Committee for the 2005 NPT Review Conference
Chinese Delegation, at the 1st Session of the Preparatory

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Hu Xiaodong, Head of the

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Mr. Chairman,

First of all, please allow me to express, on behalf of the Chinese Delegation, our sincere congratulations to you on your election to the chairmanship of this session of the PrepCom. It is my belief that with your rich diplomatic experience and outstanding talents, the meeting will surely be guided to a success. I would like to assure you of the support and cooperation of the Chinese Delegation in your work.

Mr. Chairman,

At the same venue two years ago, the 2000 NPT Review Conference successfully convened. At that time, even though there had been some negative developments in the international security field, destabilizing factors on the rise, and the international non-proliferation regime under severe challenge, parties to the conference, in a spirit of cooperation and understanding, worked together for the conclusion of a Final Document, identifying the objectives for the next stage of international disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. That testifies to the fact that to strengthen NPT review and implementation, consolidate the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and safeguard world peace and security represent the common interest and aspiration of the majority of countries in the world.

Since then two years have passed. Yet today we note not without regret that the provisions of the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference have not been fully materialized and that new negative developments which have an impact on the NPT review process and detriment to international security environment have occurred. The ABM Treaty, which is widely recognized by the international community as a cornerstone of strategic stability, is becoming history. The BWC Protocol, which had been under negotiation for seven years, was rejected. The CTBT is seeing a grimmer prospect of entry into force due to a negative attitude towards it. The bloodshed in the Middle East is continuing. And most recently, even more disturbing developments have been observed in the nuclear field. All of these have added to the uncertain and destabilizing factors in the international security field. Their adverse effects on the NPT review and implementation process must not be neglected.

Mr. Chairman,

It is a firm and sacred aspiration long cherished by the international community and a target identified in the NPT to eliminate all nuclear weapons, realize a world free of nuclear weapons and promote security, stability, peace and development. To achieve the above-mentioned target, it is imperative to maintain and strengthen the universality, authority and vitality of the NPT. As such, not only the Treaty itself but also factors beyond it are relevant.

First, an international environment of stability, cooperation and mutual trust must be created. It is a prerequisite for all countries to have a sense of security, thus removing their motivation behind acquiring and having in their control nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. The progress made in nuclear disarmament as a result of the relatively relaxed post-Cold War international relations
is a testimony to this. At present, it is most important to give up the unilateralist pursuit of absolute security. Instead, common security for all countries should be pursued through multilateral efforts. Acts that may endanger international peace and security and do harm to trust among countries must be avoided. All states should work together to maintain global strategic stability and prevent an arms race in outer space. Countries with the largest nuclear arsenals bear special and primary responsibility for nuclear disarmament and should continue reducing on a large scale their nuclear arms in a legally binding, verifiable and irreversible manner. Nuclear-weapon states should continue their moratoria on nuclear explosion test, persevere in CTBT ratification and entry into force, refrain from the development of new type of nuclear weapons and provide negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapons states unconditionally.

Second, the integrity of the international disarmament and arms control legal regime should be maintained. In the past decades, the international treaties that have been concluded on arms control and disarmament have become a mutually complementary integrity that functions as a whole. Breach or weakening of any one treaty in the regime will impact on the states parties’ confidence in the whole treaty regime. The NPT, as a treaty of principle of the regime, has its vitality closely related to other arms control treaties dealing with specific subjects. If such treaties were breached, the general targets of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation established by the NPT would be beyond reach.

Third, countries must faithfully implement their NPT obligations and the documents from NPT Review Conferences. As an international arms control treaty with the greatest universality and the best law-making effect, the NPT’s influence extends far beyond its states parties. In a sense, the nuclear-weapon States parties, the non-nuclear weapon states parties and even states that are not parties to the Treaty are obliged to abide by its spirit. In this connection, the documents from the NPT review process, the Final Documents of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference and 2000 Review Conference in particular, must be faithfully implemented. However, it is regrettable that some important provisions about nuclear disarmament and regional non-proliferation in the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference have not been carried out and some have even been breached. It will certainly impact on the authority of the NPT and the documents from its review process and therefore undermine people’s confidence in them. In this regard, the challenges confronting the NPT and its review process must not be overlooked.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me now expound on the policies, actions and stands taken by the Chinese Government in nuclear non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

