"Our Common Agenda"

Pakistan's Comments on New Agenda for Peace

The United Nations Secretary-General's report entitled **"Our Common Agenda"** *inter alia*, focuses on the growing risks to peace and security that the world confronts today and presents "a new agenda for peace" [in paragraphs 88-101] that aims to promote peace and prevent conflicts and focuses on six core areas: (i) Reducing strategic risks; (ii) Strengthening international foresight and capacities to identify and adapt to new peace and security risks; (iii) Reshaping our responses to all forms of violence; (iv) Investing in prevention and peace building; (v) Supporting regional prevention; and (vi) Putting women and girls at the centre of security policy.

2.   The report also discusses the peaceful and sustainable use of outer space; improving digital cooperation; restoring confidence in public information; and upholding human rights.

3.   Pakistan's views on all these significant issues, views and comments are as follows:

4.   The current threats to peace and security include (a) violation of principles of the UN Charter (use and threat of use of force, foreign occupation and intervention, suppression of self-determination); (b) great power rivalries; (c) proliferation of arms and weapons (complex arms buildup, and disinformation etc.); (d) festering conflicts and unresolved

disputes; (e) terrorism and extremism; (f) poverty, injustice, rise of intolerance based on religion, race, ethnicity, hate speech and suppression of minorities; (g) environmental/'climate impacts'; (h) new domains of security competition and conflict (Oceans, space, cyber); (i) cross-boundary water disputes; and (j) transnational organized crime.

5. It is essential to analyze these threats and build the required political and institutional responses to address them.

I. **Ensuring adherence to the principles of the UN Charter, UNSC resolutions and international law**

6. To build durable peace and security, it is essential to ensure consistent and universal respect for the central principles of the UN Charter and other tenets of international law by all Member States irrespective of their size, power or influence. This can be achieved only when states, large and small, act responsibly, adhere to the principles of UN Charter in letter and spirit, and are held accountable for the violations of these central principles or non-implementation of their legal obligations.

7. To this end, the first step should be the preparation of an international review (by the UN Secretary-General) of situations, especially those on the Agenda of the Security Council, where actions and policies of States violate or are inconsistent with: a) the purposes and principles of the UN Charter: b) the resolutions and decisions of the UN Security Council; or c) the established international laws, including international humanitarian law.

8.   Such violations, in specific regions and issues, should be considered systematically and without exceptions, in open sessions of the Security Council and, when this is not possible, in the UN General Assembly, or one of its Committee's or subsidiary bodies, with the objective of recommending measures to redress the violations and promote full implementations of their international obligations by the concerned Member States.

9.   The measures to promote adherence could include: (i) demand by the Security Council or the General Assembly for implementation of their resolutions; (ii) censure for non-adherence; (iii) political and economic penalties; (iv) incentives for adherence; (v) offers of mediation and other cooperation, including under Chapters VI and VIII of the Charter; (vi) the creation of specific/new modalities by the Security Council, the General Assembly or the Secretary-General to promote adherence (Peace Commissions, Special Envoys, peacekeeping missions, references for adjudication by the ICJ or ad hoc judicial mechanisms).

II.   Reducing International Tensions

10.   Tensions and competition between States, especially the major military and economic powers, has been rising over the past decade with manifestations of military, political and economic rivalry in various regions, and areas. A major conflict is underway in Europe and tensions have escalated in several parts of Asia. These tensions are manifested also in trade, technology, financial and in other restrictions and conscious efforts to reduce cross national interdependence and cooperation. Some States are seeking to exploit major powers' rivalries to

enhance their own clout and to advance their own political/hegemonic agenda in their respective regions. Such trends imperil regional peace and stability. The large majority of States have suffered from the direct and indirect impacts of these tensions and differences, including the food, fuel and finance crises confronting many developing countries. These tensions have also impeded the ability of the Security Council to address a number of issues on its agenda. They have also constrained international cooperation on global challenges such as climate change, achievement of Agenda 2030, the SDGs, non-proliferation and terrorism.

11.   While inter-state competition and rivalry is a reality, it is essential to: a) prevent another major conflict between major military powers, especially in a "nuclearized" environment; b) promote the international cooperation that is essential to address global threats and challenges; c) avert negative consequences on the security and development of "third countries", specially developing countries, which are not a party to the great power rivalries and military blocs and alliances.

