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Strengthening of the United Nations system: strengthening of the United Nations system

Letter dated 11 September 2020 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the position paper of the People's Republic of China on the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 128 (a).

(Signed) **Zhang Jun**
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to the United Nations

* [A/75/150](#).



Annex to the letter dated 11 September 2020 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Chinese, English and French]

Position Paper of the People's Republic of China On the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations

I. The year 2020 marks the 75th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations (UN) and the 75th anniversary of the end of the World Anti-Fascist War and the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression. Seventy-five years ago, with the determination to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind", we the peoples founded the UN as the most universal, representative and authoritative international organization and established an international order and system underpinned by the purposes and principles of the UN Charter. Thus began a new era in mankind's pursuit of peace and development.

Over the past 75 years, with peace as its mission, the UN has set up and operated a collective security mechanism, engaged in active mediation to settle disputes peacefully and deployed over 70 peacekeeping missions to conflict zones. In the past three quarters of a century, the UN has been instrumental in mitigating regional conflicts, preventing new world wars, and maintaining overall peace and stability in the world.

Over the past 75 years, with development as its goal, the UN has capitalized on the trend of economic globalization and mobilized resources on a global scale to establish and implement the Millennium Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. With its help, billions of people are marching toward modernization. Smallpox and many other infectious diseases that plagued humanity for millennia were eradicated. A large number of developing countries moved into the fast lane of development.

Over the past 75 years, with equity as its founding principle, the UN has promoted equality among countries, large and small, as well as the spirit of democracy. Under its auspices, the 193 Member States set international rules together, run global affairs together and share development fruits together.

The COVID-19 pandemic is compounding the once-in-a-century transformations unfolding in our world. We are entering a period of turbulence and change, and witnessing the rise of protectionism, unilateralism and bullying practices. Certain countries and political forces keep playing the blame game, clamoring for "decoupling", and pulling out of international organizations and agreements. What they are doing is sabotaging international cooperation, stoking confrontation between ideologies and social systems, and putting the world in serious jeopardy.

Such actions notwithstanding, peace and development remain the theme of our times. The rise of emerging markets and developing countries remains unchanged, the trend toward a multi-polar world remains unchanged, and continuous economic globalization despite twists and turns remains unchanged.

In this context, all countries need to look beyond the pandemic and find answers to major questions such as what the world will look like and what kind of UN the world needs. We should all work together to draw a new and better blueprint for the sake of succeeding generations.

II. The 75th anniversary of the UN presents important opportunities. As the world battles COVID-19, it is all the more important to renew the founding mission of the UN, forge international consensus on building a community with a shared future for mankind, and build an open, inclusive, clean and beautiful world that enjoys lasting peace, universal security and common prosperity.

1. Countries should jointly uphold the outcome of World Anti-Fascist War and oppose any attempt to turn back the clock of history. We must reject unilateralism, hegemonism and power politics. We must champion multilateralism, safeguard the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, defend the UN-centered international system and the international order underpinned by international law, and work together to make international relations more democratic, rules-based and equitable.

2. All countries are equal, irrespective of their size, strength or wealth. We need to respect other countries' independent choice of social system and development path, oppose interference in internal affairs, and promote a new type of international relations featuring mutual respect, fairness, justice and win-win cooperation.

3. We need to work for a new model of international development partnership that is more equitable and balanced, and consolidate the cooperation architecture with the UN at its core, North-South cooperation as the main channel and South-South cooperation as a supplement. We should strengthen international cooperation on poverty reduction and prioritize this endeavor in implementing the 2030 Agenda so as to eradicate extreme poverty as early as possible.

We must uphold the WTO-centered and rules-based multilateral trading regime, promote trade and investment liberalization and facilitation, and build an open world economy. We should all create an enabling environment for sustainable development and make economic globalization more open, inclusive, balanced and beneficial to all.

4. In view of the weaknesses and deficiencies exposed by COVID-19, we need to improve the governance system for public health security. We need to respond more quickly to public health emergencies and establish global and regional reserve centers of anti-epidemic supplies. We need to increase policy dialogue and exchange. All parties should put people's life and health front and center, place public health security high on the international agenda, and build a global community of health for all.

5. We need to respect nature, follow its ways and protect it. We need to seek harmonious coexistence between man and nature, pursue sustainable development of economy, society and environment as well as well-rounded human development, and improve global ecological conservation. We need to encourage green, low-carbon, circular and sustainable ways of life and production, and address climate change with concrete actions to protect our shared planet.

