

Draft Speaking Notes on Facts and Thinking of Chinese Disarmament

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Except for the U.S., the emergence of the other four nuclear weapons states were the products of the cold war in 50's and 60's of the last century. The fear in insecurity and incompetence is the common and most important cause for such nuclear emergence, and has driven the nuclear arms race between two cold war superpowers to the utmost level of deployment and stockpile of tens of thousands of nuclear weapons. Such fear has diminished to some extent since the end of the cold war, but still far from vanishing. Large number of nuclear warheads at level of thousands in deployment and reserve respectively and little changed nuclear strategies of nuclear powers are still a reflection of the current security environment after the cold war. Continuous resort to nuclear forces as the corner-stone of the national security of the superpower has put a heavy shadow onto the international nuclear disarmament and endangered all non-proliferation endeavor of the world for the last decades. The non-proliferation regime has never so deeply interwoven with what the nuclear disarmament would lead to in the coming years. It is no doubt that the nuclear weapons states, especially those with the most number of nuclear weapons and aggressive nuclear policies should undertake the highest responsibility in this regard.

After saying that, it is worth reviewing what China has done for nuclear disarmament. It is a little deviation from the subject of this session, What the Nuclear Weapons States Should Do. However, in my view, such review on those major facts and thinking of Chinese disarmament in the past may produce some useful lessons and experiences for our discussion on disarmament. As a very general observation, I would say that Chinese nuclear disarmament policy is deeply rooted in its nuclear strategy, or Chinese nuclear strategy is decisive to guide its general policy orientation and actions on disarmament. This strategy includes following major elements:

1. No Moral. Using nuclear weapons as a practical military instrument is immoral in Chinese leader's view. Immediately after conducting the first atomic bomb test on Oct.16, 1964, China proposed a world summit meeting, in a governmental statement, to be convened to discuss the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons. The philosophy behind the statement at that time, mainly in Chairman Mao's mind, was that such

destructive weapons should never be put in use again and they can only serve the purpose of deterrence, especially between states which both have such weapons. This philosophy has undergone decades of dramatic changes in world security arena. It did not change when China had the worst relation with the Soviet Union. It also didn't change when the U.S. blockaded and contained China for decades of years. In fact, during the cold war, China, as an independent and non-militarily allied state, not as NATO or WARSAW PACT, was facing two cold wars with both Soviet Union and the US. Under such severe security circumstances in history, China has continuously promoted this policy of complete prohibition and ultimate elimination of all nuclear weapons, and strongly supported the realization of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

To make the philosophy more concrete, China has long been advocating the conclusion of an internationally legal instrument on such complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons. In 1994, H.E. Mr. Qian Qichen, Vice Premier and Foreign Minister of China, delivered a statement at the 49th UNGA advocating the negotiation, conclusion and signing of a convention banning nuclear weapons. At the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 NPT Review Conference held in April 2004, China submitted a working paper entitled "Proposals on nuclear disarmament and reduction of the danger of nuclear war", calling for the nuclear-weapon states to commit themselves to the early complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons and to conclude an internationally legal instrument thereon. Over the years, China has voted in favor of relevant UNGA resolutions such as "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: a new agenda", and "Nuclear disarmament".

2. No legal status. In Chinese nuclear strategy, using and threatening to use nuclear weapons should have no legal status. Therefore, China supported "Advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons".

3. No intention to use and No first use. In order to prevent and eliminate the danger of nuclear war, China declared on the same day of its first atomic bomb test, Oct.16, 1964, that China would not be the first to use nuclear weapons at any time and under any circumstances. China adheres to this commitment till today. China has been promoting the nuclear-weapon states to conclude a multilateral treaty on no-first-use of nuclear weapons against each other. China insists that the role of nuclear weapons in national security policy should be reduced, and the nuclear deterrence policy based on the first-use of nuclear weapons should be abandoned.

