Statement by Ambassador WANG Qun, Director-General of the Arms Control Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China at the General Debate of the First Committee of the 72nd Session of UNGA
(New York, 6 October 2017)

Mr. Chairman,

Let me begin by congratulating you on your election to the Chairmanship of the First Committee of the current session of the General Assembly. I am confident that with your rich diplomatic experience and wisdom, the current session will be steered to a success. The Chinese delegation assures you and other delegations of its full cooperation.

Mr. Chairman,

Today's world is witnessing major developments as well as profound transformation and changes. In the historical trend of globalization, human society has increasingly become a close-knit community of shared future, with countries interdependent in security and interconnected in development. The rising forces for peace far outweigh the growth of factors for wars, while the trend of our times towards peace, development, cooperation and win-win outcomes are gaining ever stronger momentum.

Meanwhile, global security is confronted with new challenges. First, global strategic stability is under erosion. Certain big power has, in pursuit of its own absolute security, continued to increase its military expenditure with negative steps undermining global strategic stability. The lacunae in the rules and norms governing new frontiers such as cyberspace and outer space has given rise to complications, leaving the overall security landscape out of balance.

Second, the international non-proliferation regime is faced with
serious challenges. Certain country has continued with nuclear tests in defiance of international consensus; the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was pushed to a vote outside the framework of the Conference on Disarmament. Thus, the existing international non-proliferation regime with the NPT as its cornerstone suffered new buffets while already subjected to the negative effects of utilitarianism and double standards.

Third, geopolitics has made a strong return, interlinking and overlapping with non-traditional security problems. Regional hot-spot issues are escalating and traditional security threats like geographical conflicts have increasingly become the immediate causes that underlie non-traditional security threats such as terrorism and refugee crises while extremist ideologies and the proliferation of WMDs have added to the intensity of the conflicts.

Fourth, the technological revolution has produced new repercussions on international security. The risk of militarization of cyberspace is on the rise. The weaponization of new technologies such as artificial intelligence and hypersonics has further stimulated arms race. The threshold for non-state actors to acquire advanced weapons has been coming down.

Mr. Chairman,

The new security challenges and situation call for a new approach to security governance. We need to explore a feasible approach to enhance global security governance and safeguard world peace and security. Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed that all countries should pursue common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, set the goal of building a community of shared future for mankind and create together a new type of international relations underpinned by win-win cooperation. These proposals not only point the way for the strengthening of global security governance, but also provide a realistic, feasible and holistic programme for enhancing world peace and security. On this basis, I would like to further elaborate on China’s propositions from the perspectives of the goal, vision, principles and mechanisms as we see.

On the goal, we should shape a community of shared future for mankind, namely, build a world of enduring peace, universal security and common prosperity, and create a security architecture featuring fairness, justice, joint contribution and shared benefits. We should adhere to multilateralism rather than unilateralism. We should pursue a new thinking
of win-win and all-win progress, and abandon the old notion of zero-sum game and “winner takes all”. We should advocate defusing differences through consultation and settling disputes through dialogue.

On the vision, we should uphold the concept of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security. Common security calls for adhering to the basic principle of “undiminished security for all countries”, and respecting and accommodating the legitimate security concerns of every nation. Comprehensive security necessitates a holistic approach in handling the relations between traditional and emerging issues, and coordinated promotion of the international security, disarmament and non-proliferation process. Cooperative security means resolving differences and disputes through intensified international cooperation. Mutual trust between countries would be inevitably undermined by such practices as long-arm jurisdiction, willful sanctions and, worse, the threat of use of force. Sustainable security requires the forging of consensus to the maximum extent and the promotion of the process of international arms control and disarmament in a proactive, rational, practical and gradual manner. Only by so doing, can the process of international arms control and disarmament be steady and durable.

On the principles, we should abide by the rules and norms. We must effectively implement international law, including the NPT, the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC). We must safeguard the authority and effectiveness of the existing international arms control and non-proliferation regime. As the destabilizing factors and uncertainties in international security are on the increase, it is particularly important to hold this bottom line. All countries are equal before the rules. One should not “use the rules that suit oneself and forsake those that don’t”. Countries must not resort to double standards or selective application of rules, nor should they make exceptions or leave a gap to suit their own interest. On the other hand, in order to respond effectively to the new trends and demands in such new frontiers as cyberspace, outer space and artificial intelligence, and effectively cope with new challenges, we should develop new rules and norms that fit the need of our times.

