Non-proliferation of nuclear weapons

Working paper submitted by China

1. Preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons is an effective and necessary step towards the comprehensive prohibition and total elimination of nuclear weapons. Such a step, which is critical to the maintenance of international and regional peace and security and serves the shared interests of the international community, necessitates joint efforts by that community.

2. The underlying determinants of nuclear proliferation and nuclear terrorism should be eradicated by attacking both symptoms and root causes in a comprehensive manner. All States should embrace the new security concept centred on mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and cooperation, commit themselves to fostering a peaceful and stable international security environment and ensure a security for all that is mutually beneficial and universally advantageous, thereby eliminating the root causes of conflict and unrest.

3. Pragmatism and the use of double standards in tackling the proliferation of nuclear weapons must be eschewed. The principle of multilateralism should be followed and the role of the United Nations and other relevant international organizations must be accorded due importance and be given full play. Continuous efforts must be made to strengthen the just, equitable and non-discriminatory nature of the international non-proliferation regime, on the basis of universal participation and a democratic decision-making process.

4. Concerns about the proliferation of nuclear weapons should be peacefully resolved by political and diplomatic means within the existing framework of international law. Sanctions do not offer an effective means of solving the problem, nor should parties resort to the use or threat of force. Instead they should be encouraged to continue seeking effective ways to address outstanding regional nuclear issues. Safeguarding international and regional peace, security and stability is an essential prerequisite for solving these nuclear proliferation problems.

5. The universality of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is a crucial factor in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Countries that have not yet acceded to the Treaty should promptly do so as non-nuclear-weapon
States and, in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty, place all their nuclear facilities under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards.

6. Persistent efforts should be made to consolidate and strengthen the role of the Treaty as the cornerstone of the international non-proliferation regime, to boost its authority and effectiveness and to ensure effective and strict compliance with its provisions.

7. IAEA safeguards offer an important means of ensuring the effectiveness of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. Efforts should be made to promote the universality of comprehensive safeguards agreements and their additional protocols.

8. All countries should bolster the physical protection of their nuclear facilities and nuclear material, take steps to counter nuclear terrorism, improve their export control regimes and actively pursue international cooperation in the area of nuclear security. They should also support the central role played in this area by IAEA in enhancing global nuclear security.

9. All States should scrupulously implement Security Council resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1887 (2009), on the basis of existing international law, and further promote and strengthen international cooperation with a view to effectively tackling the problem of the illicit trafficking by non-State actors in weapons of mass destruction, related materials and their means of delivery.

10. Nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy are mutually reinforcing. Any measures to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons should not infringe upon the legitimate right to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. At the same time, efforts must be made to prevent any country from engaging in proliferation activities under the pretext of peaceful use. International cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy should be conducive to strengthening the effectiveness and authority of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime.