



PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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PRESS RELEASE

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**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Hu Xiaodi,
Head of the Chinese Delegation,
at the 3rd Session of the PrepCom
for the 2005 NPT Review Conference**

April 26, 2004, New York

Mr. Chairman,

First of all, please allow me, on behalf of the Chinese Delegation, to sincerely congratulate you on your election as Chairman of the 3rd Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The Committee is tasked to make procedural and substantive preparations for the Review Conference next year. The Chinese Delegation appreciates the substantial work you have done for this session. I believe that your resourceful diplomatic experience and outstanding capability will help this session progress. The Chinese Delegation will fully cooperate with and support you in your work.

Mr. Chairman,

The new century has seen far-reaching changes and increasing uncertainties in the international security landscape. We face both traditional and non-traditional security challenges, with the latter on the rise. The spread of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) plus the risk of terrorists acquiring WMD add complexity and challenge to global non-proliferation efforts.

The NPT, as the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, has since the 1960s played an important and positive role in preventing nuclear proliferation and promoting nuclear disarmament. It, as a whole, has been constantly strengthened. Nonetheless, we need to further its authority and universality in the new situation. China welcomes the accessions of Cuba and Timor Leste to the Treaty and calls upon those that

have not done so yet to join the Treaty at an early date. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) plays an irreplaceable role ensuring the implementation of the Treaty. China fully supports strengthening IAEA safeguards. We urge all countries to fulfil their non-proliferation obligations, sign and ratify the full-scope Safeguards Agreement and sign and ratify the Additional Protocol.

The disclosure of the nuclear smuggling network indicates loopholes in the international non-proliferation regime. The growing risk of terrorists acquiring WMD further demonstrates the significance and urgency to improve the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. China supports speeding up negotiations to amend the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material so as to strengthen physical protection of nuclear weapons and materials and strengthen countries' ability to prevent acquisition of radioactive materials by non-state entities. It must be pointed out that the amendment of the convention should be strengthening, rather than undermining the current international law, let alone granting any country in any manner the right to attack other countries' civilian nuclear facilities. China supports the United Nations to play a role in non-proliferation and is in favour of the Security Council on the basis of full consultation passing relevant resolutions to prevent the smuggling of WMD by non-state entities.

China takes note of the proposals to strengthen the non-proliferation regime. We hold an open attitude to suggestions conducive to maintaining and strengthening the regime and stands ready to discuss such issues with all countries. China believes that any non-proliferation measures should be based on the international law and conducive to resolving the questions of WMD proliferation through political and diplomatic means without undermining the legitimate rights and interests of any sovereign state.

Mr. Chairman,

The proliferation of nuclear weapons is a complex issue that should be treated in a comprehensive way by solving the superficial and substantive problems at the same time. In this respect, it is of fundamental importance to constantly improve the global and regional security environment. To achieve this goal, all states should commit themselves to a new security concept centring on mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and co-operation; create an international environment of co-operation and trust, and safeguard security for all. In this connection, we need to press ahead with the international nuclear disarmament efforts.

Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are mutually supportive and complimentary to each other. In the world today, confrontation between countries, especially big countries, has declined while co-operation has strengthened; international terrorism and proliferation of WMDs have become important threats to international security. In this situation, such moves as adopting pre-emptive strike strategy, explicitly listing other states as targets of nuclear strike, lowering the threshold of using nuclear weapons, research and development of new types of easy-to-use nuclear weapons, and shortening the time of preparation for nuclear tests not only run counter to international trend, but also do harm to international non-proliferation efforts, which is in the interests of no state.

The principles of “preservation of global strategic stability” and “undiminished security for all” are indispensable parts to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. China holds that all nuclear weapon states explicitly reaffirm their commitments to a complete and thorough elimination of nuclear weapons, undertake to stop the research and development of new types of nuclear weapons, ratify the CTBT as soon as

possible and observe the moratorium, lower the role of nuclear weapons in national security policy and refrain from listing any state as nuclear strike target. The two states with the biggest nuclear arsenals should implement nuclear weapon reduction treaties that have been reached and further reduce their nuclear arsenals in an effectively verifiable and irreversible manner so as to create conditions for other nuclear weapon states to join the nuclear disarmament process. The Conference on Disarmament, as the sole disarmament negotiation body, should agree on a program of work as soon as possible and on that basis start negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons, establish an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament, security assurances, prevention of arms race in the outer space, and to carry out substantive work on the relevant issues.