6. We need to advocate consultation, cooperation and shared benefits in global governance and adopt a Member States-led and action-oriented approach to improve the global governance system. The aim is to make it better reflect the changing international landscape and the aspirations and interests of the majority of countries, especially emerging markets and developing countries, and to tackle global challenges more effectively.

III. The 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly, taking place at this special moment, carries great significance. "The Future We Want, the UN We Need: Reaffirming Our Collective Commitment to Multilateralism", the theme of the commemoration events, is highly relevant. China hopes that all parties will focus on this theme, re-energize the international peace and development agenda, and bring hope and confidence to people around the world.

1. We need to strengthen solidarity and reject any politicization or stigmatization associated with COVID-19. We should fully leverage the key leadership of the World Health Organization (WHO), and take concerted global action to combat the disease. We need to increase information sharing, policy communication and action coordination, speed up the research and development of medicines, vaccines and testing, and strive for earlier breakthroughs. While maintaining vigilance against the virus, countries where conditions permit may reopen businesses and schools in an orderly fashion in compliance with WHO's professional recommendations, and make timely and calibrated adjustments as the COVID-19 situation evolves.

2. This year marks the beginning of the Decade of Action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We need to support relevant UN endeavors and put development at the center of international cooperation. Efforts should focus on poverty reduction, food security, education, health and other areas of common concern for developing countries. More resources should be pooled to support developing countries, including in funding, technology and capacity-building. They deserve a better external environment.

The impact of COVID-19 on developing countries deserves great attention from the international community. There must be joint actions to help countries in need pool resources to tackle COVID-19, stabilize the economy, and realize the SDGs as planned.

China is working with other G20 members to implement the Debt Service Suspension Initiative for the poorest countries. And we call for debt suspension over a longer time-frame. We need to bolster support for the hardest-hit countries under the greatest debt strain, and encourage international financial institutions and private creditors to take concrete actions to help this effort.

3. The international community should work toward full and faithful interpretation and effective implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement, and advance toward an equitable climate governance regime that is cooperative and beneficial to all. Biodiversity loss and the deterioration of the ecosystem pose grave risks to human development. As the host of the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, China stands ready to work with all parties for an ambitious, balanced and action-oriented post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

4. This year marks the 25th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women. The international community should further the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and highlight the protection of women and girls' rights and interests in COVID-19 response. The UN should focus more on ending violence, discrimination and poverty and bridging the digital gender divide, and increase the representation of women in the UN system.

5. China welcomes the global ceasefire appeal by Secretary-General António Guterres and calls for ceasefire and cessation of violence by all relevant parties as soon as possible. The Security Council needs to act as the international collective security mechanism, assume primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, and work for the political settlement of regional issues.

China strongly opposes any unfounded threat or use of force, unilateral sanctions and long-arm jurisdiction. No enforcement action shall be taken without Security Council authorization. The UN needs to improve the capacity of peacekeeping operations to fulfill their mandate, observe the three principles of "consent of parties, impartiality, and non-use of force except in self-defense and defense of the mandate", and help post-conflict countries build lasting peace.

The Palestinian issue is at the heart of the Middle East issue. China supports the Palestinian people's efforts to establish an independent Palestinian state that enjoys full sovereignty on the basis of the 1967 borders and with East Jerusalem as its capital. We support Palestine's greater participation in international affairs as a state. We also support Palestine's legitimate demands and all efforts that are conducive to the settlement of the Palestinian issue.

The two-state solution is the right way forward. Dialogue and negotiation between Palestine and Israel as equal parties should be advanced on the basis of relevant UN resolutions, the "land for peace" principle and the Arab Peace Initiative, among other international consensus and norms. More efforts are needed from the international community to promote peace in an objective and impartial manner.

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), endorsed by the Security Council in Resolution 2231, is an important outcome of multilateral diplomacy and a key element of the global non-proliferation architecture. Upholding the JCPOA is conducive to safeguarding multilateralism, the international system underpinned by international law, and peace and stability in the Middle East. China firmly upholds the authority of UNSCR 2231 and the validity of the JCPOA.