On the mechanisms, we should adhere to multilateralism and improve the multi-tiered global security governance mechanism. First, we need to keep the framework for cooperation between big powers on an even keel. Efforts are needed to establish a new type of big power relations based on no conflict, no confrontation, mutual respect and win-win cooperation. Big powers should work to maintain strategic stability, strengthen
communication and coordination, and proactively manage their differences with the objective of achieving common security. Second, we must support the UN in playing the core role in the multilateral disarmament machinery. This year has witnessed positive outcomes in both the UN Disarmament Commission and the Open-ended Working Group of the 4th Special Session of the General Assembly on Disarmament (SSOD IV), which fully demonstrates that the disarmament machinery set up by SSOD I is still of great value as the current most universal institutional arrangement that can best ensure all parties’ equal rights and fundamental security interests.

Third, we need to promote regional security cooperation by establishing and improving regional security cooperation mechanisms, and build security governance models with regional characteristics. In a word, multilateralism is not obsolete; the key is that all parties should fully demonstrate political will and take steps towards each other rather than pursuing unilateralism or isolationism. The multilateral disarmament machinery is not outdated, either; the key is to revitalize it instead of starting up “new kitchens”.

Mr. Chairman,

China has been committed to the maintenance of world peace and security by vigorously promoting the international arms control and non-proliferation process, and has made important contributions to the enhancement of global security governance.

Firstly, China has contributed the “Chinese vision” for global security governance. China attaches great importance to setting rules and norms for global security governance. At the Nuclear Security Summit, President Xi Jinping put forward for the first time China's nuclear security concept by advocating the building of an international nuclear security system that features fairness and win-win cooperation, and he made five proposals on advancing international nuclear security cooperation, which represent a milestone in the development of the global nuclear security undertaking. China advocates building a community of common destiny in cyberspace and, to this end, the establishment of a peaceful, secure, open, cooperative and orderly cyberspace, and a multilateral, democratic and transparent global internet governance system. To further reinforce the effectiveness of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), China proposed the formulation of a template of the Code of Conduct for Biological Scientists and the establishment of a Non-Proliferation Export Control and International Cooperation Regime. These visions have enriched global
security governance and demonstrated China's unique role.

Secondly, China has contributed the "Chinese solution" to resolving hot-spot issues. On the Iranian nuclear issue, China has firmly supported the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and participated in its comprehensive and in-depth implementation. China has pushed for positive progress in the modernization of the Arak re-moderization project. China will continue to take an objective, fair and responsible approach in working with other parties to uphold and implement JCPOA. On the Syrian chemical weapons issue, China has all along supported and contributed to the destruction of Syria’s chemical weapons within the framework of the UN and the OPCW. We maintain that the related issues should be resolved through international cooperation and by political means. On the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula, China has made unremitting efforts in pushing for a negotiated settlement. The "suspension for suspension" initiative and "dual-track approach" proposed by China are practical and viable ways to address the Korean Peninsula issue. China believes that the Security Council resolutions on DPRK should be implemented in full and that while the sanctions are tightened, efforts should be, in the meantime, intensified to re-activate the peace talks, thus turning the pressure of sanctions into a driving force for negotiations.

Thirdly, China has provided "Chinese wisdom" for new security frontier governance. China has published "the International Strategy of Cooperation on Cyberspace" to advocate the principles of "peace, sovereignty, co-governance and universal benefit" for international cooperation in cyberspace and to contribute Chinese proposals. China has taken an active part in the international efforts and relevant processes for the peaceful use of outer space and the maintenance of outer space security. During the current session, China will join Russia to table a draft resolution on the establishment of a Group of Governmental Experts on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space. This initiative is in line with the aspiration of the international community and is aimed at putting into practice the consensus of the international community of opposing the weaponization of outer space and preventing an arms race there.

Fourthly, China has contributed its share to the response to humanitarian crises. China has been fulfilling in real earnest its obligations under international treaties and has devoted great efforts to international humanitarian de-mining assistance. So far, we have provided de-mining assistance to more than 40 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. China will faithfully honor its commitment and continue to actively
implement de-mining assistance projects through various means, including by offering de-mining training, providing equipment and making financial donations.

Fifthly, China has undertaken its due responsibility in safeguarding world peace. China has remained steadfast on the path of peaceful development and has always acted as a peace-maker, peace-promoter and peace-keeper in international affairs. Since 2015, China has been deepening its defense and military reform. Our declaration of a reduction of our national army by 300,000 has demonstrated our determination to follow the path of peaceful development. As an active participant in UN peace-keeping operations, China is the biggest troop contributor among the Permanent Members of the Security Council and the second biggest contributor to the UN peacekeeping budget.

Mr. Chairman,

The Chinese people are now striving for the realization of the two “centenary goals” and the Chinese dream of national renaissance. In this great process, China has been pursuing its own growth in the context of world development, linking its own security with world peace and working together with all other countries to build a community of shared future for mankind. China is ready to effectively assume its due international responsibility, actively participate in global security governance in greater depth, and, together with the rest of the international community, channel all our efforts towards a more secure and prosperous world.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.