

**Editorial Comment:** This paper is a policy study paper on the history and development of China's nuclear weapons strategy and the evolutionary shaping of China's nuclear doctrine by a senior Chinese foreign policy scholar. JCIR occasionally welcomes policy study papers – also papers which reflect official Chinese viewpoints. We believe that publishing papers like this in English can play an important role in fostering dialogue on China's foreign policy, and can provide an insight into Chinese foreign policy thinking even though the style and argumentation of the paper differ from Western academic standards. Any conclusion, implication, or opinion expressed in this paper is that of the author and does not necessarily represent the standpoint of JCIR.

## On China's Nuclear Doctrine

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**Abstract:** Nuclear weapons have played an important role in China's national strategy. China's nuclear doctrine has a very strong continuity. Nevertheless, China has made readjustments in its nuclear doctrine according to the changes of its internal and external situation and its general strategic threat perception. China's nuclear doctrine has experienced a process of evolution from anti-nuclear blackmail to minimum deterrence. There are five major parts in China's nuclear doctrine: policy of declaration, nuclear development, nuclear deployment, nuclear employment, and nuclear disarmament. Because China is faced with a different situation from other nuclear powers and has its own strategic culture, China has a nuclear doctrine with its own characteristics. China's nuclear doctrine has been affiliated with and has served the national development strategy, national security strategy, national defense policy and military strategy of China.

### History of China's Nuclear Doctrine<sup>2</sup>

China's decision to develop nuclear weapons dates from the late 1950s when China was faced with a serious nuclear threat from the United States. During the first Taiwan Strait Crisis from September 1954 to April 1955, U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff put forward a proposal to U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower that the United States should launch atomic attacks against China's strategic targets (Xia, 2002: 158-159). Furthermore, after getting permission from Dwight Eisenhower, on March 15, 1955, U.S. Secretary of State Dulles said to news media

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that the United States was seriously considering the use of tactical nuclear weapons during the crisis (Xia, 2002: 159). In 1958, during the second Taiwan Strait Crisis, U.S. Defense Department and Joint Chiefs of Staff asked again to launch nuclear attacks against China (Xia, 2002: 159). In the context, on June 21, 1958, Mao Zedong (1993: 374), Chairman of Chinese Communist Party Central Committee and Central Military Commission (CMC), said at an expanded plenary session of the CMC, that other countries would look down on us if we do not have atomic bombs, so we should develop some atomic bombs, hydrogen bombs and intercontinental missiles, which can be achieved within ten years.

On October 16, 1964, China successfully conducted its first test of an atomic bomb. On the first day of gaining nuclear weapons, China declared its nuclear policy as follows:

- China conducted the nuclear test only for the purpose of defense
- Not to be the first to use nuclear weapons at any time or under any circumstances

China had always held the belief that all nuclear weapons should be prohibited and all those in existence should be destroyed (Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, 1995: 27).

Afterwards, the Chinese Government added another important principle to the policy: “unconditionally not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon states or nuclear weapon-free zones” (Ibid.). Until now, the four principles have remained important parts of China's current nuclear doctrine.

### **Evolution of China's General Strategic Threat Perception**

China's general strategic threat perception has experienced an evolution. During the period of the Cold War, in the mid-1960s, China regarded both superpowers - the U.S. and the Soviet Union - as its major enemies. From the end of the 1960s to the late 1980s, especially since the armed conflicts on the border with the Soviet Union in 1969 and then U.S. President Nixon's visit to China in 1972, China regarded the Soviet Union as its major enemy. Since the end of the Cold War, China's general strategic threat perception has fundamentally changed. Now,

China no longer regards any other country as its enemy. Also, China has attached significant attention to the impacts of non-traditional security challenges on international relations, which have rapidly been increasing since the September 11 incident.

