

Statement at the General Debate by Mr. SUN Xiaobo, Director General of the Department of Arms Control of MFA of China and Head of the Chinese Delegation to the First Committee of the 80th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

Mr. Chair,

I would like to congratulate Your Excellency on your election as Chair of the First Committee of the current session of the UN General Assembly.

This year marks the 80th anniversary of the World Anti-Fascist War, as well as the founding of the United Nations. Maintaining international peace and security is an important mission of the United Nations and engraved in the DNA of the UN Charter. For 80 years, the UN has spared no effort in playing an irreplaceable role in promoting global development and paving the way for world peace.

80 years on, countries around the world are facing an increasingly complex and grim international security environment. The Cold War mentality lingers on; the arms race continues to escalate, fairness and justice are trampled upon; domineering and bullying practices are rampant; and multilateral arms control mechanisms are being eroded and undermined. Humanity has to decide whether to choose peace or war, dialogue or confrontation, win-win cooperation or a zero-sum game.

This year we commemorate the 80th anniversary of the victory of the World Anti-Fascist War. It is an occasion for us to remember history, honor fallen heroes, cherish peace, and create a better future. Only when all countries and nations treat each other as equals, coexist in peace and support each other, can we uphold common security, eradicate the root causes of war, and prevent the recurrence of past tragedies. It is imperative to firmly defend international fairness and justice, actively safeguard world peace and resolutely oppose the law of jungle. May one day, there are no more wars, no more refugees and no more broken homes because of conflicts. China firmly supports the Palestinian people's just cause of regaining their legitimate national rights. We call for achieving a permanent, comprehensive ceasefire in Gaza without delay, alleviating the humanitarian catastrophe, and resolving the question of Palestine at an early date on the basis of relevant UN Resolutions and the two-State solution.

Facing the growing deficit in peace, development, security and governance, Chinese president Xi Jinping put forward the concept of building a community with a shared future for mankind, and successively proposed the Global Development Initiative, Global Security Initiative, Global Civilization Initiative, and Global Governance Initiative. Those concept and initiatives form a coherent approach and represent China's wisdom and solution to addressing global changes and urgent problems.

Mr. Chair,

China has three observations on the work of the First Committee at this session.

First, uphold multilateralism and strengthen international cooperation. China advocates the vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, rejects the concept of absolute and exclusive security, and respects the legitimate security concerns of all countries. China calls for a new path of security through dialogue rather than confrontation, partnership rather than alliance, and win-win outcome rather than a zero-sum game.

The United States strengthens nuclear sharing and extended deterrence arrangements, deploys land-based intermediate range missiles in Asia-Pacific region, builds up the “Golden Dome” system and blatantly plans to deploy weapons in outer space, seriously undermining strategic mutual trust and strategic stability. China is of the view that nuclear disarmament should be pursued in a step-by-step manner, upholding the principles of "maintaining global strategic stability" and "undiminished security for all". States with the largest nuclear arsenals should effectively fulfill their special and primary responsibility for nuclear disarmament, resume implementation of the New START treaty and negotiate a succession arrangement, and continue to reduce their nuclear arsenals significantly and substantively in a verifiable, irreversible and legally-binding manner.

China's nuclear policy remains highly stable, consistent and predictable, which is conducive to global strategic stability and represents a significant contribution to international nuclear arms control. China's nuclear strategy of self-defense will not change. China's policy of no first use of nuclear weapons will not change. China's policy of no engagement in any arms race will not change. China's willingness to engage in dialogue on strategic risk reduction will not change. And China's policy of maintaining its nuclear forces at the lowest level required for national security will not change. China rejects the misrepresentation of and accusation against China's nuclear policy leveled by a few countries.

Second, honor commitment and uphold international rule of law. The current international arms control and non-proliferation regime such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is an important component of the international arms control and nonproliferation order. It was built painstakingly on the basis of numerous experience and lessons. We must firmly safeguard the universality and effectiveness of the current arms control treaty regime, and oppose selective application, unilateral interpretation and withdrawing from treaties and organizations. Multilateral arms control mechanisms such as the UNGA First Committee, the Conference on Disarmament and Disarmament Commission must be strengthened, not weakened.

China supports the cornerstone role of the NPT, and stands ready to work with all parties for positive outcomes of the current review cycle. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the entry

into force of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC). China stands for the negotiation of a legally-binding protocol of the BWC on verification. We are ready to work closely with all countries on effective measures to strengthen the BWC, improve global bio-security governance and ensure that biotechnology benefits mankind. China urges Japan to faithfully fulfill its international obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and destroy the Japanese abandoned chemical weapons in China completely, thoroughly and safely at an early date.

Thirdly, insist on reform and innovation and improve international governance. We need to be conscious that new technologies and domains such as outer space, cyberspace, and AI are becoming important variables that shape the international security landscape. However, the lack of rules is becoming increasingly acute and there is an urgent need to improve the system of international governance. To prevent misuse of emerging technologies, the United Nations should be the main platform to advance the process of discussions on difference fields, such as the military applications of AI, prevention of an arms race in outer space, and information security. It is importance to uphold universality and inclusiveness, avoid the establishment of discriminatory and exclusive standards, and oppose drawing ideological lines and overstretching the concept of national security. The legitimate right of States on peaceful uses of science and technology should be respected. Exchanges and cooperation, such as capacity-building, should be strengthened. And efforts should be made to remove man-made barriers to science and technology and bridge the development divide and governance gaps. China actively supports the United Nations to carry out international resources integration and institutional reform in responding to developments in the area of security.

Mr. Chair,

Chinese modernization follows the path of peaceful development. China will always be a force for peace, stability and progress in the world. We have all along stood on the right side of history and on the side of the progress of human civilization. We will collaborate with all the nations to actively maintain global peace and security and to advance the multilateral arms control process. We will bring more stability and certainty to the world of interwoven changes and turbulence and build together a community with a share future for mankind.

Thank you.