

Statement by Mr. KANG Yong, Counselor of the Chinese Delegation, at the Thematic Debate on Nuclear Disarmament, at the 64th Session of the UNGA First Committee

2009/10/14

(New York, October 14th, 2009)

Mr. Chairman,

Chinese President Hu Jintao, at the recent United Nations Security Council Summit on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Nuclear Disarmament, pointed out that to realize a safer world for all, we must first and foremost remove the threat of nuclear war. President Hu also elaborated China's position on nuclear disarmament in a comprehensive and systematic way:

— Maintain global strategic balance and stability and vigorously advance nuclear disarmament. All nuclear-weapon states should fulfill in good faith obligations under Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and publicly undertake not to seek permanent possession of nuclear weapons. Countries with the largest nuclear arsenals should continue to take the lead in making drastic and substantive reductions in their nuclear weapons. The Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty should be brought into force at an early date, and negotiations on the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty should start as soon as possible. When conditions are ripe, other nuclear-weapon states should also join the multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament. To attain the ultimate goal of complete and thorough nuclear disarmament, the international community should develop, at an appropriate time, a viable, long-term plan composed of phased actions, including the conclusion of a convention on the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons.

— Abandon the nuclear deterrence policy based on first use of nuclear weapons and take credible steps to reduce the threat of nuclear weapons. All nuclear-weapon states should make an unequivocal commitment of unconditionally not using or threatening to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states or nuclear-weapon-free zones, and conclude a legally-binding international instrument in this regard. In the meantime, nuclear-weapon states should negotiate and conclude a treaty on no-first-use of nuclear weapons against one another.

International nuclear disarmament is currently confronted with unprecedented opportunities. Complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons and a nuclear-weapon-free world have become widely embraced goals, and various initiatives on nuclear disarmament have been proposed. Negotiations on a new bilateral nuclear disarmament agreement between the United States and Russia are underway. The Conference on Disarmament has also adopted Programme of Work for the first time over the years. We welcome the above developments.

It is our hope that the international community can make full use of current opportunities, embrace a new security concept featuring mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and coordination, stick to multilateralism and create a favorable international security environment for nuclear disarmament. It is imperative to consolidate and strengthen the hard-won momentum of nuclear disarmament by continuously pushing forward nuclear disarmament process and substantially reducing the threat of nuclear weapons. It's also important to preserve international strategic balance and stability so as to enhance mutual strategic trust of countries and create necessary conditions for nuclear disarmament.

The 8th NPT Review Conference is highly significant. All State Parties should seize this opportunity to further forge consensus and work together to safeguard substantive outcomes of the Review Conference, so as to bring new impetus to international nuclear disarmament.

Mr. Chairman,

China has consistently stood for complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons and has made unremitting efforts towards this goal. China is firmly committed to a nuclear strategy of self-defense. China has adhered to the policy of no-first-use of nuclear weapons at any time and under any

circumstance, and made the unequivocal commitment that we will unconditionally not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states or nuclear-weapon-free zones. China does not participate in any form of nuclear arms race, and has kept its nuclear capabilities at the minimum level required for national security. China will continue to work with the international community to advance international nuclear disarmament process, with the aim of making due contribution to early realization of the goal of complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons for a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.