All stipulations in UNSCR 2231, including provisions on the lifting of arms embargo, should be implemented in good faith. The country which pulled out of the JCPOA has no legal right to trigger the "snapback" mechanism to reimpose sanctions on Iran unilaterally. China will work with the parties concerned and the broader international community to uphold the JCPOA and UNSCR 2231, safeguard multilateralism, and seek a political and diplomatic settlement of the Iranian nuclear issue.

Political settlement is also the only way forward for Afghanistan. China supports the Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace and reconciliation process. We encourage and support broad-based and inclusive dialogue and talks among relevant parties in Afghanistan, and hope that they will make independent decisions on the country's future, prevent the country from relapsing into a breeding ground or shelter for terrorism and extremism, and achieve lasting peace and all-round development at an early date. The withdrawal of foreign troops should be conducted in an orderly and responsible manner. The international community needs to step up coordination and increase input to facilitate peace, reconciliation and reconstruction in the country.

6. Bearing in mind that "a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought", nuclear-weapon states should abandon nuclear deterrence policies based on preemptive moves, reduce the role of nuclear weapons in national security policy, stop developing and deploying global anti-ballistic missile systems, and prevent weaponization and arms race in the outer space. These efforts are essential for global strategic balance and stability. The United States withdrawal from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty and its attempt to deploy land-based intermediate-range missiles overseas will severely disrupt global strategic stability and undermine international and regional peace and security. China firmly opposes such moves.

In nuclear disarmament, countries should follow a step-by-step approach based on the principles of "maintaining global strategic stability" and "undiminished security for all countries". Countries with the largest nuclear arsenals have special and primary responsibilities in nuclear disarmament. They should extend the New START Treaty and make further cuts to their nuclear stockpile. China will not accede to the unfair and unreasonable call to join any of the so-called trilateral arms control negotiations with the United States and Russia.

Countries should work together to uphold the authority and efficacy of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and strive for positive

outcomes at the tenth NPT review conference. We should firmly support the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and its early entry into force. We should uphold multilateralism, fully leverage the lead role of the UN, and faithfully observe the NPT, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, and UN Security Council Resolution 1540. The aim is to build a just and inclusive international non-proliferation regime.

7. Global cooperation is needed to address non-traditional security threats. We must guard against the resurgence of terrorism around the world. International counter-terrorism cooperation can only be strengthened, not weakened. Combating terrorism requires a holistic strategy that addresses both the symptoms and root causes to remove its breeding ground. Terrorism and extremism should not be linked with any particular country, ethnicity or religion, and there should not be any double standards. COVID-19 sounded the alarm on global biosecurity governance. Countries should work more closely to prevent the threat of biological weapons and bioterrorism and promote the sound development of biotechnology for the benefit of mankind. The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a toll on global food security. It is imperative that countries further modernize the agricultural sector, increase productivity, engage in international cooperation and work together for an equitable, reasonable, sustainable and stable agricultural trade order. More technological and financial support should be given to developing countries, especially the least developed countries, to better safeguard food security in these countries.

8. The international community should step up dialogue and cooperation, on the basis of mutual respect and mutual benefit, to use cyberspace for economic and social development, international peace and stability, and global well-being. It is essential to oppose cyber war and arms race and to foster a peaceful, secure, open, cooperative and orderly cyberspace. The pressing task is to develop an international code of conduct for cyberspace that is acceptable to all. China opposes any country's overstretching the concept of national security to restrict normal information and communications technology (ICT) development and cooperation.

The ICT revolution is advancing rapidly, and the digital economy is thriving. Together with them come increasingly salient risks and challenges to data security. It is urgent to make international rules in this area that reflect the views and interests of the majority of countries. To this end, China proposes the Global Initiative on Data Security, which mainly includes:

- standing against ICT activities that impair or steal important data of other States' critical infrastructure;
- taking actions to prevent and put an end to activities that jeopardize personal information through the use of ICTs and opposing massive surveillance over other States with ICTs as a tool;
- encouraging and respecting companies' independent decision to choose data storage location, and refraining from forcing domestic companies to store data gathered and obtained overseas in their own territory;
- refraining from obtaining data located in other States through companies or individuals without other States' permission; and
- ICT products and service providers should not install backdoors in their products and services.

China calls on all governments and companies to support this Initiative, jointly shoulder global responsibility in the digital era, and realize win-win cooperation and common development.

9. 5G security is a technical issue. Any related assessment and conclusion should therefore be made based on facts and science. Access to the 5G market should be decided by the market and companies involved.