12.   To this end, the international community, acting through the United Nations and regional and other forums, can/should promote a series of measures, such as:

(i)   An annual UN "Global Security Report" identifying the major current or potential threats to international peace and security and proposals for actions to address, prevent and forestall such threats, including urgent consultations among the parties concerned; urgent meetings of the Secretary

Council General and /or General Assembly; offer of "good offices" by the Secretary General or other countries;

(ii) A U.N. "early warning system" including satellite monitoring of significant military deployments and movements;

(iii) Negotiation of a collective commitment by all States, especially the "militarily significant States" to: (a) the non-use or threat of use of force, in accordance with Article 51 of the UN Charter; (b) non-interference and non-intervention in the internal affairs of States in accordance with Article 2(4) of the Charter; (c) implementation of the decisions of the Security Council in accordance with Article 25 of the Charter; (d) transparency in military deployments (land, sea, air and space); and (e) disavowal of participation in aggressive military alliances and deployments which threaten other States.

(iv) A proactive role by the Secretary-General, the Security Council and/or the General Assembly *inter-alia* to demand dialogue and consultations and oppose the use or threat of use of force by parties involved in such situations.

(v) The utilization of ad-hoc mechanisms composed of high-level personalities to promote the easing of tensions in situations which may pose a threat to international peace and security.

III.   **Promoting Arms Control and Disarmament**

13.   The entire edifice of arms control and disarmament, as well as non-proliferation, has been undermined by the rising global tensions, the accompanying arms race, the wider reliance of States on military means to advance their national security and the application of double standards and discrimination in the arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation processes. It is time to revive these arms control processes as a principal means to enhance global security and "equal security for all states". The measures to achieve this could include the following:

(i)   The negotiations of a "new consensus" on global arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation which reaffirms and elaborates the principles and recommendations adopted at SSOD-I, including:

(a)   equal security for all States;

(b)   national security at the lowest possible level of armaments;

(c)   regional arms/military balance;

(d)   disavowal of dangerous military doctrines;

(e)   elimination of discrimination and double standards in arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.

This new consensus could be negotiated by the Disarmament Commission or at a Special Session of the General Assembly.

(ii)   Recommending the Conference on Disarmament negotiate treaties or internationally binding instruments on Nuclear Disarmament, Negative Security Assurances and Outer Space;

(iii)   Establishment of special negotiating mechanisms to formulate treaties to maintain peace and security on the Oceans and Cyber;

(iv)   Conclusion by the OEWG on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communications Technologies of international rules on cyber security that reflect the will and interests of the majority of countries in fostering a peaceful, secure, open and cooperative cyberspace.

(v)   Negotiation of Agreements on the control of Lethal Autonomous Weapons and military use of artificial intelligence in special bodies reporting to the UN General Assembly (UNIDIR should issue periodic reports on the development and implications of such weapons);

(vi)   Negotiations for the maintenance of arms balance and security on a regional basis in special regional forums set up by the General Assembly, including for the creation of Zones of Peace;

(vii)   Further prohibitions and restrictions on the deployment and use of new weapons and technologies, which can cause mass

civilian causalities and indiscriminate damage, or suffering through negotiations in designated bodies;

(viii) The issuance of an Annual Report by the UN (Office for Disarmament Affairs) on global and regional military expenditures, the arms trade and military deployments;

(ix) Negotiations on a new global compacts on international trade and exchanges in and access to technologies, materials and equipment for peaceful purposes, based on the principles of universality, equity and non-discrimination.

IV. <u>Settlement of Disputes</u>

14. The Security Council and the General Assembly should accord highest priority to the peaceful resolution of conflicts and disputes, especially those on the agenda of the Security Council, through dedicated discussion and the creation of specific modalities, including among the parties and/or at the regional level. These modalities may include: Special Envoys, Peace Commissions, Regional Forums, and high-level (HOS/HOG) platforms. All such efforts should address and seek to resolve the underlying causes of the disputes and conflicts and prevent their escalation or exacerbation. All such regional or other modalities should report to and be guided by the UNSC and the General Assembly.

15. Where the Security Council is unable to pursue such efforts, the General Assembly should assume this responsibility. The UN Secretary

General should exercise his considerable authority under the Charter, including under Article 99, to draw attention to and propose specific measures for the resolution of such conflicts and disputes.

16. For issues on the agenda of the Security Council, the mandate of the ICJ should be made mandatory to ensure objective and legally consistent application of UN Charter principles and implementation of UNSC resolutions and international laws.

17. The UN General Assembly should consider the establishment of a ""Council of Leaders", composed of current or former Heads of State or Government, to promote the peaceful settlement of disputes. The Council should be guided by and report to the UN General Assembly.

V.   International Terrorism

18. International efforts to eliminate terrorism have remained partial – focusing on one form of terrorism and kinetic approaches and failing to address others. Global efforts have fallen short of containing the spread of terrorism including the expansion of terrorist groups. Specifically, international efforts have failed to address (a) root causes of terrorism, including state terrorism and state-sponsored terrorism, (b) new and emerging forms of terrorism and (c) the emergence of right wing, extremist and fascist movements which resort to or foment terrorism.

