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# Statement by Sun Xiaobo, Director-General of the Department of Arms Control of the Foreign Ministry of China, at the General Debate of the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2026 NPT Review Conference

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(Geneva, July 2024)

Mr. Chair,

On behalf of the Chinese delegation, I would like to congratulate you on your election as the Chair of the second session of the preparatory committee and assure you of China's full support to your work.

Mr. Chair,

At present, the international security situation is undergoing profound changes, and humanity have to choose between peace or war, unity or confrontation. In this context, Chinese President Xi Jinping has put forward the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative and the Global Civilization Initiative, in which he advocates the building of a community with a shared future for mankind and the vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security. Through these initiatives, he has offered a Chinese solution to the international security dilemma.

The treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the cornerstone of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime, and an important pillar of the global security and development governance system. China is willing to work with international community to constructively participate in the second session of the preparatory committee, advance the three pillars of nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in a balanced manner, and give full play to the role of the NPT in serving security and development in the new era.

Firstly, foster a correct security vision and pursue common security. All country's security interests are equal and indivisible. While pursuing its own security, a country should not ignore the security

concerns of others. The pursuit of absolute security, even at the expense of other countries' security, will only create an all-lose security dilemma. Both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States should adhere to true multilateralism, follow the principles of "maintaining global strategic stability" and "undiminished security for all", formulate nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation measures by consensus, and commit to promoting the security of all countries.

Secondly, uphold the consensus on nuclear disarmament, avoid making detours or going into the wrong path. Requiring countries with vast differences in nuclear policies, nuclear capabilities and external security environment to undertake the same nuclear disarmament obligations is unfair and unreasonable, and will surely lead the international nuclear disarmament process to nowhere. The two countries with the largest nuclear arsenals must continue to fulfill their special and primary responsibilities for nuclear disarmament, resume implementing the New START Treaty and discuss follow-up arrangements, and further significantly and substantially reduce their nuclear arsenals in a verifiable, irreversible and legally binding manner, so as to create the conditions for other nuclear-weapon States to join the nuclear disarmament process.

Thirdly, strengthen cooperation in a rational and pragmatic manner to reduce strategic risks. Nuclear-weapon States should make further efforts to reduce strategic risks on the basis of the Joint Statements of Leaders of the Five nuclear-weapon States on Preventing Nuclear War and Avoiding Nuclear Arms Races issued in 2022. China hereby proposes that the five nuclear-weapon States negotiate and conclude a treaty on "mutual no-first-use of nuclear weapons" or issue a political statement in this regard and has put forward the elements of the treaty or political statement. China supports the Conference on Disarmament in negotiating an international legal instrument, providing negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States, and outlined five points in this regard for further discussions. China has submitted working papers to the meeting in this regard and hopes to receive positive support.

Meanwhile, China calls on the relevant nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in national and collective security policies. We urge the United States to abandon the "nuclear sharing" and "extended deterrence" arrangements, withdraw all nuclear weapons deployed overseas, refrain from the development and deployment of global missile defense systems, immediately cease deploying land-based intermediate-range missiles in the Asia-Pacific. Relevant countries should earnestly support the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, and sign the Protocol to the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone at an early date.

Fourthly, reject double standards and strengthen the nuclear international non-proliferation regime. The AUKUS nuclear submarine cooperation involves for the first time the transfer of large quantities of weapon-grade highly enriched uranium from nuclear-weapon States to non-nuclear-weapon States, posing serious nuclear proliferation risks. The international community should promote the intergovernmental discussion process under IAEA framework, and the three countries shall not start nuclear-powered submarine cooperation before all parties reach consensus. The JCPOA is the correct and effective solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. The parties concerned should keep calm and exercise restraint, resume negotiations as soon as possible, and restore the full and effective implementation of JCPOA. The crux of the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula is the lingering remnants of the Cold War, the absence of a peace mechanism, and the lack of mutual trust. All parties should strive to restart dialogue, follow the dual track approach, and take phased and synchronized steps to promote the political settlement of Korean Peninsula issue.

Fifthly, ensure shared benefits and inclusiveness, and promote the cause of peaceful uses of nuclear energy. China advocates the establishment of an inclusive market environment, giving full play to the central role of IAEA, and ensuring the “Global South” participate in international nuclear energy cooperation on an equal and orderly basis. We are firmly opposed to attempts to overstretch the concept of national security, use export control as a political tool for “decoupling” and impose unnecessary restrictions on international nuclear energy cooperation. China will submit again the resolution of Promoting International Cooperation on Peaceful Uses in the Context of International Security to the upcoming session of the UN General Assembly, and we look forward to your support. In the meantime, the peaceful uses of nuclear energy should not be achieved at the cost of natural environment and human health. China opposes discharging the nuclear contaminated water of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant into the ocean, and urges Japan to cooperate in establishing long-term, independent and effective international monitoring arrangements that involve the substantive participation of its neighbors and other stakeholders.

Mr. Chair,

China was compelled to develop nuclear weapons during a particular time in history, in order to deal with nuclear threat, break the nuclear monopoly and prevent nuclear war. From the day it came into possession of such weapons, China has advocated their complete prohibition and thorough destruction, and has stayed committed to the no-first-use of nuclear weapons at anytime and under any circumstance and unconditionally undertakes not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States or nuclear-weapon-free zones. China has always pursued a defensive nuclear strategy and kept its military development at the minimum level required for national security. China has no intention of pursuing arms race with any country. For the past six decades, China's understanding of the nature of nuclear weapons has remained unchanged. China's nuclear policy is highly stable, consistent and predictable, and is the most meaningful transparency. China's nuclear policy in itself is an important contribution to the cause of international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Some countries deliberately misinterpret or even smear China's nuclear policy. China strongly opposes those deeds. China is open to having dialogues and consultations on arms control and non-proliferation with all country. However, China will not accept the practice of claiming to be willing to have dialogue, while constantly taking negative actions that undermine China's core interests.

Mr. Chair,

China will soon take over as the P5 coordinator, and is willing to enhance the P5's communication and cooperation on issues of upholding the NPT regime. We are also willing to work for fruitful outcomes of this round of the review process, and to jointly uphold the universality, authority and effectiveness of the NPT.

Last week, the 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China convened its third plenary session, which stressed that Chinese modernization is the modernization of peaceful development. China will stay committed to pursuing an independent foreign policy of peace and is dedicated to promoting a human community with a shared future. Holding dear humanity's shared values, we will pursue the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative and the Global Civilization Initiative, and make new contribution to world peace and common development.

To conclude, I wish this preparatory meeting a great success. Thank you, Chair.

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