In January 1994, China provided the draft text of a treaty on no-first-use of nuclear weapons against each other to the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom and France,

suggesting that the five states start consultations on this issue as soon as possible. At the 49th UNGA, China proposed that the nuclear-weapon-states should immediately negotiate and sign a treaty on no-first-use of nuclear weapons against each other. Since 2000, China has made repeated calls in the CD for the nuclear-weapon states to undertake the obligation not to be the first to use nuclear weapons at any time and under any circumstances. China has also made active efforts to reach a commitment with other nuclear-weapon states to no-first-use of nuclear weapons against each other on the bilateral basis. In September 1994, the Presidents of China and Russia made a pledge in their joint statement on no-first-use and de-targeting of nuclear weapons against each other. In June 1998, China and the United States declared de-targeting of nuclear weapons against each other. In April 2000, the five nuclear-weapon states, China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States, declared in a joint statement that their nuclear weapons were not targeted at any state. The nuclear-weapon states should abide by their commitment to neither target their nuclear weapons at any state nor even list any state as nuclear attack target.

4. Negative security assurance. Ever since the possession of nuclear weapons, China has pledged unconditionally not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states or nuclear-weapon-free zones. China is the only state among five nuclear-weapon states that has done so.

China attaches great importance to security assurances for the non-nuclear-weapon states. This is a crucial matter for the non-proliferation regime. Since 2000, China has been urging, at the UNGA First Committee and the CD, other nuclear-weapon states to provide unconditional security assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon states, and to conclude an internationally legal instrument for this purpose at an early date. China supports the re-establishment of an ad hoc committee on negative security assurances (NSA) at the CD and the immediate commencement of substantive work and negotiation. At the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 NPT Review Conference, China submitted a working paper on the NSA issue, reiterating the above-mentioned position. For many years, China has voted in favor of the UNGA resolution on “conclusion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon states against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons”.

5. Nuclear disarmament. China supports the efforts by the Conference on Disarmament to set up an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament, and to carry out substantive work on nuclear disarmament issues. China supports and attaches importance to the nuclear disarmament measures contained in the final document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference, and seriously implements those measures. Ever since the first day of possessing nuclear weapons in 1960's, China has fulfilled its nuclear disarmament obligations in spirit. China has

always exercised utmost restraint in developing its nuclear force, and has never participated in any nuclear arms race, no matter how its security environment changes. Compared with nuclear superpowers, Chinese nuclear arsenal is very small and limited. This is not because China has not such capability, but fundamentally because China does not consider nuclear weapons should be practical war-fighting instruments. Chinese nuclear weapons only serve self-defense purposes in order to deter possible nuclear threatens, blackmails, and actual attacks by other states. China has closed down its nuclear weapons research base in Qinghai Province. After environmental clean-up, the base was handed over to the local government in May 1995.

China appeals that the states possessing the largest nuclear arsenals undertake special responsibilities for nuclear disarmament, and therefore should take the lead in drastically reducing and destroying their nuclear arsenals and delivery means. Nuclear disarmament should follow the principles of effective verification, irreversibility and legally binding. Nuclear disarmament measures should aim at maintaining the global strategic stability and uncompromised security for all states, so as to create conditions for other nuclear-weapon states to join the nuclear disarmament process. No efforts should be made to develop and deploy missile defense systems which are very detrimental to the global strategic balance and stability and nuclear disarmament.

6. No deployment on the territory of other states. China opposes any state to deploy any nuclear weapon on jurisdictional territories of other states. This certainly will give wrong signals to the world, the reliance on nuclear weapons is still important. This practice is very harmful to nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, and regional stability. Those states that have done so should withdraw their nuclear weapons completely to its own territory.

7. The CTBT and FMCT. China firmly stands for the CTBT and supports its early entry-into-force. China has taken an active part in the conferences for promoting the entry-into-force of the CTBT, and has co-sponsored relevant UNGA resolutions on the treaty. China has actively participated in the work of the Preparatory Commission of the CTBTO, and has made serious preparations for implementing the treaty. Pending the entry-into-force of the treaty, China will continue to abide by its moratorium on nuclear testing.

China supports the early negotiation and conclusion of a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT). In 1993, China supported the UNGA resolution on concluding a “non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices”. Since then, China has voted in favor of the resolution on the FMCT at each session of the

UNGA. The negotiations on FMCT in substance should be commenced as early as possible.

8. Nuclear Free Zones. China has consistently respected and supported the efforts by non-nuclear-weapon states to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of voluntary consultations and agreements. China supports the efforts to establish a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. At the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2005 NPT Review Conference, China submitted a working paper on the Middle East nuclear issue.

In conclusion, any reliance on nuclear weapons for world peace and stability is a tragedy of the mankind. Such peace and stability will be ones in horror just like we had during the cold war for nearly half a century.