Statement by H.E. Ambassador Wu Haitao at the Plenary of the Conference on Disarmament
2013/02/05

Mr. President,

The Chinese delegation congratulates you on your assumption of the first Presidency of the 2013 session of the Conference on Disarmament (CD). We believe that your rich diplomatic experience and wisdom will surely guide the work of the CD to a good start this year. The Chinese delegation will fully support and cooperate with you. I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome our new colleagues.

Mr. President,

Since the opening of this year's session, Secretary-General Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Director-General Mr. Tokayev, together with you and other colleagues have expressed respective views on the work of the CD, calling upon the CD to break its deadlock by adopting a Programme of Work and starting substantive work as soon as possible. While some colleagues are anxious and worried about the current situation in the CD, the majority still believe that the CD is the most appropriate forum for negotiating multilateral arms control and disarmament treaties and efforts should be made to safeguard and enhance its authority.

China supports the CD to adopt as soon as possible a comprehensive and balanced Programme of Work and start its substantive work accordingly. A Programme of Work will not only guarantee the orderly conduct of the work of the CD, but will also demonstrate the dedication by all member states to taking forward multilateral disarmament process. China appreciates and supports the efforts by the President in promoting the adoption of the Programme of Work and is carefully studying the relevant proposal. We hope that the President will carry out further consultations to accommodate concerns of different parties and bridge the differences.

Mr. President,

China always supports the authority and role of the CD as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. The CD and its predecessors successfully concluded various multilateral arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation treaties. Its membership is highly representative, which reflects the current overall situation in the field of international security and arms control and disarmament. The CD’s Rules of Procedure with the consensus principle at the core can protect the legitimate security concerns of the member states. Therefore, the authority and advantages of the CD are irreplaceable.

Recently, especially during last year’s UNGA First Committee, various views and proposals were put forward on how to promote the FMCT negotiation and the nuclear disarmament process. China believes that the CD is the only appropriate venue for the FMCT negotiations. It can ensure the participation of all major
parties in the negotiations, so as to achieve a treaty which will fulfill its dual objectives of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. On the issue of nuclear disarmament, the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference has already formulated an Action Plan for nuclear disarmament. This issue is also on the current agenda of the CD. Nuclear disarmament should be carried out steadily in the existing mechanisms, including the CD, in accordance with the Action Plan. China does not support the removal of such core issues as nuclear disarmament and FMCT out of the CD, which will undermine the authority of the CD as well as the overall international arms control and disarmament process.

Mr. President,

Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS) is one of the core issues in the CD and is also a high priority for China. Since 1982, the UNGA has adopted resolutions on PAROS for more than 30 consecutive years, calling for negotiation of relevant multilateral agreements. The CD had also established Ad Hoc Committees on PAROS for 10 years to discuss relevant issues.

China always advocates peaceful use of outer space and opposes the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space. It has been actively promoting negotiations to conclude an international legal instrument in this regard. The draft Treaty on Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space and of the Threat or Use of Force against Outer Space Objects (PPWT) was introduced by China and Russia in 2008. In August 2009, in response to relevant comments and questions, China and Russia jointly submitted a working paper entitled Principal Questions and Comments on the Draft PPWT (CD/1872), which provided further explanations and clarifications on relevant issues. China believes that the PPWT is the most mature proposal on PAROS that has so far been presented to the CD. China hopes that the CD will start substantive discussion on PAROS as soon as possible and begin the negotiation on the basis of the draft PPWT.

Mr. President,

To conclude, let me assure you that China will continue to coordinate and cooperate with all parties to promote the work of the CD in a positive direction.

Thank you, Mr. President.