CONVENTIONAL DISARMAMENT

Basic position of the Chinese delegation

Working paper submitted by China

1. While emphasis is put on nuclear disarmament, the importance and urgency of conventional disarmament must not be overlooked. In fact, there exist between them organic relations.

   (a) Conventional and nuclear armaments form the basic components of the military capacity of both super-Powers as well as the two major military alliances that confront each other;

   (b) With the advance in science and technology, conventional weapons tend to become increasingly lethal and destructive. During the forty-odd years since the Second World War, millions of lives have been lost in regional wars and conflicts fought with conventional weapons;

   (c) There is no insurmountable barrier between a conventional war and a nuclear one. If a conventional war should break out in a region where nuclear and conventional arms are concentrated on a large scale, it is highly possible that it would escalate into a nuclear war;

   (d) Conventional arms are often used as means of intervention, subversion, aggression and occupation against sovereign States;

   (e) The lion's share of nearly $US 1 trillion in military expenditure worldwide goes to conventional arms, consuming a huge amount of resources which otherwise might be used to benefit mankind. It is particularly intolerable that the arms race should take away so many valuable resources when the world is still beset with hunger and poverty.
Therefore, it is totally necessary to pursue the drastic reduction of conventional armaments along with nuclear disarmament.

2. The global conventional arms race is a race between the super-Powers which possess the largest and most sophisticated conventional arsenals. Bearing a special responsibility for the process of conventional armaments reductions, these two countries should take the lead in halting forthwith the conventional arms race, particularly the research, development, testing, production, deployment and stockpiling of new types of conventional weapons, and reducing their conventional armaments and armed forces substantially, first and foremost their new, heavy offensive conventional arms. After reduction takes effect, the weapons involved should be destroyed on the spot while forces disbanded. Neither should be transferred to other areas.

3. The two major military alliances should work to reach agreement through serious negotiations on the drastic reduction of conventional armaments in Europe, a region known to have a high concentration of conventional weapons, with a view to achieving a military balance at the lower level. In the mean time, the conventional armaments of the super-Powers in other parts of the world should also be substantially reduced. This is essential to world peace and security.

4. The conventional arms of all countries should not be used other than for self-defence. Every country should undertake to refrain from the threat or use of force in its international relations, and from armed intervention, aggression or military occupation against others with its conventional armed forces. All acts of armed intervention, aggression and military occupation against other countries must be stopped, and all troops engaged in aggression or occupation against other countries must be withdrawn. With the progress in conventional disarmament, all troops stationed in other countries should be withdrawn and all military bases in other countries dismantled.

5. Every country is entitled to take part, on an equal footing, in the consideration, negotiation and settlement of the questions relating to conventional disarmament.

6. Every conventional disarmament agreement should contain provisions on necessary and effective measures of international verification.

7. The central role of the United Nations in the field of conventional disarmament should be brought into full play. Negotiations on conventional disarmament could be conducted either multilaterally or bilaterally. In either case, however, the United Nations should be kept informed of the development in these negotiations. In addition to the continued regular deliberation by the United Nations Disarmament Commission on how to facilitate the process of conventional disarmament, the Conference on Disarmament should also start as early as possible to tackle the issue of conventional disarmament.