Statement by Mr. Kang Yong,
Representative of Chinese Delegation
at the Thematic Debate on Nuclear Weapons
at the 63rd Session of the UNGA First Committee
(New York, 16 October 2008)

Mr. Chairman,

It is of great and realistic significance to move forward the nuclear disarmament process and to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in national security policies in order to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, enhance mutual trust and improve international security environment.

Currently, the multilateral nuclear disarmament is faced with not only challenges but also opportunities. On the one hand, the multilateral nuclear disarmament process is in stalemate. The nuclear non-proliferation regime is yet to be perfected. Regional nuclear non-proliferation hotspot issues are still outstanding. The road to a world free of nuclear weapons is still long and bumpy. On the other hand, the new NPT review process has started, in which the states parties are making their efforts to achieve a positive outcome. A number of nuclear disarmament initiatives also come forth. All these provide rare opportunities for the international community to push forward the nuclear disarmament process.

Mr. Chairman,

Thorough destruction of nuclear weapons and establishment of a world free of nuclear weapons are the common wish of the international community. China always strives for this goal and makes its own contribution to it.
China actively advocates and practices the new security concept featuring mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and cooperation, and China all along commits itself to building up a sound regional and international security environment. As nuclear-weapon state, China has firmly pursued the policy of no-first-use of nuclear weapons at any time and in any circumstances. China has committed unconditionally not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states and nuclear-weapon-free zones. China supports the conclusion of international legal instruments on complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons. China faithfully carries out the obligations in the NPT. China has never taken part and will never take part in any nuclear arms race. China has never deployed nuclear weapons outside its own territories.

China respects and supports efforts by relevant countries and regions to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of consultations among themselves and voluntary agreements in light of actual regional conditions. China has signed all the protocols of the treaties on nuclear-weapon-free zones that are open for signature.

China attaches great importance to the new NPT review process and takes part in it constructively. China will work with other states parties in order to continuously maintain and enhance the authority, universality and effectiveness of the Treaty.

China actively promotes the early entry into force of the CTBT. China commits itself to the early ratification of the CTBT. China also actively takes part in the preparatory work for the CTBTO. Before the entry into force of the CTBT, China will honor its commitment of moratorium on nuclear test.

China supports the CD to reach a comprehensive and balanced program of work and to start negotiations on a multilateral, non-discriminatory and internationally verifiable FMCT on the basis of that.

Mr. Chairman,
China always believes that any nuclear disarmament measures, including various intermediate measures, should observe the guidelines of "promoting international strategic stability" and "undiminished security for all". The nuclear disarmament should be a just and reasonable process of gradual reduction towards a downward balance. The two states with largest nuclear arsenals bear special and primary responsibility for nuclear disarmament. They should further reduce their nuclear arsenals in a verifiable and irreversible manner and seriously implement the nuclear disarmament treaties already concluded, so as to create conditions for the final goal of complete and thorough nuclear disarmament.

The authority, universality and effectiveness of the NPT should be continuously safeguarded. The nuclear disarmament principles and measures set out in the Final Document of the NPT 2000 Review Conference should be reflected in new NPT review process.

International efforts on issues such as nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation and prevention arms race in outer space are mutually reinforcing and complimentary to each other. Safeguarding and enhancing international nuclear non-proliferation regime, as well as ensuring the impartiality of the nuclear non-proliferation efforts, will contribute to eliminating the motivation of seeking nuclear weapons. To prevent the deployment of weapons in outer space is conducive to maintaining global strategic balance and stability, and will prevent arms race including nuclear one.

Mr. Chairman,

In order to earnestly promote the nuclear disarmament process, China maintains that nuclear weapon states should adopt the following measures:

(a) Abandoning the policies of nuclear deterrence based on the first use of nuclear weapons and lowering the threshold for using nuclear weapons;

(b) Undertaking not to be the first to use nuclear weapons at any time or under any circumstances; to refrain unconditionally from using or
threatening to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States or nuclear-weapon-free zones; and to conclude relevant international legal instruments thereupon;

(c) Honoring their commitment not to target their nuclear weapons against any countries, nor to list any countries as targets of nuclear strikes;

(d) Withdrawing and repatriating all nuclear weapons deployed outside their own territories;

(e) Abandoning “nuclear umbrella” and “nuclear sharing” policies and practices;

(f) Not developing easy-to-use low-yield nuclear weapons;

(g) Taking all necessary steps to avoid accidental or unauthorized launches of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

China is ready to work with other countries and make unremitting efforts to continuously push forward the nuclear disarmament process and realize the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.