19. The world's counter-terrorism architecture needs to be reoriented and redesigned to incorporate contemporary forms, manifestations and ideologies as well as groups, entities and organizations engaged in

terrorist activities." The UN General Assembly should adopt a comprehensive and more effective strategy to combat all forms of terrorism and take collective action without any double standards or discrimination and take the following steps:

(i) **First, address root causes of terrorism** - underlying causes of terrorism and "conditions conducive to terrorism" – injustice, poverty and hunger, foreign occupation and intervention, and suppression of legitimate rights of peoples to self-determination – should be taken into account in all counter terrorism efforts;

(ii) **Second, adopt a consensual definition of terrorism,** which makes a clear distinction between terrorism and legitimate struggles for national liberation and the right to self-determination;

(iii) **Third, adopt a comprehensive approach that takes into account new and emerging trends in terrorism** and addresses all the four pillars of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (GCTS), especially the protection of human rights while countering terrorism;

(iv) **Fourth, combat all forms of terrorism,** including (a) terrorism emanating from far-right, extremist and racist groups and ideologies, which incite violence against other communities; (b) state terrorism, especially to suppress the

right of peoples to self-determination and to perpetuate foreign occupation; (c) as well as state-sponsored terrorism;

(v)   **Fifth, strengthen and democratize the UN's counter-terrorism architecture** by establishing a Counter Terrorism Committee under the UN General Assembly to formulate a comprehensive CT strategy, oversee its implementation and report on progress to the UN General Assembly.

(vi)   **Sixth, the procedures of UN Security Council bodies** relating to counter-terrorism need to be made more transparent and fair.

VI. Underlying causes of Conflicts and Disputes, Terrorism and Violence

20.   The fundamental causes of conflicts, disputes and violence, including terrorism, are several and complex. These include: (a) poverty and hunger; (b) injustices against peoples and nations; (c) foreign occupation and intervention; and denial of the right to self-determination; (d) environmental degradation and consequent deprivation and conflict. These underlying causes need to be addressed urgently and vigorously through international cooperation, based on the UN Charter. Addressing the fundamental causes of conflicts, disputes and violence, including terrorism would also have a positive impact on the implementation of Agenda 2030 and the SDGs as well as the Paris Agreement and other environmental goals.

21.   To this end, the Peace Building Commission (PBC) should be entrusted with preparing an analysis of conflicts – situations which are the direct result of such underlying causes and propose appropriate ways and means to address these underlying causes, including the special measures required to address the issues of injustice and the suppression of the rights of peoples through denial of their right to self-determination and foreign occupation.

VII.   Reinforcing the United Nations and its Organs

22.   It is amply evident that the current and future threats to international peace and security can be addressed only through multilateral cooperation within the framework of the UN Charter and full adherence to its purposes and principles. The deficits in addressing these threats do not denote the failure of the UN or its organs so much as the failure of Member States to empower these organs and agree on collective and cooperative measures to address these threats.

23.   The "New Agenda for Peace" must adopt concrete measures to strengthen and reinforce the capacity of the UN and its organs to more effectively address these threats:

(i)   Security Council

24.   The Security Council should be more transparent, more representative, more accountable, more democratic and more effective through (a) equitable geographical expansion of 11 additional non-permanent elected seats; (b) greater transparency and accountability; (c)

restrictions on the use of the veto; and (d) improvements in its working methods, including pre-emptive actions to prevent and avert conflicts before they occur, and meet automatically, without a procedural decision, on any item which is already on its agenda.

(ii) General Assembly

25.   Since the General Assembly is the most representative organ of the United Nations, it is vital to utilize its true potential for a meaningful progress across the UN's three pillars. The General Assembly must respond to today's realities and develop the capacities to address the new and emerging challenges, including the new arms race, governance of "global commons", and assume the responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, whenever and wherever the Security Council is unable to discharge its functions under the Charter.

26.   The General Assembly should invite the Security Council to provide subject-oriented special reports on the issues of current international concern under the Article 24, Para 3 of the Charter.

(iii) Disarmament Machinery

27.   The UN's multilateral disarmament mechanisms (the C.D, D.C, and the First Committee) should be activated to fulfill their assigned functions of negotiating international disarmament treaties, and discussing arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation issues on the basis of the agreed principles and objectives, in particular the Declaration and Programme of Action of SSOD-I.

a) UN Conference on Disarmament

28.   The role of the CD as the "single multilateral disarmament-negotiating forum" is irreplaceable. The CD's agenda should be expanded to cover and formulate treaties on all weapons and security "domains" i.e. nuclear, conventional, chemical, biological, missiles, cyber, outer space, autonomous weapons and regional arms control and disarmament, according the highest priority to nuclear disarmament, negative security assurances and the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

b) UN Disarmament Commission

29.   The Disarmament Commission should be revived to play the role envisaged for it by SSOD-I i.e. to clarify and identify issues for the C.D to finalize multilateral disarmament negotiations and treaties taking into account recent developments in weapons, technologies and military capabilities.

