Statement by H.E. Ambassador Hu Xiaodi,
Head of the Chinese Delegation,
On Nuclear Disarmament and
Reduction of the Danger of Nuclear War

Mr. Chairman,

The new century has seen major changes in the international security landscape, with non-traditional security issues on the rise. Confrontation between countries, especially big countries, has declined while cooperation has strengthened. All these bring us closer to possibly realize large-scale reduction or even elimination of nuclear weapons.

China believes that the establishment of a new security concept based on mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and cooperation and the creation of an international environment of cooperation and trust conducive to nuclear disarmament.

China maintains that all nuclear-weapon states explicitly undertake the commitment to a complete and thorough elimination of nuclear weapons. States possessing the largest and most advanced nuclear arsenals shoulder special and primary responsibility for nuclear disarmament. The reduction of nuclear weapons should be carried out in accordance with the principle of being effectively verifiable, irreversible and legally binding. Any nuclear disarmament measures, including various intermediate measures, should observe the guidelines of "preservation of global strategic stability" and "undiminished security for all" and should be conducive to the promotion of international peace and security. Multilateralism is the way to maintaining
the nuclear disarmament process.

Mr. Chairman,

China actively promotes the international efforts for nuclear disarmament. It stands for the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons and the conclusion of an international legal instrument for this purpose, in a manner similar to the comprehensive bans on chemical and biological weapons. As a nuclear-weapon state and a permanent member of the UN Security Council, China is well aware of its own obligations in nuclear disarmament. China has contributed to the international nuclear disarmament cause by unilaterally undertaking some important obligations.

China has adopted a nuclear strategy that is purely for self-defense. Ever since the very first day it came into possession of nuclear weapons, China has pledged not to be the first to use nuclear weapons at any time or under any circumstances. China opposes the policy of nuclear deterrence based on the first use of nuclear weapons. We call upon all nuclear-weapon states to renounce such a policy and undertake not to be the first to use nuclear weapons and to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in their national security policies. China has never taken part in nuclear arms race or deployed nuclear weapons outside its territory.

China supports an early entry-into-force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and is committed to ratifying the Treaty at an early date. China actively supports and participates in the preparatory work of the CTBT Organization. The relevant work for the 12 international monitoring stations hosted in Chiru, including six seismic stations, three radionuclide stations, two infrasound stations and one radionuclide laboratory, is proceeding smoothly.
China supports the Conference on Disarmament (CD) in Geneva to reach an agreement as soon as possible on a program of work accepted by all, which includes negotiations on a multilateral, non-discriminatory, internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons according to the mandate contained in the Shannon Report. On 7 August 2003, China stated that it was ready to join the consensus on the “Five Ambassador’s Proposal on Program of Work” and support establishment of the relevant ad hoc committees to start substantive work on such important issues as nuclear disarmament, FMCT, prevention of arms race in the outer space and negative security assurances.

In order to promote the international nuclear disarmament process, China is opposed to the deployment of weapon systems in outer space and of the view that the missile defense system, that would disrupt global strategic balance and stability and lead to arms race including a nuclear one, should not be deployed. On 28 June 2002, China and the Russian Federation, together with Vietnam, Indonesia, Belarus, Zimbabwe and Syria, jointly submitted to the CD a working paper entitled “Possible Elements for a Future International Legal Agreement on the Prevention of the Deployment of Weapons in Outer Space, the Threat or Use of Force Against Outer Space Objects” (CD/1679). China and Russia will continue to improve the paper so as to lay a solid foundation for the establishment of an ad hoc committee on the prevention of an arms race in the outer space and negotiations on relevant international legal instrument. Over the years, China has been one of the cosponsors of the resolution on Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space in the First Committee of the UN General Assembly.

Non-nuclear-weapon states have initiated some “intermediate measures” with regard to nuclear disarmament. China is ready to consider
implementation of relevant measures at appropriate time and under appropriate conditions in the due course of the nuclear disarmament process.

Inseparable to the full realization of the goals of the NPT are the common efforts of the international community, including those of governments, and people of all countries, and NGOs. In this regard, appropriate public education plays an important positive role. The relevant working paper submitted by Sweden and other countries are highly appreciated.

Mr. Chairman,

China has submitted to this session of the Preparatory Committee a working paper on Nuclear Disarmament and Reduction of Danger of Nuclear War. We hope that elements in the paper be reflected in the recommendations to the 2005 NPT Review Conference. The Chinese Delegation has also produced a fact sheet on the same subject, detailing measures that China has taken in this regard.

Mr. Chairman,

The complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons is the goal of nuclear disarmament. China will, together with all other countries in the world, make its unremitting efforts towards the realization of this lofty goal.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.