STATEMENT BY H. E. MR. WANG QUN, AMBASSADOR FOR DISARMAMENT AFFAIRS OF CHINA, AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE 66TH SESSION OF UNGA

(New York, 7 October 2011)

Mr. Chairman,

I wish to begin by congratulating you on your election as chairman of the 66th Session of the UNGA First Committee. I am confident that, with your rich diplomatic experience and wisdom, the current session will be steered to a success. I wish to assure you and other delegations of the full cooperation by the Chinese Delegation.

Mr. Chairman,

The first decade of the 21st century has witnessed major development, major transformation and major adjustment.

During this decade, there have been profound and complex changes in the international security landscape. The global security issue has now become increasingly prominent. It not only extends to political, economic and financial fields as well as public health and energy, but also covers a wider spectrum, from outer space to such new frontiers as cyberspace and polar region.

During the past decade, the international community has also seen the ups and downs of the multilateral arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation cause. While the notion of "a nuclear-weapons-free world" has gained momentum, the attainment of such a goal remains a formidable task.

Mr. Chairman,

The first decade of the 21st century is now behind us. What has enlightened us is most thought-provoking: as the world today is moving towards multi-polarity with accelerated economic globalization and fast development of the information age, all members are
virtually in a state of unprecedented mutual dependence, with their interests intertwined; and the world has, subsequently, being turned into a “community of common destiny”, in which the members are closely interconnected.

No countries could, under the present new historical conditions, be immune from global challenges, nor could they be able to meet such challenges alone. To work together to overcome difficulties in pursuit of a win-win situation should thus be the cardinal principle guiding the present international relations.

In the coming decade, the international community should, from the new perspective of “the community of common destiny”, work together to meet the multiple security challenges confronting mankind by sharing weal and woe and in pursuit of a win-win situation. To this end, we should:

- champion a new thinking on security featuring mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and coordination, and work to pursue comprehensive security, common security and cooperative security;

- foster a peaceful and stable international environment and build a safer world for all.

- fully respect the legitimate security concern of all countries, and seek proper solutions through enhanced mutual trust and dialogue and consultation on an equal footing. Zero-sum game should be done away with, and to work to pursue a win-win situation through cooperation is the only choice before us;

- adhere to multilateralism, and maintain the collective security system with the United Nations at its core.

Mr. Chairman,

The international arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation process, as part and parcel of the endeavour of mankind in pursuing peace and development, is now at a critical juncture and calls for joint unremitting efforts of the entire international community.

I. We should further intensify international nuclear disarmament efforts and prevent the proliferation of WMD.

The complete and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons is the common goal of the international community. In 2012, we will start another round of the review process of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). States Parties should implement in earnest the Final Document of the Eighth NPT Review Conference.

Nuclear disarmament should follow the principle of global strategic stability and undiminished security for all. The Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) should be brought into force at an early date. Negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) should be activated at the Conference on Disarmament as early as possible. And an international legal instrument on negative security assurances should be negotiated and concluded. In addition, to attain the ultimate goal of complete and thorough nuclear disarmament, the
international community should develop, at an appropriate time, a viable long-term plan composed of phased actions, including the conclusion of a negotiated convention of the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons.

Nuclear non-proliferation constitutes an essential condition for the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons. China, for its part, wishes to see the early reactivation of the six-party talks on the nuclear issue on the Korea Peninsular, and the early resumption of the dialogue between Iran and E3+3.

Earnestly strengthening nuclear security is crucial to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and non-proliferation. China welcomes the UN High-Level Meeting on Safety and Security in September this year, and hopes that all parties continue to intensify international cooperation and carry out the activities of peaceful uses of nuclear energy on the prerequisite of ensuring nuclear safety.

China consistently supports the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, and commend the long-term and unremitting efforts by all parties concerned. It is our hope that the international conference scheduled next year on this issue will achieve positive outcome.

II. We should work to push forward the multilateral disarmament negotiations with the participation of all parties concerned through enhanced mutual trust and with right perception and methodology.

While the CD and other multilateral arms control and disarmament machineries are deadlocked, one may hear complaints from time to time. Some believe the CD has already been “paralyzed”, calling for reform of this body; some others have simply pushed to set up “new kitchens” and move the FMCT negotiations out of the CD.

China maintains that, to break the CD deadlock, the crux of the matter must be identified in the first place. For prescriptions to be effective, they have to be based on correct diagnosis. To climb a tree will not help catch fish, to make it worse, such an approach may only delay the process with the precious time lost.

The CD deadlock is, as born out, primarily attributable to political factors. So, what are earnestly called for are, firstly, enhanced political trust with pre-conceived political views put behind us; secondly, right perception and methodology, and thirdly, an objective-driven and purpose-driven approach before embarking on any exercise.

For multilateral arms control negotiations to be meaningful and relevant, the participation of all relevant parties is indispensable. It is even more the case on the FMCT. While it is true that it may be easy to conclude such a treaty outside the CD, but what is its relevance, especially how to achieve the objective of disarmament and non-proliferation in the absence of the participation of countries with the capability of producing fissile materials?

