

Pakistan ready for nuclear non-testing agreement with India, says Sartaj Aziz

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Islamabad: Pakistan today expressed its willingness to enter into a a bilateral moratorium with India on nuclear non-testing.

Sartaj Aziz

Sartaj Aziz, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's Advisor on Foreign Affairs, pointed out that that Pakistan had already declared a unilateral moratorium on further nuclear testing and offered to convert it into a bilateral agreement with India.

"We have declared a unilateral moratorium on further testing. Pakistan is prepared to consider translating its unilateral moratorium into a bilateral arrangement on non-testing with India," Aziz said.

Briefing the media about the Envoys' Conference held last week, Aziz said the meeting noted that Pakistan consistently supported the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and voted for it when it was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1996.

Noting that the conference held detailed talks on the Pakistan's application for the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and regional nuclear stability issue, Aziz said Pakistan is one of the applicants, along with India, for NSG membership.

"While Pakistan's formal application for NSG membership was submitted on May 19, 2016, we had been preparing for it for quite some time. Our efforts to upgrade our export controls, nuclear safety and security long pre-date our application," he said.

He said Pakistan's candidacy is based on a desire to strengthen global non-proliferation regimes; the need for strategic stability and level playing field in South Asia; priority for socio-economic development and technological advancement of the country; and capability to supply items on NSG lists Part 1 and 2.

- (With PTI inputs)