Mr. President,

After a long recess of three months due to Covid-19, the CD is finally resuming its meeting today. I am very pleased to return to the Palais des Nations and see all my colleagues again. May I express my sincere gratitude to you, to the P6+2, and the Secretariat for your efforts. You can count on the full support of my delegation in your endeavors. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your assumption of the Presidency of the CD, and warmly welcome the arrival of H.E. Ambassador Sabri BACHTOBJI of Tunisia, H.E. Ambassador LIM Sang-beom of the Republic of Korea, and H.E. Ambassador Federico VILLEGAS of Argentina, and look forward to working closely with them.

Mr. President,

The Covid-19 is the common enemy of mankind and is presenting a challenge to all countries of the world. In the face of the pandemic, should we place our faith on scientific rationality or on sowing political divisions? On mutual respect and learning from each other or on blaming others as a way to pass the buck? On enhanced international cooperation or on decoupling and isolation? On advancing multilateral coordination or on pursuing unilateralism? The choice made by each country about these questions will need to stand the test of history. The international
response to the pandemic has further underlined the critical importance of continued commitment to multilateralism, solidarity and cooperation, which remains the best guarantee to finally defeat the pandemic and to jointly build a community of shared future for mankind.

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought new challenges to the international political and security scene. Political viruses are generating shock waves to relations among major countries. A major power continues to withdraw from treaties on international security. The Space Force of that country has a new flag. In spite of all these, in a special year marking the 75th Anniversary of the UN and the 50th anniversary of the entry into force of NPT, the international community has come out in vast number to reaffirm their unwavering commitment to multilateralism and to the existing international arms control and non-proliferation regime. During the Covid-19 lockdown, our reflections and discussions continued online, focusing on topics like “post bi-lateral world” and “new era of arms control”. The course of history is made of single steps. The concept of “post bi-lateral world” should not write off the special responsibility and duty of the country with the largest nuclear arsenal in nuclear disarmament. Arms control in the new era must be built on trust and commitment, discarding Cold War mindset, and upholding common security. Major countries should respect each other, avoid conflicts and confrontations, enhance strategic trust as an important premise and guarantee in the international arms control process. No country should put its narrow interests “first” or become an “exception” to the multilateral arms control.

Mr. President,
In the global fight against the Covid-19 pandemic, China was the first to take decisive actions in line with its overriding desire to save people’s lives and has in the process China has suffered enormous losses and made big sacrifices. By actively supporting the WHO and engaging in extensive international assistance and cooperation, we have contributed significantly to safeguarding global security in public health and thus demonstrated our sense of responsibility towards multilateralism and international solidarity and cooperation.

At the same time, China has moved ahead with its contribution to advancing international arms control process. In this connection, I am pleased to inform the Conference that on June 20th, the National People’s Congress of China adopted a decision on acceding to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), signaling the completion of major domestic legal procedures for China to become a state party to the ATT soon. While a major power walks away, we deliver. This marks China’s contribution to the ATT in another major move to promote multilateralism and push forward the building of a community of shared future. It will have a very positive impact on boosting the universality and effectiveness of the ATT.

During the lockdown, I have kept my daily schedule in office by remaining in close contact with colleagues of all delegations and exchanging and coordinating views with them on activities in the CD, the UNGA First Committee, the NPT Review Conference and the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters. My team and I are looking forward to working pro-actively during the remaining annual session of the CD. We are ready to embark on frank and in-depth discussions with all delegations on outstanding issues such as the profound impact of the global political and security
situation on the international arms control process, the future prospect and orientation of the multilateral arms control, strategic stability and nuclear disarmament and the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The Chinese delegation is also ready to engage in substantive work with all parties on the above issues.

The outbreak of Covid-19 has also focused international attention on bio-security. On the one hand, disarmament teams in Geneva need to make full use of the institutional platform of BWC in order to strengthen the bio-security of all countries and the international cooperation in this field, as well as to strengthen the BWC institution, including negotiations to conclude its verification protocol. On the other hand, we also need to consider what role the CD can play to enhance bio-security. In this regard, the Russian draft for an international convention for the suppression of acts of chemical and biological terrorism merits a careful look by all delegations.

I hope the P6+2 will produce a comprehensive and balanced meeting schedule on the above-mentioned topics based on full consultations with all delegations, in order to allow the Conference to conduct its work in a smooth and systematic manner.

Thank you, Mr. President.