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Statement by H.E. Ambassador Hu Xiaodi
Head of the Chinese Delegation
at the 2nd Session of the Preparatory Committee
for the 2005 NPT Review Conference

April 28th, 2003, Geneva
Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, the Chinese Delegation wishes to congratulate you on your assumption of the chairmanship of the present session of the PrepCom. We believe with your outstanding talent and diplomatic experience you will guide the session smoothly. The Chinese Delegation stands ready to fully support you in your work. I would also like to take this opportunity to warmly welcome the Cuban Delegation that has come to this session as a member to the NPT for the first time.

Mr. Chairman,

The arms control and disarmament process has all along closely linked to the overall international security environment. The relaxation in international situation after the end of the Cold War helped the arms control and disarmament process yield positive progress. At the turn of the century, however, profound changes took place in the international security situation. Local conflicts caused by territorial, religious and ethnic disputes occur from time to time. The tendency of seeking dispute resolution by military force increases and the international situation is further away from being tranquil. Countries are faced with greater threat from such non-traditional factors as terrorism.

The international arms control and disarmament process is now confronted with severe challenges. Some important disarmament treaties have been abandoned. The prospect of entry into force for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is still grim. The status of nuclear weapons in the security strategy of certain country has been strengthened rather than weakened. Retrogression is also seen in the area of negative security assurance for non-nuclear-weapon states. While many issues related to proliferation of nuclear weapons are yet to be resolved, potential threat of nuclear terrorism has increasingly caused concern and disturbance in the international community.

The evolution of the international situation has proven once again that countries are inter-dependent in security and that a stable and democratic international environment of mutual trust and cooperation and the realization of security for all are completely necessary in order to eliminate the driving incentives behind the retention and development of nuclear weapons, thus promoting nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. To facilitate the grand objective of a nuclear-weapon-free world, countries need
to advocate and follow a new security concept of mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and cooperation, work together to realize the democratization of international relations, establish a just and equitable new international political and economic order, promote lasting peace and sustainable development and promote multilateralism in the disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation field.

Mr. Chairman,

On the question of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, China has all along held the following positions. First, a complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons must be realized and a world free of nuclear weapons established. Second, nuclear deterrence policy based on the first use of nuclear weapons should be abandoned. Third, existing nuclear arsenals must be reduced in an irreversible, effectively verifiable and legally binding manner. Countries possessing the largest nuclear arsenals bear special and primary responsibility in this regard. Fourth, the principle of global strategic stability and undiminished security for all should be followed in nuclear disarmament. Fifth, no research and development work should be conducted into low-yield nuclear weapons or “mini-nukes” aimed at probable battlefield use and the policy of lowering threshold of use of nuclear weapons should be discarded. Sixth, missile defense programmes should not undermine global strategic balance or disrupt international or regional peace and stability. Negotiations should begin as early as possible to conclude relevant international legal instruments preventing weaponization of and arms race in outer space. Seventh, binding international instruments on the provision of security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon-states should be concluded. Eighth, the effectiveness, integrity, and universality of the NPT should be maintained and international nuclear non-proliferation efforts should be strengthened. Ninth, proliferation concerns should be addressed through adoption of a new security concept and by way of dialogue and cooperation rather than confrontation, exertion of pressure or even use of military force. Tenth, the international efforts aimed at preventing proliferation of nuclear weapons and nuclear terrorism must not undermine the legitimate rights and interests of all countries, developing ones in particular, in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Mr. Chairman,

China has always been committed to the realization of all NPT objectives in a comprehensive and balanced way. China has been consistently advocating a complete prohibition and thorough destruction of all nuclear weapons. China has exercised utmost restraint towards developing nuclear
weapons. China has, ever since it came into possession of nuclear weapons, undertaken 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 at any time and in any situation. Although some negative changes have taken place in international security and nuclear disarmament, China remains committed to nuclear disarmament and thorough elimination of nuclear weapons. China will continue its moratorium on nuclear testing and is committed to an early ratification by its legislature of the CTBT. China has demonstrated and will continue to show flexibility in order that the Conference on Disarmament reach consensus on a programme of work and begin as soon as possible negotiating a treaty banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons. China will continue to support the efforts to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones, and is willing to sign the relevant protocols to the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty and Central Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty at an early date. China supports the establishment of a zone free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East and respects the nuclear-weapon-free status of Mongolia.

China has persistently adhered to the principle of neither advocating, encouraging, or engaging in nuclear proliferation, nor assisting any other countries in developing nuclear weapons. China is member to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the NPT. China joined the Zangger Committee in 1997. In light of its international legal obligations, China has taken a series of measures in nuclear export control. In this field, we have actually adopted common international practices such as end-use and end-user certificate system, licensing system, control lists and the “catch-all” principle. As to the scope of control, China’s Nuclear Export Control List and Export Control List of Nuclear Dual-use Items and Related Technologies cover all the items, equipment and technologies contained in the Zangger Committee and Nuclear Suppliers Group lists. China actively supports international non-proliferation efforts and the strengthening of IAEA safeguards. In March 2002, China completed the domestic legal procedures for the entry into force of the Additional Protocol to its Safeguards Agreement with the IAEA and is the first among the five nuclear-weapon states to do so.

China supports the international efforts against nuclear terrorism. China has acceded to the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM) and established a nuclear materials security system in line with the Convention. China promulgated Regulation on Control of Nuclear
Materials in 1987 and relevant Practice Guidelines in 1990. China has also taken an active part in negotiating amendments to the CPPNM and has made significant contribution to the process.

China has always attached great importance to correctly handling the relationship between nuclear non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. China now has 16 inter-governmental agreements on peaceful uses of nuclear energy and has developed fruitful cooperation with IAEA and the relevant countries. Up to now, China has joined 12 international conventions in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy and is studying accession to other conventions. In the new century, China will double its effort in peaceful uses of nuclear energy and expand its exchange and cooperation in this field with other countries.

Mr. Chairman,

For decades, the NPT has, as the cornerstone of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime, played an important role in preventing nuclear weapons proliferation and promoting nuclear disarmament. Universal accession and compliance is the fundamental assurance of its vitality and vigor. China supports continued efforts to safeguard the universality and effectiveness of the NPT and urges countries that have not done so yet to accede to the Treaty as soon as possible.

China consistently supports and actively participates in the process to reinforce the review and implementation of the NPT. In this new review cycle, we have successfully held the first PrepCom, which suggests that thorough exchange of views on the guidelines, objectives and ways of full compliance with and enhanced universality of the Treaty and a comprehensive reflection of various positions in the Chairman’s summary document are useful for the third PrepCom in forwarding recommendations to the 2005 Review Conference. China endorses the present session be held in the pattern of the first PrepCom and wishes it a success.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.