As for governments, they should treat all 5G companies in a non-discriminatory manner, uphold the principles of free trade and market competition, and enable an open, fair, just and non-discriminatory business environment. No government should politicize 5G, or abuse the notion of national security to exclude or restrict a particular company.

Like other technologies, 5G belongs to mankind and should be used to benefit all.

10. Countries should conduct international human rights cooperation on the basis of equality and mutual respect, and reject the politicization of human rights and the practice of double standards. The Human Rights Council and other UN agencies should work in an impartial, objective and non-selective manner, facilitate international exchanges and cooperation on human rights, and promote balanced progress of the two categories of human rights, especially the rights to subsistence and development.

Under the current circumstances, it is imperative to address police brutality, failure in protecting people's rights to life and health during the COVID-19 response, and racial discrimination in certain countries, issues that have caused grave concerns of the international community. Only in this way can we realize the lofty goal of "human rights for all".

11. Countries should support the UN, UNHCR and other multilateral organizations as the main channel in addressing the refugee issue. Countries should work to ensure the effective implementation of the Global Compact of Refugees, and do their part under the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. It is important to address war, conflict, poverty, underdevelopment and other root causes, and create conditions for the voluntary, safe and sustainable return of refugees.

While unbalanced development is the main underlying cause of migration, migration has been a key driver for development. Efforts must be focused on development issues that lie at the heart of irregular migration, and prioritize sustainable development throughout the process of global migration governance.

Countries of origin, transit and destination should step up coordination and collaboration as they implement the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. The implementation of the Compact must be based on respect for national sovereignty, take into full account conditions of different countries, and accommodate the interests of all parties.

12. China supports better protection of intellectual property (IP) in the world. China is committed to improving the global governance system for intellectual property and promoting global IP governance featuring consultation, cooperation and shared benefits.

China will remain an active advocate, promoter and player in global cooperation on intellectual property and a staunch defender, participant and contributor of international IP rules.

In the face of COVID-19, countries need to step up international cooperation on IP protection, jointly address the challenges brought by the virus, and help create an enabling environment for innovators and market entities of all countries.

13. China appreciates and supports the efforts of Secretary-General António Guterres in advancing the reforms of the United Nations in recent years.

The UN needs to respond to the new situation and new tasks, and rally all parties together in a commitment to multilateralism. According to the mandates of relevant resolutions, the UN should work to improve efficiency, enhance its ability to respond to global challenges, strengthen the capacity of its development system to support Member States in implementing the 2030 Agenda, and enhance oversight and accountability. In terms of staff representation and resources distribution, the needs and interests of developing countries should be reflected as they account for four-fifths of the UN membership and 80% of the world population. All possible efforts should be made to meet the expectations from the international community.

IV. China is a founding member of the UN and the first country to sign the Charter. As the largest developing country and a permanent member of the Security Council, China embraces the lofty ideals of the UN by contributing to humanity's cause of peace and development and promoting with concrete actions a community with a shared future for mankind.

1. China follows a path of peaceful development. We have never sought invasion, territorial expansion or spheres of influence. We are committed to developing friendship and cooperation with all countries on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence. At the same time, we will firmly defend China's sovereignty and dignity, uphold China's legitimate rights and interests, and safeguard international justice and equity.

China actively looks for the settlement of major regional hotspots such as the Korean Peninsula nuclear issue, the Iranian nuclear issue, Afghanistan, Myanmar, the Middle East, and Syria. As we pursue solutions to global and regional hotspot issues, we seek to do it in a Chinese way.

China has dispatched more than 40,000 peacekeepers to over 30 missions, contributing more peacekeepers than any other permanent member of the Security Council. The Chinese peacekeepers are highly commended by both the UN and the host countries for their strict discipline and professionalism.

2. China has ensured that the basic needs of its 1.4 billion people are met. This year, China will lift out of poverty all of its rural residents living below the current poverty line, and complete the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects. This will be a great contribution to human progress.

China is advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at home in all respects, in line with its new philosophy of innovative, coordinated, green, open and shared development. China is among the first to have published a National Plan and two Progress Reports on the implementation of the Agenda, and has achieved early harvests in many areas.

