Dear colleagues,

Currently, the international arms control, disarmament and nonproliferation situation is undergoing significant changes. Nuclear disarmament, nuclear nonproliferation, nuclear security and peaceful use of nuclear energy have become increasingly important on the international security agenda and attracted great attention from the international community. It is therefore of great value for the NATO to hold this conference to discuss how to maintain and enhance international nuclear nonproliferation regime and promote international arms control, disarmament and nonproliferation cooperation.

Now I would like to share a few thoughts with you on how to address current proliferation threats and challenges in Asia.

Over the past year, the Korean Peninsula nuclear issue has undergone a chain of significant development. The DPRK declared a satellite launch test, and then conducted the second nuclear test. The UN Security Council acted in response. The Six-Party Talks found itself in a stalemate. Meanwhile, parties concerned are exerting their continued efforts to try to break the deadlock, and seek to resolve the issue through political and diplomatic means. After experiencing severe challenges, denuclearization of the Peninsula is now faced with new opportunities.

As we all know, the Korean Peninsula nuclear issue has evolved throughout history against the political and security backdrop in Northeast Asia. It has always been closely related to peace and stability of the region. If it is properly dealt with, long term peace and stability in Northeast Asia can be realized. Otherwise, the security situation of the region will see further negative developments. Furthermore, the Korean Peninsula nuclear issue has too many things to do with the authority and effectiveness of the international nuclear nonproliferation regime. The goal of denuclearization of the Peninsula can only be realized by safeguarding peace and stability of Northeast Asia, and consolidating the international nuclear nonproliferation regime, which is not only in the strategic interests of all stakeholders, but also the common aspiration of the international community.

We believe that, like all countries in the world, countries in Northeast Asia sincerely hope that they can enjoy political stability and economic development, and that their people can live a peaceful and happy life. They all know that development of the country requires harmonious and smooth relations with the outside world, and a peaceful and stable security environment. The DPRK is no exception. To handle the Northeast Asia security and Korean Peninsula nuclear issue calmly and prudently, this judgment is the key.

Bearing this in mind, no matter how complicated and difficult the situation seems to be, in dealing with the Korean Peninsula nuclear issue, China always believes that it is imperative to respect the history and reality, take into consideration the big picture, and address the problems and difficulties on the surface together with the root causes. Only by pursuing a new security concept featuring mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and cooperation, surpassing differences in ideologies and social systems, respecting each other’s security interests, establishing a regional and international environment of security for all through a mutually beneficial way, can we eliminate factors that trigger proliferation of nuclear weapons in the region, and move toward the goal of denuclearization of the Peninsula.

China holds that, to properly deal with the Korean Peninsula nuclear issue, we should always bear in mind the following "musts":

1. Consider the historical and reality.
2. Address the problems and difficulties on the surface together with the root causes.
3. Establish a regional and international environment of security for all through a mutually beneficial way.

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First, we must firmly safeguard peace and stability of the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia. This region affords no more disturbances and chaos. They are not in the interest of any country. Safeguarding peace and stability is equally important as achieving the goal of denuclearization of the Peninsula. Therefore, China is always of the view that the Korean Peninsula nuclear issue must and can only be solved peacefully through dialogue and negotiations. We are firmly opposed to the use or threat of force at any time or under any circumstances. We urge all parties concerned to avoid intensifying the contradictions, or aggravating the tension.

Secondly, we must stick firmly to the goal of denuclearization of the Peninsula. Becoming a new nuclear-weapon state will not bring the DPRK or any other countries in the region true security, but will only lead to further deterioration of the strategic security environment and endless troubles for the future. Therefore, China is explicitly opposed to the DPRK developing and possessing nuclear weapons. We have never in any way assisted DPRK in its nuclear programme. Meanwhile, we also firmly oppose certain voices from other countries preaching about seeking and possessing nuclear weapons in the pretext of the situation in DPRK. All parties concerned should be dedicated to the goal of denuclearization of the Peninsula in order to free once and for all the Peninsula and the whole Northeast Asia from the threats of nuclear weapon proliferation, nuclear arms race, and nuclear war.

Thirdly, we must maintain the Six-Party Talks and try to restart the Talks at an early date. The Six-Party Talks has gone through ups and downs in the past few years with both success and setbacks. However, its role and contribution have been duly recognized by all parties as well as the international community. The goals of the Six-Party Talks are to achieve denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, to realize normal relations between relevant countries, and to establish a Northeast Asia peace and security mechanism and realize security for all countries in the region. History has proven that the Six-Party Talks has been able to take account of the interests and concerns of all parties and has served as an effective platform to solve the Korean Peninsula nuclear issue through dialogue and consultation. At present, all parties should, under the premise of adhering to the framework of the Six-Party Talks, improve the Talks in accordance with new situation, so that the Talks can bring more vitality to the Northeast Asia security cooperation.

Fourthly, we must be committed to establishing a new Northeast Asia order featuring mutual respect, mutual trust, common security and common development. All parties should take into account each other's reasonable concerns in a fair and balanced manner. They should try to achieve mutual understanding and trust through calm, patient, prudent and creative diplomatic efforts, eliminate root causes of regional conflict and trouble, enhance the sense of security of all parties including the DPRK, and promote common development and prosperity.

With common efforts of all parties, the current situation unfolds three positive aspects:

Firstly, all parties stick to the framework of the Six-Party Talks and believe it is the best platform to achieve denuclearization of the Peninsula and safeguard regional peace and stability.

Secondly, positive changes have taken place concerning the position of the DPRK. During Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao's visit to the DPRK last October, the DPRK indicated that there is no change in its goal to achieve denuclearization of the Peninsula, and it is willing to hold multilateral talks, including the Six-Party Talks, based on the result of its contact with the US. The DPRK also reiterated this position on the Northeast Asia Cooperation Dialogue.

Thirdly, positive interaction between relevant parties has increased. Some significant interaction between the DPRK and the US and the ROK since last August received international attention and welcome from the international community. A DPRK delegation visited the US. The US Special Representative for DPRK policy, Ambassador Stephen Bosworth visited the DPRK early this week. We cannot count on a couple of contacts to solve the issue. However, these efforts are important steps marching towards the right direction. We hope that parties concerned could make active endeavor to strengthen dialogue and develop bilateral relations with the DPRK, with a view to creating favorable atmosphere for the restart of the Six-Party Talks.

China attaches great importance to the Korean Peninsula nuclear issue. Over the past years, we have been keeping in close contact with all parties and working actively for the reconciliation and negotiation. We are playing a unique and constructive role in efforts to achieve the
denuclearization of the Peninsula and safeguard regional peace and stability. China is ready, together with parties concerned and the international community, to work for the restart of Six-Party Talks at an early date. We will continue to make unremitting efforts to achieve the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, promote normalization of bilateral relations between countries concerned, and maintain lasting peace and stability in Northeast Asia.

Thank you for your attention.

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