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Statement of the Chinese Delegation
At the General Debate
Of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone
Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction
(New York, 19 November 2019)

Madame President,

At the outset, may I extend, on behalf of the Chinese delegation, our congratulations on the convening of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction. We also congratulate you on your election as President of the Conference. China looks forward to seeing the conference achieve all the expected goals under your guidance and facilitation.

Madame President,

Currently, the world is undergoing unprecedented complex and profound changes. In the international security scene, uncertainties and destabilizing factors have been on the rise; the deficit of global security governance has worsened. A certain country, in its search for security supremacy, is hyping up great power competition and geo-political rivalry, placing its own interests above the common interests of all other countries, and promoting unilateralism and hegemonism. On the strength of its advantages, it is imposing unilateral sanctions and exercising long-arm jurisdiction over other countries, and willfully challenging the existing international order based on international law. This has seriously undermined global and regional security. Affected by these negative factors, hotspot issues have continued to crop up, posing even more severe challenges to the already fragile regional security, with the spillover effect becoming ever more evident.

Maintaining peace and security in the Middle East has a bearing on not only the fundamental interests of the regional states, but also stability of the whole world. China has consistently been making energetic calls for multilateralism, upheld the concept of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security and stood for the

settlement of disputes through dialogue and consultation, and addressing common threats through international cooperation, in a push for building a world that enjoys lasting peace and common security. It is in this spirit that China has, on the Middle East question, actively explored and practiced a typically Chinese way of addressing hotspot issues by engaging multiple parties in peace talks and playing a positive and constructive role in pushing for a political solution to regional hot-spot issues. We support countries in the region in engaging in dialogue on regional security issues. We also call upon countries outside the region to inject positive energy for restoring peace and tranquility in the region and help all regional countries enjoy security together rather than creating hostility and inciting confrontation in the region. China welcomes any initiative for dialogue that is conducive to attaining peace and security in the Middle East. We stand ready to work with all parties in an unremitting effort to promote lasting peace, stability and security in the Middle East.

Madame President,

Establishing in the Middle East a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs will help curb the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, ease tension in the Middle East and enhance regional and global peace and security. The international community should proceed from the vantage point of consolidating the nuclear non-proliferation regime and maintaining the long-term interests of the region, respond actively to the legitimate concerns of Arab states, and make persistent efforts to advance this objective by effectively following the requirements of relevant UN General Assembly documents and those of the NPT Review Conference. We hope that countries in the region will continue in a practical and constructive spirit to increase their diplomatic efforts and find a solution, through dialogue and consultation, for the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs. All countries outside the region, the nuclear-weapon states, in particular, should provide unwavering political support.

The UN Secretary General is convening, based on the GA decision last year, this international conference in the UN headquarters to launch the international discussion on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs. This is an important step in the right direction and will have a positive real effect on the early achievement of the goal through consultation by all parties. China appreciates the efforts made by the United Nations. Next year marks the 50th anniversary of the NPT's entry into force. The holding of this conference is in itself conducive to easing conflict and

create favourable conditions for a successful 2020 NPT Review Conference. China hopes that all parties will make the most of this conference, engage in useful discussions on issues related to the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs, plan properly for the follow-ups and lay a good foundation for a sustainable process of international discourse. China also hopes that work will be carried out in this conference in a constructive and open spirit, leaving space for other relevant countries to join the process later in the future.

China regrets the fact that some states have refused to attend this conference. We hope that the U.S. will assume in real earnest its due special responsibility as one of the depositary states of the NPT and contribute to the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs.

Madame President,

China always supports the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones by non-nuclear-weapon states in light of the actual situation in their own regions and on the basis of their own consultations and voluntary agreement. China has signed and ratified all the protocols to nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties that are open for signature and it has strictly fulfilled the relevant obligations. China is the only country that has unequivocally and unconditionally committed itself not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states and nuclear-weapon-free zones.

China has always supported the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMDs. We will continue to support and actively participate in relevant international efforts to work with all the relevant countries to contribute to an early establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

Thank you, Madame President.