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Statement by Ambassador Yu Peiwen of the People's Republic of China
at the Plenary Meeting of the Committee on Disarmament held on
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This session of the Committee on Disarmament is about to conclude. Several delegations have reviewed and commented upon the work of the CD during the year. The Chinese Delegation began participating in the work of the CD only this year. With regard to the work of the CD this year, we are of the view that some progress has been made, and this is the result of the common efforts of various delegations.

We consider that main progress has been achieved in this respect. The Ad Hoc Working Groups established by the CD have already been able to enter concrete negotiations of a substantive nature on disarmament questions of common concern to all delegations, such as the prohibition of chemical weapons, the prohibition of radiological weapons, security guarantees for non-nuclear States and the elaboration of a Comprehensive Programme for Disarmament. Although at present the progress in the negotiations on different items varies in degree, this is after all a good beginning to the accomplishment of the task of the CD.

In connexion with this, in their general statements and during concrete negotiations, delegations have expounded upon their respective views and positions concerning questions related to disarmament, and have in various forms put forward proposals. All these are conducive to the mutual understanding by delegations of each others' positions. They have clarified the points in common and points of divergence of all sides on relevant questions and have provided the necessary basis for future consultations and negotiations to be continued.

We have also noticed that many delegations, in their ardent desire for genuine disarmament, have solemnly, seriously and actively participated in the work of the CD, and made their contribution. For instance, the Group of 21 submitted a working paper on the important item of the prohibition of chemical weapons. The group greatly promoted the establishment of this Ad Hoc Working Group which carried out comparatively useful negotiations. Also, at the initiative of some delegations, discussions were carried out in the CD, with the participation of experts, on the identification of seismic events and on the prohibition of chemical weapons. These meetings were welcomed by all sides and were conducive to negotiations on relevant disarmament questions. Moreover, a number of other delegations also put forward proposals and tests worth our attention. The constructive attitude adopted by these delegations has been a positive factor advancing the work of the CD.

Of course, when we talk about progress achieved by the CD this year, we recognize that such progress has been preliminary or may be even superficial. In any case, when we talk about progress achieved in this or that area, we cannot overlook the fact that there is an enormous gap between such progress and the desire of the peoples of the world for the cessation of the arms race, the reduction of the threat of war and taking practical actions in disarmament. At the same time we should constantly be vigilant towards those who pay lip-service to disarmament to conceal their arms expansion, thereby leading the disarmament negotiations astray.

From our participation in the work of the CD this past year, the Chinese Delegation has derived the following preliminary considerations, on which we would now like to make some brief remarks:

1. Disarmament negotiations are closely connected with the international atmosphere. It cannot be denied that this year's work in the disarmament field has, to a considerable extent, been adversely affected by the atmosphere of international tension. Several sovereign countries, such as Afghanistan and Democratic Kampuchea, continue to be the victims of occupation and invasion by foreign armed forces. The relevant resolution of the United Nations General Assembly on the cessation of foreign aggression and the withdrawal of occupation troops has not been implemented to date. The present reality is that a superpower is stepping up its expansion and aggression. Not only has the threat of war not been reduced, but the flames of war continue to spread. In such an international atmosphere, how can the statements and proposals made by a certain representative in the CD embody his goodwill for disarmament? How can an atmosphere of mutual trust be generated for the whole process of disarmament negotiations? Where are the guarantees for the security of the numerous small and medium-sized States?

2. Progress in disarmament negotiations depends mainly on political will. The agenda of the CD includes such items as the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament, a comprehensive nuclear test ban, security guarantees for non-nuclear States, the prohibition of chemical weapons and the prohibition of radiological weapons. The scope covered is quite broad and the working groups already established are certainly not small in number. But the most fundamental principle for the solution of disarmament problems is that the superpowers must take the lead in taking practical actions for disarmament. As is stated in the "Final Document" of the Special Session on Disarmament, the superpowers "bear a special responsibility" in this respect. Only this approach can reduce the threat of the enormous military superiority of the superpowers against the numerous small and medium-sized countries, and only this approach can create the necessary conditions for the further adoption of various disarmament measures jointly by other countries, including China. Whether the superpowers take the lead to reduce their own super-arsenals is a test of their political will. Such political will cannot be demonstrated or measured by the number of "Disarmament Proposals", "Working Papers" that are submitted. It has to be judged mainly by how much practical action they take for genuine disarmament.

3. Disarmament negotiations should be based on consultations among all the nations on an equal footing. Respect and importance should be accorded to views or ideas submitted on disarmament issues relating to their security in the course of our deliberations and negotiations by all States, whether large or small, whether they are nuclear States, States with few nuclear weapons, non-nuclear States and irrespective of the strength of their defence capabilities. The superpowers cannot impose their own views and ideas on the numerous small and medium-sized countries, nor should they reject in an unwarranted way all reasonable criticism directed at them, amendments, or other views different from their own. They even describe these as "setting up obstacles" and make arbitrary accusations in this regard. One cannot say that such "bullying" has not occurred in the plenary meetings or meetings of the working groups. Such irregularities must be stopped.

Moreover, in deliberating upon various issues, the CD must uphold the principles of the United Nations Charter and the norms of international relations. During the deliberations of the CD on the requests by six non-members for participation in the discussions of the CD on the questions of the prohibition of chemical

weapons, etc, one superpower, in order to block the request by Democratic Kampuchea, a member State of the United Nations under foreign occupation, had delayed for a rather long time the deliberations on requests made by the other States. It also attempted to have a completely illegal puppet regime fostered by foreign occupation troops take the place of the representative of the sole, legal government of Kampuchea, ie, Democratic Kampuchea to participate in the meetings. Such behaviour runs counter to the principled position of safeguarding the sovereignty of a State, upholding the United Nations Charter, adhering to the purposes of the non-aligned movement and opposing aggression and interference, and should be firmly resisted.

The task faced by the CD is an arduous one. However, we believe that as long as persistent efforts are made in accordance with the spirit mentioned above, we will be able to achieve due progress in the cause of promoting disarmament and safeguarding peace. The Chinese Delegation would like to strengthen co-operation with other delegations, and march forward together.

In conclusion, on behalf of the Chinese Delegation, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to delegations for their sympathy, understanding and friendly support. I wish also to express my profound gratitude to Ambassador Jaipal, the representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the secretariat staff for their contribution to progress achieved in the work of the CD and for the assistance they provided to us.