China is working with other countries to put development front and center in the global macro policy framework and seek greater synergy between the Belt and Road Initiative and the 2030 Agenda. China is helping other developing countries within the South-South cooperation framework with their implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

China will continue to pursue a win-win strategy of opening-up and share its development experience and opportunities with countries around the world. China's effective COVID-19 response and head start in business reopening gives us a good

opportunity to promote an open world economy at a higher level and foster a new, dual-cycle development architecture with the domestic cycle as the mainstay and with domestic and international development reinforcing each other. Such efforts will contribute to global economic recovery and bring new development opportunities to the rest of the world.

3. No human right is more important than the right to a happy life. As a country that respects and safeguards human rights, China applies the universal principles of human rights in light of the national context, promotes the mutually reinforcing development of democracy and people's well-being, and pursues peace and development in parallel. It is committed to promoting and protecting human rights through greater development. This is a path of human rights development that suits China's national reality.

While vigorously promoting human rights at home, China follows the principles of equality, mutual trust, inclusiveness, mutual learning, win-win cooperation and common development. It takes an active part in UN human rights affairs, earnestly fulfills its international human rights obligations, and carries out extensive international cooperation on human rights. It is contributing Chinese wisdom and solutions to global governance on human rights.

4. China is firmly committed to safeguarding the UN-centered global governance system, the basic norms of international relations underpinned by the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, the authority and stature of the UN, and the central role of the UN in international affairs. As a member to nearly all universal inter-governmental organizations and a signatory to over 500 international conventions, China has faithfully fulfilled its international obligations and honored its international commitments. China will work with the global community to fight back attempts to undermine the international order or trample on international rules.

5. In the face of COVID-19, China has actively responded to the UN-initiated Global Humanitarian Response Plan: a cash donation of US\$50 million to WHO, assistance in kind to over 150 countries and international organizations, and medical exports to more than 200 countries and regions.

At the opening of the 73rd World Health Assembly, President Xi Jinping announced that China will provide US\$2 billion in international assistance over two years, work with the UN to set up a global humanitarian response depot and hub in China, establish a cooperation mechanism for its hospitals to pair up with 30 African hospitals, make China's COVID-19 vaccine development and deployment, when available, a global public good, and work with other G20 members to implement the Debt Service Suspension Initiative for the poorest countries. China will implement these measures in letter and spirit, and contribute to the building of a global community of health for all.

6. While facing formidable development tasks at home such as improving people's well-being, China has readily taken international responsibilities commensurate to its development stage and national conditions, and has taken a host of policy actions in response to climate change. China's climate target for 2020 has been met ahead of schedule, a significant contribution to the global response to climate change.

An active participant in global climate governance, China is among the first state parties to the UNFCCC, and has made important contribution to the conclusion of the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement and its implementation guidelines. Thanks to the concerted efforts of China and other parties, the 2019 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Madrid produced a set of decisions that upheld

multilateralism and reflected the consensus on climate governance, laying the groundwork for follow-up negotiations.

7. At the 2015 summit meetings commemorating the 70th anniversary of the United Nations, President Xi Jinping announced a host of important initiatives and measures in support of the work of the UN. All of them have now been delivered on the ground.

China has registered an 8,000-strong standby force and a 300-member permanent police squad for UN peacekeeping missions. Six of its standby contingents have been elevated to Level Three in the UN Peacekeeping Capability Readiness System. As such, China now has the biggest standby force and most varieties of contingents among all UN Member States. The China-UN Peace and Development Fund has provided a total of US\$67.7 million for over 80 projects, supporting the UN's efforts in areas such as peacekeeping, counter-terrorism, energy, agriculture, infrastructure, health and education.

China has assisted other developing countries with 180 poverty reduction projects, 118 agricultural cooperation projects, 178 aid-for-trade projects, 103 projects on ecological conservation and climate change, 134 hospitals and clinics, and 123 educational and vocational training institutes. The South-South Cooperation Assistance Fund has supported over 80 projects in more than 30 developing countries, injecting impetus for global sustainable development. China has also made important contribution to women's development in the world. With a donation of US\$10 million to UN Women, China is the largest contributor among developing countries. It has completed 133 health projects for women and children and invited over 30,000 women from other developing countries to training programs in China.

Under the new circumstances, China will continue to shoulder its responsibilities and make its contribution as a major country. It will provide more global public goods and contribute its share to world peace and development. China will work with countries around the world to uphold and carry forward multilateralism, join the UN on a new journey with renewed commitments, and build a community with a shared future for mankind.
