

Have strong credentials to become Nuclear Suppliers Group member: Pak

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Washington: Pakistan today said it has "strong credentials" to become a member of the elite Nuclear Suppliers Group, arguing it has streamlined and strengthened its export control regime.

"Pakistan has strong credentials to become a member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group and other multilateral export control regimes, on non-discriminatory basis," Pakistan's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Syed Tariq Fatemi told the Nuclear Security Summit (NSS).

Over the years, Pakistan has streamlined and strengthened its export control regime and enhanced its engagement with multilateral export control regimes, Fatemi said in a statement.

He was representing his country in the two-day summit in the absence of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif who cancelled his US trip in the aftermath of the Lahore terror attack.

Pakistan laid its claim to be a responsible member of the global nuclear community unmindful of the fact that the international community is yet to recover from the dreaded A Q Khan network of nuclear proliferation.

The country has been lobbying hard to become a member of the NSG, the 48-member nuclear club, whose members can trade in and export nuclear technology.

NSG is a powerful multinational body concerned with reducing nuclear proliferation by controlling the export and re-transfer of materials that may be applicable to nuclear weapons development.

Pakistan has been saying that if it is deprived of NSG membership while India is accommodated, it would be taken as discrimination and lead to an imbalance in the region. Its National Command Authority has noted with concern India's rapidly expanding conventional military asymmetry and dangerous limited conventional war policy called the 'Cold Start' doctrine.

Fatemi, while describing Pakistan as a responsible nuclear state, also said his country takes nuclear security very seriously and accords it the highest priority in its security construct.

- PTI