilian and military purposes, the potential and the risk of its weaponization cannot be ruled out. There is an urgent need to address this issue in the CD in order to prevent outer space from emerging as the new realm of conflict and arms race.

The issue of PAROS has been on the CD's agenda for over three decades now. In our view, it is ripe for the commencement of negotiations on a legally binding treaty.

The draft Treaty on the Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space, the Threat or Use of Force against Outer Space Objects, commonly known as PPWT, tabled jointly by the Russian Federation and China in 2008, and updated in 2014, provides a useful basis for the commencement of negotiations in the CD. We welcome the circulation of the revised treaty text by China and Russia last year, contained in document CD/1985, and consider it a substantive and concrete contribution for advancing the work of the CD on this agenda item.

The dominance enjoyed by certain countries in outer space owing to their current technological prowess cannot last forever. Other countries are catching up fast. And 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.

Mr. President,

Pakistan is party to all of the five core multilateral treaties governing the peaceful uses of outer space, including the 1967 Outer Space Treaty; the 1968 Rescue Agreement; the 1972 Liability Convention; the 1975 Registration Convention; and the 1979 Moon Agreement. We stand ready to explore additional treaties that would contribute to preventing the weaponization of outer space.

Pakistan is a member of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UN COPUOS). COPUOS has an important role in maximizing the benefits of space capabilities in the service of humanity, particularly in the fields of environment, health and disaster mitigation. Pakistan has developed a strategy for the effective application of space-based technologies for sustainable development through its 'Space Vision 2040'. Space-based solutions for planning and development projects are being developed and implemented in the areas of agriculture, water resources, disaster management and mitigation.

Mr President,

The Outer Space Treaty of 1967 recognized that the exploration and use of outer space shall be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all countries and shall be the province of all humanity, i.e. our common heritage. The treaty prohibits the placement of nuclear weapons and other WMDs in outer space, but is silent on the placement of other types of weapons including conventional weapons in outer space. Moreover, the development and deployment of Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) systems and their integration into space assets has added another dangerous dimension to this issue. These concerns need to be addressed in a treaty on PAROS.

My delegation is keen to understand from those states that are opposed to the commencement of negotiations in the CD, the reasons for their opposition and how negotiations on PAROS would negatively affect their security interests, and why the contentious issues like definitions and verification etc. cannot be addressed during negotiations, as advocated by them on another issue. In any case, these states should acknowledge their responsibility in perpetuating the CD's deadlock by preventing the start of negotiations on an issue which does not undermine the security interests of any state.

Mr President,

We take note of the consensus report and recommendations of the UN Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Transparency and Confidence Building Measures (TCBMs) in Outer Space. 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. However, these voluntary measures cannot be a substitute for legally binding treaty based obligations. There are clear gaps in the international legal regime governing the use of outer space with security implications. These gaps must be plugged by concluding a treaty on PAROS in the CD.

Mr President,

The informal discussions on PAROS that were held last year in the CD under the Schedule of Activities were of great value in understanding the different perspectives and issues related to PAROS. In our view, the arguments that we heard against the commencement of negotiations on PAROS in the CD did not relate to the national security concerns of states. It reinforced our view that none of the contentious issues is insurmountable, or that cannot be resolved during negotiations.

Mr President,

The United Nations General Assembly resolution 69/30, titled Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, was co-sponsored by Pakistan and adopted on 2 December 2014 with an overwhelming majority of 178 states in favour, zero abstentions and only 2 against. It calls on the CD to "establish a working group under its agenda item entitled Prevention of an arms race in outer space as early as possible during its 2015 session".

The UN General Assembly also adopted another important and landmark resolution co-sponsored by Pakistan at its last session titled "No First Placement of Weapons in Outer Space". This resolution "urges early start of substantive work based on the updated draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects submitted by China and the Russian Federation at the Conference on Disarmament". We welcome the laudable and pioneering move by the Russian Federation to announce the political commitment that it would not be the first to place weapons in outer space, and appreciate similar announcements by other states.

To conclude, Mr. President, we sincerely hope that the CD would be able to undertake substantive work on the issue of PAROS during the current session under a comprehensive and balanced programme of work that also allows for progress on nuclear disarmament and negative security assurances.

I thank you.

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