As a state party to the NPT, China has always adopted a serious and responsible attitude towards preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. China never engages in and resolutely opposes the proliferation of nuclear weapons in any form. To fulfill efficiently its non-proliferation obligations, China has, on one hand, sped up nuclear export control legislation and regime. The Regulations of the People’s
Republic of China on Nuclear Material Control, the Regulations of the People‘ s Republic of China on Nuclear Export Control and the Regulations of the People‘ s Republic of China on the Control of Nuclear Dual-Use Items and Related Technologies Export were issued in 1987, 1997 and 1998 respectively. China also exercises a monopolizing and licensing system of nuclear export. In October 1997 China became a member of the “Zangger Committee”, an important component of the international nuclear export control regime. On the other hand, China actively supports and participates in the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards activities. At present, nine nuclear facilities are under IAEA safeguards through the Safeguards Agreement between China and the IAEA. I also would like to take this opportunity to announce that China has completed the domestic legal procedures for the Protocol Additional to the Safeguards Agreement to enter into force. China formally notified the IAEA of the matter on March 28, 2002. And as of that day, the Additional Protocol has become effective in China. China is the first among the five Nuclear Weapon States to do so. This fully reflects China‘ s positive and responsible attitude towards strengthening the effectiveness of the safeguards regime and fulfilling her non-proliferation obligations.

After Sep. 11, prevention of nuclear weapons proliferation and nuclear terror has become even more important and urgent. China supports IAEA to step up efforts in this regard. China has actively participated in amending the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. China will, based on agreement reached by all parties, make her contribution to the strengthened international efforts in nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear anti-terror.

As a nuclear weapon State, China has never shied away from her responsibility in nuclear disarmament. China has, with her own action, made unique contribution to international nuclear disarmament. China consistently advocates a complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons. China has, ever since coming into possession of nuclear weapons, undertaken unconditionally not to be the first to use nuclear weapons and not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon States or nuclear-weapon-free zones. China has along urged all Nuclear Weapon States to confirm the aforementioned commitment in legal form. China has always exercised utmost restraint towards developing nuclear weapons, kept her nuclear arsenal at the minimum level for self-defense. China has never been in any nuclear arms race, nor has it deployed any nuclear weapons outside of China. China firmly believes that comprehensively banning nuclear test explosions is an important step in the process towards the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons. China supports an early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, is committed to its ratification at an early date, and supports and participates in the preparatory work for the CTBTO with concrete actions. China supports the Conference on Disarmament in reaching a program of work agreed by all parties and begin to negotiate, according to the mandate of the “Shannon Report”, a multilateral, non-discriminative and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

China believes that the NPT’ s two functions of non-proliferation and peaceful
uses of nuclear energy should be balanced and that state parties’ rights to peaceful uses of nuclear energy should not be restricted in the name of preventing nuclear weapons proliferation. Along with the prevention of nuclear weapons proliferation, the important role of nuclear energy in exploring clean and efficient energy and in promoting economic and social progress of developing countries must be affirmed and enhanced. This is an important condition for the NPT to keep its vitality and for non-nuclear Weapon States to strictly abide by their non-nuclear weapon commitment. As one of the nuclear capable members of the IAEA, China constantly supports the Agency’s work and values the co-operation on peaceful uses of nuclear energy with other members organized and coordinated by the Agency. Since joining IAEA in 1984, China has always paid its voluntary contributions to technical cooperation in full and in a timely manner. China has signed intergovernmental agreements in peaceful uses of nuclear energy with 17 countries and conducted various forms of cooperation in this respect. China has also actively participated in multilateral nuclear cooperation. To date, China has signed or acceded to 12 international conventions on peaceful uses of nuclear energy, including the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and the Convention on Nuclear Safety.

Mr. Chairman,

This meeting is the first session of the PrepCom of a new round of the NPT review process in the new century. It should naturally play a role in linking the past and the future. As to the purpose of this meeting, there are explicit provisions in the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference, that is, to consider the principles, objectives and methods of promoting comprehensive compliance and enhancing universality of NPT so as to lay a good foundation for the submission of proposals by the third session of the PrepCom to the Review Conference. In this connection, the meeting should focus on listening to the opinions of all parties. Correspondingly, the final result of this meeting should also be an objective reflection of the positions expressed. It is the view of the Chinese Delegation that due to limited time available, over emphasis on a word-by-word or sentence-by-sentence negotiation is likely to impact on the discussions of substantive issues and deviate the meeting from its preparatory nature. Therefore, an objective summary of the discussions at the meeting by the Chairman might be more conducive to the smooth proceeding and success of the meeting.

Mr. Chairman,

Upon conclusion, let me reaffirm to you that the Chinese Delegation is ready to work together with other delegations for the success of this meeting in a cooperative and constructive spirit.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.