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Agenda item 8

General debate

Letter dated 29 September 2020 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of the written statement of the Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations in exercise of the right of reply to the remarks made by the Philippines to the General Assembly on 22 September 2020 (see annex).

I should be most grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 8.

(Signed) **Zhang Jun**
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative
of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations



Annex to the letter dated 29 September 2020 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Chinese and English]

Right-of-reply statement responding to remarks by the Philippines on the South China Sea at the general debate of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly

China expresses firm opposition to the remarks by the Philippines on the “2016 arbitral award” at the general debate of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly.

With regard to the arbitration and awards, China’s position is clear and consistent. The arbitral tribunal in the South China Sea arbitration established at the unilateral request of the Philippines disregards the fact that the essence of the subject matter of the arbitration is territorial sovereignty and maritime delimitation, exercises jurisdiction *ultra vires*, obviously errs in ascertaining facts and applying the law, and subsequently violates the principle of State consent, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and relevant international law. The awards rendered by the arbitral tribunal are null and void.

The Government of China has solemnly declared that China neither accepts nor participates in the South China Sea arbitration and neither accepts nor recognizes the awards. China’s territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests in the South China Sea shall under no circumstances be affected by those awards. China opposes and will never accept any claim or action based on those awards.

China will continue to abide by international law and basic norms governing international relations enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and continue to work with States directly concerned, including the Philippines, to resolve the relevant disputes in the South China Sea through negotiations and consultations on the basis of respecting historical facts and in accordance with international law, so as to maintain peace and stability in the South China Sea. China will continue to work with Association of Southeast Asian Nations countries to make the South China Sea a sea of peace, friendship and cooperation.
