

Uphold Multilateralism to Promote Common Security

Remarks by H.E. Wang Yi

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At the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva

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Ambassador Salomon Eheth,

Secretary-General Tatiana Valovaya,

Representatives,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Conference on Disarmament (CD) represents humanity's shared aspiration to beat swords into ploughshares and achieve peaceful development. It has played an important role in the historical process of international arms control and disarmament, and made historic contribution to global peace and security. As the world is undergoing transformation and a pandemic both unseen in a century, the CD should stand up to the profound and complex changes in the global security landscape, and send out a clear message of its firm commitment to maintaining global strategic stability, advancing the international arms control process and defending

multilateralism.

Mr. President,

In his address at the World Economic Forum Virtual Event of the Davos Agenda last January, Chinese President Xi Jinping expressly called on the world “to let multilateralism light humanity’s way forward.” Multilateralism is the right way of the world, and all countries should stay on this path. They should pursue a new approach of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, and endeavor to advance the international arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation processes.

We need to strengthen cooperation for mutual benefit, promote peace and security through cooperation, stand firm against Cold War mentality and zero-sum games, and work to achieve security for all.

We need to uphold fairness and justice, strengthen the authority and effectiveness of the UN-centered multilateral disarmament mechanisms, reject exceptionalism and double standards, and work to achieve universal security.

We need to take a comprehensive approach to improve governance. We should address immediate prominent security challenges, and at the same time also take multi-pronged policies to remove potential threats, for the purpose of achieving sustainable security.

Mr. President,

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the restoration of the lawful seat of the People's Republic of China at the UN. Over the past five decades, China has fully participated in UN affairs, and made important contribution to global peace and development. Based on thousands of years of our history, we believe in the historic wisdom that a country seeking hegemony is bound to fall, rather than that a growing power should seek hegemony. China is firmly committed to the path of peaceful development, adheres to the independent foreign policy of peace, and pursues the defense policy that is defensive in nature.

China has the most stable, consistent and predictable nuclear policy among all nuclear-weapon States. Since the first day of possession of nuclear weapons, China has stood for the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons worldwide, and pledged not to use nuclear weapons first at any time or under any circumstances. China is committed to a policy of not using or threatening to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States and nuclear-weapon-free zones unconditionally. China never shirks its international obligations in the areas of disarmament and arms control. China always keeps its nuclear capabilities at the minimum level required for national security, and does not compete with any other country in the size or scale of nuclear force.

Mr. President,

Advancing international arms control, disarmament and

non-proliferation processes is an important means to preserve world peace and security. It is also a concrete step to uphold and strengthen multilateralism. As for how to advance these processes, I wish to share with you the following observations:

First, we need to work together to maintain global strategic stability.

Nuclear disarmament should be a just and reasonable process of gradual and balanced reduction. The two largest nuclear-weapon States should further slash their nuclear arsenals in a verifiable, irreversible and legally binding manner to create conditions for the multilateral nuclear disarmament process.

The P5 countries should reaffirm the important formula that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought, strengthen cooperation strategic risk reduction and other areas, and deepen strategic dialogue on a broader range of strategic security issues so as to enhance strategic trust.

More than 20 years have passed since China proposed the signing of a treaty on mutual no-first-use of nuclear weapons among the five nuclear-weapon States and presented the draft of the treaty. China will continue to work to this end. The CD should immediately start international legal instrument negotiations on the Negative Security Assurances and work for substantive progress at an earlier date.

China opposes the development and deployment of regional and global missile defense systems by a certain country that

undermine strategic stability, and China opposes the deployment of land-based intermediate range ballistic missiles by the same country in the neighborhood of other countries.

Second, we need to observe international arms control treaties.

The regime of the *Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons* is irreplaceable and carries special significance. State parties to the Treaty should advance the three pillars of nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation, and peaceful uses of nuclear energy in a balanced way, and revitalize the Treaty in the new era to expand its role in safeguarding world peace and security and serving sustainable global development.

The parties should support the building and functioning of the verification regime of the *Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty*, and continue to work for the early entry into force of the Treaty. All nuclear-weapon States should observe the moratorium on nuclear testing. The CD should continue to prepare for the negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty and make substantive efforts toward achieving the dual goals of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

China calls on countries concerned to earnestly fulfill their obligations under the *Chemical Weapons Convention* and complete the destruction of the chemical weapons stockpile and the abandoned chemical weapons as soon as possible.

