



Fact Sheet: China: Nuclear Disarmament and Reduction of

2004/04/27

China stands for the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons and the conclusion of an international legal instrument for this purpose. As a nuclear-weapon state and a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, China has never shunned away from its own obligations in nuclear disarmament and has unilaterally undertaken some important measures contributing to nuclear disarmament. China has also worked to promote international effort in this regard.

I. Since the very first day when it came into possession of nuclear weapons, China has pledged not to be the first to use nuclear weapons at any time or under any circumstances. China has also undertaken unconditionally not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states and nuclear-weapon-free zones. China firmly opposes the policy of nuclear deterrence based on the first use of nuclear weapons. We call upon all nuclear-weapon states to renounce the policy of nuclear deterrence and undertake not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. China has never taken part in any nuclear arms race or deployed a single piece of nuclear weapon outside of the Chinese territory.

In January 1994, China formally presented a draft "Treaty on Mutual No-First-Use of Nuclear Weapons" to the United States of America, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and France and proposed that the five nuclear-weapon states begin consultations on this matter as soon as possible.

China seeks to reach arrangements on a bilateral basis with other nuclear-weapon states for mutual no-first-use of nuclear weapons. In September 1994, Chinese and Russian leaders declared their commitment to mutual no-first-use of nuclear weapons and non-targeting of such weapons at each other.

In June 1998, China and the United States announced the non-targeting of nuclear weapons at each other.

In April 2000, the five nuclear-weapon states-China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States, issued a joint declaration announcing the non-targeting of their nuclear weapons at any countries.

In April 1995, China issued a statement reaffirming its unconditional negative security assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon states and its commitment to offering positive security assurances. China appeals to other nuclear-weapon states to unconditionally provide negative and positive security assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon states and to conclude an international legal instrument to this end as soon as possible.

China has signed and ratified the relevant protocols to nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties that have been open to signature and assumed the relevant obligations.

II. China's development of a limited nuclear force is purely for the purpose of self-defence. China exercised great restraint in the development of its nuclear weapons.

From 1964 to 1996, China conducted 45 nuclear tests. Among the nuclear-weapon states, China has performed the least number of nuclear tests and possesses the smallest nuclear arsenal. It has never taken part in any nuclear arms race or deployed any nuclear weapons outside its territory.

Since the 1990s, China has gradually cut back on its nuclear weapons development program. The research and development site in Qinghai was closed. Then it was returned to civilian use in May 1995 after environmental clean-up.

III. China actively participated in the negotiations on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), making major compromise and sacrifice for the conclusion of the Treaty. China firmly supports CTBT. As a nuclear-weapon state and one of the 44 Annex II countries, China is well aware of its special responsibility for promoting the entry-into-force of the Treaty. China took an active part in all the three Conferences on Facilitating Entry-into-Force of the Treaty. China will continue to honour its commitment to a moratorium on nuclear-weapon test explosions.

On 29 July 1996, China declared moratorium on nuclear-weapon test explosions. In September 1996, China was among the first to sign the treaty.

In 1999, the Chinese Government completed its review of CTBT and submitted the Treaty to the National People's Congress. The Chinese Government is actively promoting an early ratification of the Treaty by the National People's Congress.

China is taking an active and constructive part in all the work of the Preparatory Commission of the CTBT Organization. China is earnestly preparing for the national implementation of the Treaty.

China has set up a specialized agency to prepare for national implementation of the Treaty, including the construction, operation and management of International Monitoring System stations. China has undertaken the construction of 12 stations, including six seismic stations, three radionuclide stations, two infrasound stations and one radionuclide laboratory. Close cooperation with the Preparatory Commission for CTBT has ensured smooth progress in all relevant work. At present, the primary seismic stations have been tested, radionuclide stations have begun trial operation, and the site survey of infrasound stations has begun. The construction of the National Data Centre has also started.

China has taken an active part in the negotiation of the on-site inspection operational manual. At present, China is discussing with the Provisional Technical Secretariat (PTS) for CTBTO about the Facility Agreement.

China hosted for three years in a row the Seminar on Regional Cooperation, On-Site Inspection Workshop and IMS Training Course in cooperation with the PTS.

In recent years, China has cosponsored the CTBT resolution in the First Committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

IV. China believes that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is conducive to preventing proliferation of nuclear weapons and promoting regional and global peace and security. We support and respect the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and WMD-free zones on the basis of voluntary consultations. China has unilaterally undertaken not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states and nuclear-weapon-free zones. China is active in promoting the conclusion of relevant international legal instruments.

China has undertaken from the very beginning of possessing nuclear weapons not to be the first to use nuclear weapons at any time and under any circumstances. China has also unconditionally pledged not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states or nuclear-weapon-free zones.

