



Statement by Ambassador Zhang Yishan on Cluster II (Freedom from fear) of the SG Report "In larger freedom: towards development, Security and human rights for all" at informal thematic consultations of GA 59th Session

(22 April 2005)

Mr. Facilitator:

The Chinese delegation wishes to make a few observations on the recommendations under Cluster II of the Secretary-General's report.

1. Collective security consensus

The Secretary-General's report points out, "the threats to peace and security include not just international war and conflict but civil violence, organized crime, terrorism and weapons of mass destruction". They "also include poverty, deadly infectious disease and environmental degradation." At the same time, "the threats we face today are interconnected", and "whatever threatens one threatens all". It is therefore imperative that collective action be taken to deal with various kinds of security threats and challenges. It coincides with China's proposal for a new security concept that emphasizes "mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and cooperation". We should attach equal importance to all types of threats and challenges and not stress one over or at the expense of another. At present, there are different perceptions of threats. Given the fact that internal conflicts are complex in nature, no generalization should be made that they all pose a threat to international peace and security. They should be analyzed in the context of their specific circumstances.

2. Non-proliferation and disarmament

China actively supports international efforts to prevent proliferation of WMD as well as their means of delivery. We very much wish to see a bigger role by the United Nations in this field. The SG's report attaches great importance to the 7th Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and expresses the hope that this Conference will make progress in areas such as nuclear disarmament, security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon states, the initiation of negotiations on a "fissile material cut-off treaty" and achievement of the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty. China supports all these objectives.

We also support efforts to further increase IAEA verification capacity by enhancing the universality of the IAEA's Additional Protocol on Safeguards. Regarding the proposal on the setting up of a multilateral nuclear fuel cycle centre, we think it is important and are open-minded about it. We believe that multilateral

arrangements in this field should and can only be explored, formulated and implemented through the widest possible multilateral discussions. During this process, the legitimate interests, rights and concerns of the broad numbers of the non-nuclear-weapon states, especially the developing countries should receive full understanding and respect.

We support the recommendations contained in the report regarding the promotion of the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the strengthening of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC). It must be pointed out in particular that the countries concerned must strictly abide by the provisions of the CWC and expedite the destruction of the chemical weapons they abandoned in other countries. While China supports the strengthening of the biological security regime, we believe that the questions related to the investigating mechanism referred to by General Assembly resolution 42/37 are important and sensitive ones and should therefore be treated cautiously.

At present, there are no universally recognized standards by which to determine whether an infectious disease constitutes a threat to international peace and security, nor is it likely for us to agree on operable standards in the short run. It is not appropriate for the Security Council, a body mainly dealing with incidents that pose significant threats to international peace and security, to get too involved in the prevention and treatment of infectious diseases.

China actively supports Security Council resolution 1540 as well as the work of the 1540 Committee. We hope that the resolution will be implemented effectively so as to contribute to the strengthening of the international non-proliferation efforts and to the promotion of international cooperation in this field. However, China has reservations regarding the welcome expressed in the SG's report to "Proliferation Security Initiative" (PSI). We believe that combating proliferation should be carried out through strengthening law enforcement cooperation within the existing framework of international law.

The report calls on states to adopt effective export controls covering missiles and other WMD delivery means, rockets and MANPADS, as well as ban the transfer of any such weapons and means of delivery to non-state actors. China supports these ideas.

The report also touches upon other issues of arms control, especially on small arms, light weapons and landmines. In principle, we support these proposals. The international community has yet to reach an agreement on the nature of an international instrument to regulate marking and tracing of illicit small arms, nor is there an agreement on whether an international legal instrument on illicit brokering should be formulated. States should continue consultations with the aim of reaching an agreement in this regard.

