

Statement by Mr. Sun Lei, Counsellor of the Permanent Mission of China to the UN, at the General Debate of the United Nations Disarmament Commission 2017 Substantive Session

(2017/4/3, New York)

Madame Chair,

At the outset, allow me, on behalf of the Chinese delegation, to congratulate you on your assumption of the chairmanship of this session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC). I am confident that your capable leadership will steer the session to positive achievements. My delegation wishes to assure you and other delegations of its full cooperation. I would also like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to your predecessor, Ambassador Odo Tevi of Vanuatu for his work.

At present, the trend of our times towards peace, development, cooperation and win-win outcomes has gained stronger momentum. Meanwhile, mankind is in an era of profound transformation and change, with increasing security challenges and risks. Geopolitical hot-spot issues are vexed and difficult to solve. Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation process is faltering. Unconventional security threats are on the rise. Rules and norms on the emerging strategic frontiers are yet to be in place. Global strategic balance and stability is confronted with challenges.

Security is as precious as air. People don't notice it until it is gone. When visiting the United Nations Office at Geneva early this year, the Chinese President XI Jinping set out a proposition to answer the call of current

security landscape, which is to build a community of shared future for mankind. All countries should pursue common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, create a peaceful and stable international and regional security environment, and build a world of lasting peace and common security through win-win cooperation.

As a member of the international community, China actively fulfills its due international responsibilities and is willing to be a champion of peace and development and a new impetus for global governance. China consistently pursues a national defense policy that is defensive in nature, positively advocates a new concept of international security, constructively takes part in global security governance, and promotes healthy development of international arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation process, which makes China a staunch force in maintaining world peace and regional stability.

Madame Chair,

China has made steadfast efforts to consolidate the multilateral disarmament treaty mechanisms, and has been committed to strengthening the universality, authority and effectiveness of international arms control and non-proliferation treaties. As the cornerstone of the international non-proliferation regime, *Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons* (NPT) has established three pillars, i.e. Nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. All parties should abandon double standards and pragmatism, and implement their respective treaty obligations in a comprehensive, earnest and balanced manner.

China has always stood for complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons, and has been earnestly fulfilling its obligations of nuclear disarmament under NPT. China will never engage in nuclear arms

race in any form, and will continue to keep the nuclear force at the minimal level required by national security. China firmly adheres to a nuclear strategy of self-defense, a policy of no-first-use of nuclear weapons at any time and under any circumstance, and makes unconditional commitment not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states or nuclear weapon free zones.

China supports UNDC in adopting an outcome document regarding recommendations of achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

At present, disputes widens in advancing nuclear disarmament. China is of the view that nuclear disarmament cannot be achieved overnight and can only be taken forward through step-by-step approach, following the principles of maintaining the global strategic stability and undiminished security for all. Negotiations on nuclear disarmament should only take place within the exiting international disarmament and non-proliferation regime such as Conference on Disarmament (CD). Countries possessing the largest nuclear arsenals should take the lead in reducing their nuclear weapons substantially and substantively, thus creating conditions for the ultimate realization of complete destruction and total elimination of nuclear weapons.

China firmly opposes the proliferation of nuclear weapons in any form and works for the diplomatic resolution of regional hot-spot nuclear issues. China has signed and ratified all additional protocols to the treaties on nuclear-weapon-free zones open for signature, and will continue to support non-nuclear weapon states, in accordance with the reality of the region, to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at.

On FMCT, China always supports its early negotiation in the CD, and participated in the work of the UN Group of Governmental Experts in a constructive manner. The reason that China voted abstention on the relevant First Committee resolution of the 71st Session of the UNGA is that China holds firmly that the CD is the only proper venue for the negotiation of FMCT, and to negotiate and conclude this treaty on the basis of the Shannon Mandate in the CD is the only way out. At the same time, China is of the view that universal participation of all key parties is essential to the preparation and negotiation of the treaty.

On the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), China supports its objectives and purposes and honors the commitment of moratorium on nuclear test. Last June, Mr. LI Baodong, vice-minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China led a delegation to the Ministerial Meeting of the Twentieth Anniversary of the CTBT, and reiterated China's political commitment to the Treaty. At the end of last year, the radionuclide station in Lanzhou of China has been certified by Preparatory Committee of CTBTO, making it the first certified monitoring station under CTBT in China.

The diplomatic settlement of the Iranian nuclear issues can provide useful experience for resolving other hot-spot nuclear issues. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) has played an important role in maintaining the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and promoting peace and stability in the Middle East. At present, the implementation of JCPOA goes on smoothly. All parties should continue to faithfully fulfill their obligations, properly handle differences, so as to ensure the comprehensive, continuous and effective implementation of the JCPOA. As the co-chair of E3/EU+3 Working Group on the modernization project of Arak Heavy Water Reactor, China is ready to work with all parties to continuously achieve positive progress in the modernization project.

Madame Chair,

China supports the UNDC in adopting an outcome document regarding recommendations on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms.

China is of the view that establishing practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms not only contributes to preventing confrontations and reducing doubts, but also helps to promote international and regional disarmament process. As important mechanisms of transparency and confidence-building measures within the framework of the UN, the UN Register of Conventional Arms and UN Report on Military Expenditures have played an active role in enhancing mutual trust between member states and promoting international peace and security. China has taken part in the above-mentioned mechanisms, and submitted reports to the UN annually. China has also participated in the new round of work of two UN Groups of Governmental Experts since last year, which contributed to the sound development of two mechanisms.

China has always taken part in the process of conventional arms control, and attached importance to addressing humanitarian concerns caused by the abuse of conventional arms. As a full High Contracting Party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and its five Protocols, China always supports the work related to the Convention and honor its obligations under the Convention and annexed Protocols in real earnest. Since 1998, China has offered humanitarian assistance worth over 90 million RMB yuan to nearly 40 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, in the form of de-mining equipment, technical training, donation and etc., and provided training to nearly 500 de-mining technical experts.

China has attached great importance to fighting against illicit trade in small

arms and light weapons, actively participated in and earnestly implemented the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light weapons in All Its Aspects. In this regard, China has adopted a series of effective measures on legislation, law enforcement, capacity building and international cooperation. China played a constructive role in the negotiation of the Arms Trade Treaty, and attended the Conferences of States Parties to the ATT as an observer in two consecutive years. China hopes that the treaty could contribute to solving the problem resulted from the illicit trade of conventional arms, without prejudice to security, sovereignty, reasonable national defense requirements of each country, and legal arms trade among states.

China is open to the addition of new agenda item in light of the new situation, and would like to participate in relevant discussions in a constructive manner, including further elaborating China's views through informal consultations on the sidelines of the UNDC.

Madame Chair,

As the sole deliberative body in the field of multilateral disarmament under the framework of the United Nations, the UNDC has played an important role in setting priority agenda for multilateral disarmament negotiations over the past decades. However, in recent years, few progress was achieved in the existing multilateral disarmament machinery including the UNDC.

Under new circumstances, all parties should face the reality, bridge gaps in a pragmatic and positive manner, and make efforts to find a solution by consensus, so as to safeguard and enhance the status and role of the UNDC. Meanwhile, with new problems and challenges in areas of the international security and disarmament emerging one after another, the UNDC should bring its leading role into full play, consider and deal with various problems

in a timely manner in accordance with its own mandate, and make specific recommendations, so that it could achieve substantial progress conducive to the maintenance of international security and stability.

China stands ready to work with all parties to make positive progress in this round of review, thus injecting fresh impetus into the revitalization of the multilateral disarmament machinery.

Thank you, Madame Chair.