China will take its accession to the *Arms Trade Treaty* as an

opportunity to engage more deeply in the global efforts to stop illicit transfer of conventional arms, and give its support to the Silencing the Guns initiative proposed by African countries.

Third, we need to resolve non-proliferation issues through negotiations.

The JCPOA, endorsed by the UN Security Council resolutions, is an important outcome of multilateral diplomacy and a key pillar of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and peace and stability in the Middle East. The unilateral bullying acts of the United States are the root cause of the Iranian nuclear issue. To return to the deal, lifting sanctions on Iran first is the natural thing to do. As the negotiations for the United States and Iran to resume compliance with the agreement are now in the final sprint, parties concerned need to make a political decision as quickly as possible and redouble diplomatic efforts to bring the JCPOA back on track.

China proposes to establish a multilateral dialogue platform for regional security in the Persian Gulf region and build step by step a framework for collective, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security in the Middle East. China supports building a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and stands ready to work toward that end.

No matter how the regional and international landscapes may change, China remains committed to upholding peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula, and resolving the issue

through dialogue and consultation. The parties concerned should follow a dual-track approach and take phased and synchronized actions to move toward the goals of complete denuclearization and the establishment of a permanent peace mechanism. China will continue to work with all parties to push for the political settlement of the issue and promote enduring peace and stability on the Peninsula.

Fourth, we need to improve global security governance in new frontiers.

There is a growing urgency to prevent the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space. China calls for the early launch of negotiations at the CD on a treaty to prevent arms race in outer space, and welcomes constructive input from all parties on the Draft Treaty on the Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space, the Threat or Use of Force against Outer Space Objects (PPWT) jointly proposed by China and Russia.

A cyberspace featuring openness, cooperation, peace and security is very important to all countries and the world as a whole. The *Global Initiative on Data Security* proposed by China aims to address the common concerns of all parties, and provides a constructive solution for protecting data and cyber security in the world. Several months ago, China and the League of Arab States (LAS) issued the *China-LAS Cooperation Initiative on Data Security*. It shows the shared aspiration of the two sides for maintaining cyber and data security. China stands

ready to work with all parties to formulate global rules on digital governance on the basis of the Global Initiative on Data Security.

The extensive application of artificial intelligence in the military field triggers security, legal, humanitarian and ethical concerns. China stands ready to discuss with all parties a global solution to the issue of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS).

Emerging technologies are double-edged swords. While making the best possible efforts to prevent weaponization of such technologies, we must also avoid obstructing their peaceful use and international cooperation. In particular, we must reject the attempt of a certain country to impose technology blockade under the pretext of national security. The United Nations needs to play a central role in this respect. China is considering proposing a draft resolution at this year's UN General Assembly to promote the launch of an inclusive, transparent and equitable international process at the United Nations to address the relationship between non-proliferation and peaceful uses in a more balanced way.

The COVID-19 pandemic highlights the new challenges of biosecurity governance facing the world. Countries need to build a security shield through closer international cooperation. China supports establishing a verification regime of the *Biological Weapons Convention*, and urges the United States to

stop being the only one that stands in the way of negotiations for a legally binding protocol on verification.

China advocates responsible research in bioscience. Not long ago, scientists from China and other countries developed the Tianjin Biosecurity Guidelines for Codes of Conduct for Scientists. We encourage all stakeholders to refer to the Guidelines on a voluntary basis and jointly advance relevant international discussions.

China supports Kazakh President Tokayev's proposal of setting up an International Agency for Biological Safety (IABS) and Russia's proposal of an International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Chemical and Biological Terrorism.

Mr. President,

The United Nations shoulders the important mission of safeguarding global peace and security. China highly commends the disarmament agenda proposed by Secretary-General Guterres, and will continue to contribute to its implementation.

As the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community, the CD needs to keep pace with the times and strive to be creative. Member states should strengthen coordination, accommodate each other's legitimate concerns, and formulate a comprehensive and balanced Programme of Work to start the substantive work at an early date. As a responsible member of the CD family, China stands ready to work with all parties to steadily advance international

arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation processes, and make new contribution to building a world that enjoys lasting peace and universal security.

Thank you, Mr. President.