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**Preparatory Committee for the 2005 Review  
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Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons**

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**Steps taken by the People's Republic of China to facilitate  
the Middle East peace process and promote the  
establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the  
Middle East**

**Report submitted by China**

China has been closely following the development of the Middle East situation. It has consistently attached great importance to the Middle East peace process and has actively supported efforts to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. In accordance with the provisions of the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, China would like to explain the steps it has taken to facilitate the peace process in the Middle East and promote the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons there.

**1. Support for all multilateral efforts to promote the Middle East peace process**

China is of the view that an early solution of the Middle East issue will not only be in the interests of the countries in the Middle East, but will also contribute to the peace and stability of the world. China therefore supports and actively participates in all international efforts that will help achieve peace and stability in that region.

China maintains that the Middle East issue should be resolved in a fair and reasonable manner through dialogue based on the relevant United Nations resolutions and on the principle of "land for peace", and that the peace, stability and development of the region should be speedily achieved.

China welcomes and supports the Arab Peace Initiative adopted at the 14th session of the League of Arab States Summit held in March 2002. China supports the Quartet performance-based road map to a permanent two-State solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and urges the Israeli and Palestinian sides to take effective measures and actively cooperate with the efforts of the various parties concerned to promote peace, so as to speedily implement this plan and achieve an early resolution of the Palestinian issue. In the view of China, the Syrian-Israeli and

Lebanese-Israeli peace negotiations are important elements of the Middle East peace process; an early start to such negotiations would aid in achieving genuine and comprehensive peace in the region.

**2. Active commitment to promoting peace and facilitating negotiations through the channel of bilateral relations**

China has established diplomatic relations with all the countries of the Middle East, has maintained good cooperation in various fields through bilateral contacts with countries in the region, and has actively promoted peace and facilitated negotiations there.

In its bilateral consultations and exchanges of visits with Palestine and Israel, China has consistently emphasized that peace negotiations are the only valid path to resolving conflicts. Meeting violence with violence can only deepen mutual hatreds. China appeals to the Palestinian and Israeli sides to exercise restraint and actively cooperate with the mediation efforts of the international community, so as to calm the conflict and return to the path of peace negotiations.

As the situation in the Middle East has evolved, Chinese leaders on several occasions have exchanged letters with the leaders of various countries in the Middle East to express the Chinese position. The Chinese Foreign Minister has, upon request or at his own initiative, telephoned the Israeli and Palestinian leaders or ministers of foreign affairs to elaborate on China's views of the Israeli-Palestinian situation, and urged the two sides to exercise restraint and prevent the conflict from escalating further so as to maintain stability in the region and create a favourable climate for an early resumption of peace negotiations.

**3. Active participation of China's special envoy on the Middle East issue in international efforts for peace**

In September 2002, in response to appeals from countries in the Middle East, especially the Arab countries, China appointed a special envoy on the Middle East issue. In November, the special envoy visited Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Israel and Palestine and held consecutive meetings with special envoys for the Middle East from the "Quartet" (the United States, the European Union, Russia and the United Nations) who were visiting the region. In May 2003, the Chinese special envoy visited Israel and Palestine, and visited Syria, Egypt, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Palestine and Israel in October 2003. During these visits, the special envoy set out China's position on promoting the Middle East peace process, and expressed China's support for and willingness to participate in all international efforts that will help the Middle East return to peace and stability, as well as China's willingness to participate actively in international meetings towards that end. The Chinese position was well received and taken seriously by all parties concerned. In December 2003, the special envoy attended an international meeting on the Geneva Initiative and expressed support for the efforts of all parties concerned to promote peace. The Chinese special envoy has consulted and maintained close contact with the Arab and Israeli sides and with other concerned parties in the international community.

**4. Support for efforts to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East**

China has already undertaken unconditionally not to be the first to use nuclear weapons and not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear

weapon states or nuclear-weapon-free zones, and has consistently supported efforts by countries to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of voluntary consultations. In 1992, on the occasion of its accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), China issued a solemn call to all nuclear-weapon states “to undertake to support the proposition of establishing nuclear weapon-free zones, respect the status of such zones and undertake corresponding obligations”.

China believes that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is conducive to preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and strengthening the international non-proliferation regime. In regions where tension prevails, the dangers of nuclear proliferation are even greater. From the very beginning, China has therefore clearly expressed its support for the efforts of the Middle East countries to turn the region into a nuclear-weapon-free zone, because it believes such efforts can help alleviate the tense situation in the region and contribute to the resolution of the Middle East issue.

China has always supported the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East within the United Nations framework. Every year since 1974, the General Assembly has adopted a resolution sponsored by Egypt on establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Egyptian president Mubarak has also put forward a proposal to build a zone free of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in the Middle East, and has appealed to all countries in the region to make active efforts towards this goal and engage in serious negotiations on this matter. China has consistently adopted a favourable attitude towards the foregoing resolution and proposal, and also supported the decision on the Middle East issue adopted by the 1995 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

China has also actively promoted, on a bilateral level, the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. During high-level meetings with the leaders of all countries in the region, China has always spoken highly of efforts made by countries of the region to establish such a zone, and consistently stood by its clear position on supporting the establishment of such a zone.

In December 2003, Libya decided to abandon its WMD programmes, including its nuclear weapons programme. China has commented positively on this development, believing that this step by Libya is favourable for maintaining the non-proliferation regime, and conducive to promoting the peace and stability of the region. China has also joined the international community in supporting efforts to achieve an appropriate resolution of the Iranian nuclear question through negotiations within the framework provided by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). China is of the view that positive steps taken by Iran will promote the process of denuclearization in the Middle East. China believes that Israel’s accession to the NPT and placement of all its nuclear facilities under IAEA comprehensive safeguards is essential for achieving the goal of accession to the NPT by all countries of the Middle East, as well as for strengthening the international non-proliferation regime.

Together with the international community, China is ready to continue making efforts and contributions towards the achievement of peace in the Middle East and the speedy establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons in the region.