c) A new special session of the General Assembly

30.   The 1978 SSOD-I remains the only available framework adopted by consensus governing the objectives and principles of disarmament and the multilateral disarmament machinery to achieve these objectives. This original consensus has been eroded by recent developments especially revived global arms race. It would be opportune for the General Assembly to convene another Special Session to revive the consensus and agree on the new agenda for comprehensive disarmament, arms control and non-

proliferation in a balanced and non-discriminatory manner, which responds to the security interests and objectives of all states.

d) UNIDIR and Secretary General's Advisory Board

31.   Two related bodies of the UN disarmament machinery are UNIDIR and Secretary General's Advisory Board. UNIDIR's autonomy and impartiality should be upheld and its funding be increased to enable it to fulfill its role of providing in-depth and long term research on disarmament issues, in particular nuclear disarmament. The Secretary General's Advisory Board should become more representative especially by inclusion of Members from the non-aligned and developing countries and adopt an inclusive and forward looking approach to global disarmament issues.

(iv)   Peace Building Commission

32.   As envisaged in its founding resolutions, the advisory and bridging role of the PBC should be strengthened to facilitate more informed decision-making by the Security Council, the General Assembly and ECOSOC through more extensive informal dialogues between the PBC, the Security Council, the Assembly and ECOSOC.

33.   In most peace-building situations, the economic and financial stabilization of the concerned country is vital. Peace-building and humanitarian support to distressed populations should not be nullified by sanctions and asset freezes which contradict or undermine the objectives of peacebuilding and security stabilizations or humanitarian assistance.

34. While it is important to mobilize additional resources for peace-building, it is also vital to utilize these resources in accordance with the needs and priorities identified by the country concerned. This was the founding principle of the PBC and must be preserved. Once identified, the needs of the conflict-affected country should be transformed into specific projects and the financial support mobilized for such projects from bilateral and multilateral sources, including the Peace-building Fund.

(v)   Peacekeeping Operations

35. Peacekeeping has been a UN "success story." It is most effective when it is part of an overall 'political strategy' to resolve conflicts and sustain peace. This strategy should embrace the entire peace continuum: From conflict prevention to conflict resolution through peacekeeping, mediation and peace-building processes.

36. The formulation of peacekeeping mandates should be a two-phase process to allow for consultation with the TCCs, for identification of the most appropriate troop contributors and for taking into account the "ground realities". Political, financial, and other considerations should not influence force generation and composition of UN peacekeeping missions. Sufficiently staffed and resourced missions are also the best guarantee for the safety and security of troops and personnel in the field. And, troop cost reimbursements should match the current financial indices.

37. UN peacekeeping is fundamentally different from peace enforcement or counter terrorism operations. Venturing into "grey zones" will erode the neutrality of UN peacekeepers and undermine its reputation and success, besides endangering the safety and security of peacekeepers.

38. The UN's efforts to enhance the effectiveness of peacekeeping missions must be supported with professional, well-trained and well-equipped peacekeepers and partnerships with troop and police contributing countries and with regional organizations

(vi) ICJ and Judicial bodies

39. The ICJ and judicial mechanism can play a critical role in the resolution of conflicts and disputes. The Court's jurisdiction should become mandatory on issues that are on the agenda of the Security Council. The General Assembly should promote inclusive dialogue on legal matters of global concerns.

(vii) CT Architecture

40. Under the umbrella of the UN, the following measures are recommended for enhancing and strengthening the capacity of the organization towards effectively countering the terrorism threat on a global scale:

   a. **The UNSC sanctions regime and listing processes** should be reformed and improved by (a) including provisions to list all terrorists, organizations and groups, (b) make the process

more transparent to all member states and (c) strengthen the office of the Ombudsperson.

b. **Establish a "Commission on the Elimination of All forms of Terrorism" (CEAT) as a subsidiary body of UNGA** to implement the UN's GCTS, with regulatory, review and reporting mechanisms.

c. **Ensure that UN reports, resolutions and communications avoid the use of phrases that are prejudiced** and display a biased approach. For example, words such as "Islamists", "Jihadi", "Islamic State" and "radical Islam" give rise to negative associations and must not be used by the United Nations documents.

VIII. <u>Disinformation</u>

41. Disinformation has emerged as instrument to foment destabilizations and disputes and complicates the challenge of promoting universal peace and security. It is essential to develop regulatory/ monitoring frameworks and conventions for social media platforms, internet providers and crypto currencies with legally binding instruments to filter and ban content that (a) propagates disinformation campaigns and conspiracy theories (b) incites violence, (c) spreads hate speech and xenophobia including Islamophobia and (d) facilitates online funds transfer to finance terrorism through the dark web.

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