It’s easy peasy if one just like to indulge himself in complaints, nor is it difficult at all for the
FMCT to be moved out of the CD. Such approaches cannot, however, help solve the problem. A sense of historical responsibility is thus called for, especially at this juncture. We cannot "paralyze" our much needed efforts to convert retreat into advance due to unjustifiable fear.

Looking back the past year, while there is no "extraordinary" achievement registered, the CD has nevertheless engaged itself in its "mundane" task in a down-to-earth manner. All countries have translated their political will into the specific work of the Conference, and they have all come to the CD meetings, both formal and informal, in a serious and constructive manner.

From above, one will not fail to see their tenacious efforts and enterprising spirit to advance in the face of difficulties, which, I believe, has laid a sound basis for the Conference to reactivate its substantive work next year. This is not easy to come by and should thus be cherished.

There are more and more countries and personages with vision and insight have, after this year's thorough debate and discussion, come to realize that to negotiate the FMCT outside the CD is virtually a non-starter and will lead us to nowhere, as such an approach will not be able to bring on board all the necessary players, still less to ensure the prospective treaty's universalization and effectiveness.

The CD is thus the only viable forum to negotiate and conclude a FMCT with the participation of all relevant parties. All parties should now, on the basis of this year's effective work, zero in on how to further strengthen the CD with the objective of reactivating all CD's substantive work, including negotiation of a FMCT.

III. We should actively pursue a preventive diplomacy in prevention of cyber-space and outer space being turned into new battlefields.

The 21st century is an era of information. The increasingly wider application of information and cyber-space technologies has helped pick up the pace of development of human civilization. Meanwhile, the security threats on the front of information and cyber-space have constituted a grave challenge to the international community.

The pressing task before the international community now is how to, through formulation of international norms and rules, promote and guide States towards adoption of responsible behaviour in information and cyber-space, effective management of cyber-space and proper maintenance of cyber-space security and order, coupled with intensified international cooperation. China hopes that the international community will, by so doing, be able to effectively respond, in a concerted effort, to security threats in the political, economic and social fields brought about as a result of the application of information and cyber-space technologies. And the United Nations, we believe, is the most appropriate forum for deliberation and formulation of such international norms and rules on information and cyber-space security.

It is against this backdrop that China has joined Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan as co-sponsors and submitted a draft "International Code of Conduct on Information Security" to
the 66th session of the General Assembly. It is our hope that the international community will, on the basis of the above draft, enter into open, transparent and democratic deliberations, within the framework of the United Nations, with the objective of reaching early consensus on the relevant code of conduct, so as to safeguard the common interests of all parties in this field, and to ensure that information and cyberspace will be used to better promote international peace, security and stability as well as the well-being of mankind.

Outer space, given its global common nature, is the common wealth of mankind. So, to promote the peaceful uses of outer space in prevention of an arms race in outer space is in the interest of all mankind. China attaches importance to the Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures (TCBMs) in outer space and remains open to the relevant initiatives and their discussion. The Chinese side believes that TCBMs are not at adds at all with efforts to prevent an arms race in outer space, and such TCBMs are useful supplement to the legal instrument on prevention of weaponization of and an arms race in outer space. China, for its part, stands ready to join all other parties in in-depth deliberation of the relevant initiatives and related issues at the UN Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Outer Space TCBMs to be established next year.

IV. We should advance the arms control process in the fields of biological and conventional weapons through a step-by-step approach.

China attaches great importance to the Seventh Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) to be held in December this year. We will work together with all other parties to further strengthen the authority, effectiveness and universality of the BWC.

China also attaches major importance to the humanitarian concerns caused by cluster munitions, and supports the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) of Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) to reach a negotiated protocol on cluster munitions, which balances humanitarian concerns with legitimate security requirements. We appreciate the work of the GGE, especially the enormous efforts the Chairman of GGE have put into the draft protocol. And we hope that a protocol will be reached on the basis of the Chairman’s latest text.

China, for its part, also subscribes itself to international efforts to adopt proper measures to regulate relevant arms trade and combat illicit arms trafficking. The negotiation of the “Arms Trade Treaty” (ATT) should proceed step by step and in an open, transparent and consensual manner.

Mr. Chairman,

The Chinese Government has recently published its white paper on China’s Peaceful Development, and solemnly declared again to the world that China is committed to the path of peaceful development and endeavours to build a harmonious world of durable peace and common prosperity, and that to pursue peaceful development is a strategic choice it has made to realize modernization, make itself strong and prosperous, and contribute more to the progress of human civilization. The above declaration is not only the earnest aspiration of
China for a peaceful and stable international environment, but also represents China’s concrete action.

A more prosperous and harmonious world cannot be achieved in the absence of a peaceful and stable international environment.

China, for its part, will continue to work together with other members of the international community to further advance the international arms control and non-proliferation process and play a greater role in promoting world peace and development.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.