Non-proliferation of nuclear weapons

Working paper submitted by China

Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy are important elements of global nuclear governance, and have a direct bearing on global and regional peace and stability, as well as the security of all States and the well-being of all peoples. All parties should focus on global nuclear governance, build consensus and enhance cooperation, and promote nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy in a comprehensive, balanced and steady manner. China believes that the root causes of nuclear proliferation are complex and that both the causes and the symptoms of nuclear proliferation should be addressed through an integrated approach. Accordingly, China takes the view that efforts are needed in the following areas:

1. States should seek universal security and eliminate the root causes of nuclear proliferation. They should discard zero-sum thinking and the cold-war mindset, and create a peaceful and stable international environment. They should fully respect and accommodate the legitimate security concerns of all countries. They should pay attention not only to their own security, but also to collective security, and should form a community with a common destiny.

2. The issue of nuclear non-proliferation should be addressed peacefully through political and diplomatic means. The fundamental objective of non-proliferation is to eliminate the risk of proliferation and to maintain international and regional peace and security. Therefore, proliferation concerns should be addressed through political and diplomatic dialogue and negotiation. Resorting to the use or threat of force or using non-proliferation as a pretext to achieve other objectives should be avoided.

3. Double standards and pragmatism on nuclear non-proliferation issues must be eschewed, and the authority of the non-proliferation regime must be maintained. All parties should implement their obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons fully, faithfully and in a balanced manner, and no country should judge other countries’ compliance with non-proliferation standards on the basis of its relationship with the countries concerned. The effectiveness and impartiality of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
safeguards should be enforced. The international community should be alerted to imbalances between the supply of and demand for nuclear material in some countries, and should take effective measures to rectify this situation.

4. States should uphold multilateralism and ensure universal participation and democratic decision-making in the field of non-proliferation. The Non-Proliferation Treaty’s status as the cornerstone of that effort should be consolidated and strengthened, and States not parties to the Treaty should accede to it as non-nuclear-weapon States at the earliest possible date. The role of the United Nations and other international organizations and mechanisms should be given full play, and Security Council resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1887 (2009) should be implemented scrupulously. Efforts should be made to promote the universality of IAEA comprehensive safeguards agreements and the additional protocols thereto. Nuclear export control regimes should be enhanced and the efforts of the Zangger Committee and the Nuclear Suppliers Group in this regard should be supported.

5. States should adhere to the principle of impartiality and balance and should properly address the relationship between non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Non-proliferation will create an international security environment conducive to the use of nuclear energy to benefit humankind. In addition, the development of nuclear energy will facilitate progress towards non-proliferation objectives. The legitimate right of all States to the peaceful use of nuclear energy should not be restricted on the pretext of non-proliferation, nor should the peaceful use of nuclear energy be used as a pretext for proliferation activities.

6. States should scrupulously enforce nuclear security and eliminate the threat of nuclear terrorism. They must take a rational, coordinated and balanced approach to nuclear security. They should adhere to the principle of placing equal emphasis on development and security, on rights and obligations, on independent and collaborative efforts and on addressing both symptoms and root causes, and should build an international nuclear security system based on fairness and win-win cooperation. All States should improve their own nuclear security capabilities, maintain nuclear security and participate actively in international nuclear security cooperation.