I'd like to take this opportunity to draw your attention to another important issue in the field of arms control, namely the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The SG's report did not touch upon this very important arms race issue. China believes that in the section on arms control, the outcome document of the Summit should stress the necessity and urgency of preventing an arms race in outer space and weaponization of outer

space. It should also state clearly that the international community should take effective measures as early as possible in this regard, including negotiating and concluding relevant international legal instruments in order to address this question appropriately.

3. Counter-terrorism

China upholds the fight against all forms of terrorism. We believe that only by addressing both the symptoms and root causes of terrorism can we exterminate this scourge. Cooperation in the fight against terrorism is in the common interest of the international community. Counter-terrorism cooperation must avoid politicization and double standards, and the coordinating role of the United Nations and the Security Council must be given full play. We are in favor of formulating expeditiously a comprehensive, global strategy against terrorism, reaching a consensus on the definition of terrorism and further improving the international counter-terrorism legal framework.

China welcomes the counter-terrorism strategy presented by the Secretary-General, which is based on five pillars. Member states should give serious consideration to this strategy and reach agreement on its contents.

To guarantee the effectiveness of the international fight against terrorism, member states and civil organizations must abide by the UN Charter and relevant principles of international law in their counter-terrorism cooperation. To address violations of human rights, which occur in the fight against terrorism, we should make full use of the existing mechanism of the Human Rights Commission, relevant treaty bodies and monitoring mechanisms of international humanitarian law. At present, we see no need to consider establishing new mechanisms.

China supports the strengthening of the international cooperation in combating organized crime and corruption. UNODC should focus its work on providing technical assistance in helping member states fulfill their obligations under relevant international conventions.

4. Use of force

Peaceful settlement of disputes is a fundamental principle of the UN Charter and international law. China has always advocated the peaceful settlement of international disputes and opposes the use or threat of force in international relations. In view of the differences in the causes of crises and their circumstances, it is unrealistic and may be highly controversial to form criteria that are universally applicable to all situations. We endorse the view that Article 51 of the Charter needs neither rewriting nor reinterpretation. The Charter has explicit provisions on the use of force, namely, except in case of self-defense against armed attacks, any use of force must have the authorization of the Security Council. Any "imminent threat" should be carefully judged and handled by the Security Council in view of the specific circumstances.

5. Peacebuilding Commission

China is favorably disposed toward the proposal for the establishment of a Peacebuilding Commission and believes that its main responsibility should be to help devise plans for the transition from conflict to post-conflict peacebuilding and to coordinate initiatives of the international community in this respect. It should also be primarily accountable to the Security Council. We are in favor of the creation of a Peacebuilding Support Office within the Secretariat based on the principle of efficiency and effectiveness. China appreciates the explanatory note provided by the Secretary-General concerning the function, structure and composition of the proposed Peacebuilding Commission. We are now in the process of carefully studying this document and we are willing to continue the exchange of views with others.

6. Peacekeeping

China supports the enhancement of UN peacekeeping operations. The concepts of Strategic reserves and civilian police standby capacity presented by the Secretary-General are innovative proposals. We hope that the Secretariat will flesh out these proposals as requested by the Special Committee for Peacekeeping Operations. The creation of new mechanisms require careful and thorough study so that their feasibility and effectiveness will be ensured, resources will be utilized in an integrated manner, their capacity will correspond to their tasks and the potentials of existing mechanisms will also be fully explored.

China supports that the UN strengthen its cooperation with regional organizations and arrangements in the field of peacekeeping, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the UN Charter.

7. Sanctions

Sanctions are one of the enforcement measures at the disposal of the Security Council as mandated by the Charter. Once the Security Council decides on imposing sanctions, all states have an obligation to strictly comply with the decision. It is the consistent position of China that sanctions must be approached very cautiously and must be based on the precondition that all means of peaceful settlement have been exhausted. Sanctions should be subject to strict criteria and time limits. Efforts should also be made to mitigate humanitarian consequences of sanctions. The United Nations should strengthen the monitoring of the implementation of sanctions and assist relevant member states in their capacity building.

Thank you, Mr. Facilitator.