The 2000 NPT Review Conference agreed on 13-step nuclear disarmament measures, the spirit and purpose of which are still valid and should be adhered to. At the same time, new proposals such as no-first-use of nuclear weapons, not developing new nuclear weapons, and preventing weaponization of the outer space, which reflect the new situation in nuclear disarmament, should be explored.

Security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon states have always been the focus of attention of the non-nuclear-weapon states. It must be pointed out that security assurances are not one way offering, benefiting non-nuclear weapon states only. It is fully legitimate and reasonable for non-nuclear-weapon states to obtain assurances by nuclear-weapon states against nuclear threats and have such assurances in the form of a legal instrument since they have given up the nuclear weapon option. History has proven that security assurances help boost the sense of security and reduce the motivation to acquire nuclear weapons on the part of non-nuclear-weapon states. That in

turn serves international non-proliferation efforts. For the above-mentioned reasons, China firmly supports conclusion of an international legal instrument on security assurances as soon as possible.

Mr. Chairman,

The right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy is one of the three pillars of the NPT. Non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy are not incompatible with each other. They are mutually supportive of each other. Non-proliferation efforts must not impede legitimate activities of peaceful use or be used as excuses for other purposes.

The principal problem in this area is insufficient funds for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and imbalance between the safeguards and promotional activities. Technical co-operation fund is in shortage, some countries fail to contribute their respective shares. As a result, programs vital for some developing countries have not been included in IAEA's core program. We hope that Member States and the Agency will attach greater importance and render more support to promotional activities and provide sufficient technical co-operation funds. At the same time, we need to consider an institutional solution to the problem.

Mr. Chairman,

As a State Party to the NPT, China has always faithfully implemented her obligations to facilitating the three objectives of the treaty and has made important contributions.

As a nuclear-weapon state, China has never shunned its responsibility in nuclear disarmament. China has always supported a complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons, exercised utmost restraint in developing nuclear weapons, and maintained a minimum arsenal

necessary for self-defence only. China has never and will not take part in any arms race. China actively participates in the NPT review process, supports an early-entry-into-force of the CTBT and start of negotiation of a FMCT at the Conference on Disarmament. We hope these steps will ultimately lead to the objective of complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons.

On the very first day it came into possession of nuclear weapons, China solemnly declared that at no time and under no circumstances would it be the first to use nuclear weapons. Later, China undertook unconditionally not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states or nuclear-weapon-free zones. In 1995, China undertook to provide positive security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon states. China has consistently urged all nuclear-weapon states to enshrine their commitments in a legal form. China has signed all relevant protocols to the nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties that are open to signature and undertaken corresponding obligations. China and the ASEAN countries have reached an agreement on the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty and its protocol. China has no difficulty with the text of the protocol to the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction undermines international peace and stability as well as China's own security. China actively participates in the international efforts to prevent proliferation of nuclear weapons and nuclear terrorism. We have been consistently supporting the IAEA. China completed domestic legal procedures necessary for the entry into force of the Protocol Additional to the Agreement between China and IAEA for the Application of Safeguards in China in March 2002. China is the first nuclear-weapon state to have the Additional Protocol in effect. China joined the Zangger Committee in 1997

and submitted application for joining the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) last January. With a view to strengthening and improving domestic law and regulations on export control, we issued the Regulations on the Control of Nuclear Export and the Regulations on the Control of Nuclear Dual-Use Items and Related Technologies Export and their Control Lists and are currently improving them in accordance with international practices. In 2003, the Chinese Government issued the White Paper on China's Non-Proliferation Policy and Measures, which detailed China's positions and measures in this area.

China is active in peaceful uses of nuclear energy and has engaged in co-operation with other Member States under IAEA safeguards. Since joining the IAEA in 1984, China has paid voluntary contributions to the technical co-operation fund in time and in full. China has agreements on co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy with 17 countries and conducts co-operation in various forms.

Mr. Chairman,

The new situation and challenges have made this session and the 2005 Review Conference all the more important. For the Review Conference next year, it is essential to conduct extensive discussions and put forward proposals. We hope that all reasonable proposals and propositions conducive to the three objectives of the NPT will attract adequate attention and be discussed. Mr. Chairman, the Chinese Delegation will support your work without reservation and duly contribute to the progress of the session.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.