In 1973, China signed the protocol II to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin American and the Caribbean, pledging neither to use nor threaten to use nuclear weapons against the nuclear-weapon-free zone and countries in the zone, nor to test, manufacture, produce, store, install or deploy nuclear weapons, nor to allow their delivery means with nuclear weapons pass the countries' territory, territorial sea and airspace.

In 1983, China joined the Antarctic Treaty and Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, Including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies and has since undertaken relevant obligations

In 1987, China signed Protocols II and III of the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty, committed to respecting the region's position as a nuclear-weapon-free zone, not to using nor threatening to use nuclear weapons, nor conducting nuclear tests in the zone.

In 1991, China joined Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof and has since undertaken relevant obligations.

Upon the requests of Ukraine and Kazakhstan, the Chinese Government issued statements to provide security assurances to the two countries respectively in December 1994 and February 1995.

In April 1995, the Chinese Government issued a statement, reaffirming its unconditional negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon states and undertaking to provide positive security assurances.

In 1996, China signed Protocols I and II to African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty and has since undertaken not to use or threaten to use nuclear explosive device against nor to test such device in the nuclear-weapon-free zone.

In 2000, China together with other nuclear-weapon states issued a declaration, reaffirming the 1995 security assurances.

China supports the efforts made by the ASEAN countries to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone and has reached agreement in principle with ASEAN on the relevant questions in Protocol to the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty. China stands ready to sign the Protocol when it is open to signature.

China supports efforts made by the five Central Asian countries to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone. China has no difficulty with the current text of the Central Asian nuclear-weapon-free zone treaty and its protocol. China is willing to sign at an early date after an agreement is reached on the treaty and the protocol.

China supports the efforts made to free the Middle East from nuclear weapon and other WMDs, and hopes that the goal will be achieved at an early date. China joined consensus on the United Nations General Assembly resolutions on establishing nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

China respects and welcomes Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status.

China has called upon other nuclear-weapon states to provide unconditional security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon states and negotiate and conclude an international legal instrument in this regard at an early date.

China actively supports the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva to establish an ad hoc committee on negative security assurances and start substantive work and negotiations without delay.

V. In order to promote the international nuclear disarmament process, China opposes to the deployment of weapons in the outer space and is of the view that missile defence systems that disrupt global strategic balance and stability and lead to arms race including nuclear arms race should not be deployed.

In April 2002, China and the United Nations Department of Disarmament Affairs jointly sponsored an international seminar on arms control and disarmament affairs in Beijing. Participants engaged in in-depth discussions on the prevention of arms race in the outer space. Parties concerned reaffirmed their commitment to peaceful use of the outer space.

In June 2002, China and the Russian Federation, together with Vietnam, Indonesia, Belarus, Zimbabwe and Syria Arab Republic, jointly submitted to the Conference on Disarmament (CD) a working paper entitled "Possible Elements for a Future International Legal Agreement on the Prevention of the Deployment of Weapons in Outer Space, the Threat or Use of Force Against Outer Space Objects"(CD/1679), which attracted attention of all parties. Missions in Geneva have put forward amendments and suggestions to the working paper. China and Russian will further improve the working paper so as to lay a solid foundation for the negotiations on the relevant international legal instrument within the ad hoc committee on the prevention of an arms race in the outer space to be established by the CD.

China has for years cosponsored of the resolution on Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space in the First Committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

VI. China supports the conclusion of a multilateral, non-discriminatory and verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other explosive devices (FMCT).

In April 1997, China, together with the United States, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and France, issued a statement supporting an early conclusion of FMCT on the basis of the mandate contained in the Shannon Report.

In August 2003, China declared that it would accept the Five Ambassadors' Proposal on the work program of the CD and support the establishment of the relevant ad hoc committees to start substantive work on such important issues as nuclear disarmament, FMCT, prevention of an arms race in outer space and negative security assurances.

China has voted in favour of all the FMCT resolutions of at the First Committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

VII. In order to advance the nuclear disarmament process, China submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session a proposal for a comprehensive and interlinked nuclear disarmament process, which called on the nuclear-weapon states, inter alia, to negotiate immediately and sign a treaty on mutual no-first-use of nuclear weapons; to undertake not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states and nuclear-weapon-free zones; to conclude and ratify CTBT; to negotiate and conclude an FMCT; to negotiate, conclude and sign a convention on the comprehensive prohibition of nuclear weapons.

Over the years, China has cast favourable vote on the resolutions entitled Towards a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World: the Need for a New Agenda, Nuclear Disarmament, Follow-up to the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Legality of the Threat of Use of Nuclear Weapons and Conclusion of Effective International Arrangements to Assure Non-Nuclear-weapon states against the Use or Threat of Use of Nuclear Weapons, of the First Committee of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

VIII. China supports the intermediate nuclear disarmament measures proposed by non-nuclear-weapon states. China is ready to consider the implementation of relevant measures at an appropriate time and under appropriate conditions in the due course of the nuclear disarmament process.

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