Non-traditional security challenges are also labeled as global problems, transnational problems or low politics problems; including terrorism, proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), piracy, environmental pollution, global warming, population explosion, drug trafficking, international crimes, HIV/AIDS, and so on. Non-traditional security threats have two major characteristics. One is that they exist all over the world and are related to all human beings. Another one is that they threaten the existence and development of humanity. So major powers should abandon Cold War mentalities and accept the new security concepts based on cooperative security and common security.

At the same time, China also has some strategic concerns:

#### *How to Maintain International Strategic Stability*

The framework of strategic stability between major powers is the foundation of global strategic stability. During the Cold War, strategic stability between major powers mainly consisted of stability of arms races and stability of crisis. Since the end of the Cold War, both the U.S. and Russia have reduced their strategic nuclear weapons. So it is now very possible to avoid a nuclear arms race. However, major powers must make great efforts to avoid a security dilemma, which may lead to a nuclear arms race between them. Major powers should maintain global strategic balance and stability and vigorously advance nuclear disarmament. All nuclear-weapon states should fulfill, in good faith, obligations under Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and publicly undertake not to seek permanent possession of nuclear weapons.

#### *Missile Defense System*

A global missile defense program will be detrimental to international strategic balance and stability, undermine international and regional security, and have a negative impact on the process of nuclear disarmament. For example, if the U.S. increases the number of interceptors

of its strategic missile defense system, China has to increase the number of its intercontinental nuclear missiles in order to maintain the capability of its minimum nuclear deterrence because 3-4 interceptors can intercept one attacking warhead. This means that China has to have one nuclear warhead, which can penetrate the U.S. missile defense system in order to hit the United States after being attacked first by American nuclear weapons.

### *U.S. Nuclear Strategy*

Issues over Taiwan, the South China Sea, and the Diaoyu Islands may lead to China-U.S. armed conflicts. Because the U.S. has the largest nuclear arsenal in the world and continues to pursue the nuclear strategy based on the policy of first-use of nuclear weapons, China has to maintain the minimum nuclear deterrence capability. If the U.S. increases the number of interceptors of its missile defense system, China has to increase its nuclear warhead count.

### **The Role of Nuclear Weapons in China's Military Strategy**

Nuclear weapons have been playing an important role in China's national and military strategy – though not a key role. However, they have not played a key role. China's nuclear doctrine has gradually experienced the process change from a counter-nuclear blackmail strategy to a minimum deterrence strategy. Now the most important task of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) is to win partial wars in light of modern technology. Conventional forces are still the major implements used to win these kinds of wars. The major task of China's nuclear weapons is to deter the enemy from launching an initial nuclear attack against China.

From China's initial test of a nuclear weapon on October 16, 1964, to the mid-1980s, China's nuclear doctrine has been the counter-nuclear blackmail strategy. During the period, China's nuclear weapons were few and did not reach the standard of the minimum deterrence strategy. This strategy would inflict an unaffordable loss by nuclear retaliation on any superpower that first launched a nuclear attack against China. Furthermore, during this period, both Chinese Government and the PLA did not accept the concept of nuclear deterrence. Some Chinese experts even regarded the nuclear deterrence as a means for the superpowers to

impose nuclear blackmail on other countries.

Since China's acquisition of nuclear weapons, it has not only broken the superpowers' nuclear monopolization, but also generated the capability to deny nuclear blackmail from these superpowers. Identified below are some of the major features of the counter-nuclear blackmail strategy:

*1) The counter-nuclear blackmail strategy was established on the foundation of the concept of people determining the results of wars instead of the theory of nuclear taboo*

The basic reasons for China developing the counter-nuclear blackmail strategy were:

- Nuclear weapons have two distinct characteristics. First, they are weapons of mass destruction that can kill thousands of people. Second, nuclear weapons cannot determine the results of wars
- Territorially, China is very big with a large population, so this would provide an ample amount of army and militiamen for a people's war in China against foreign invaders if necessary

*2) The counter-nuclear blackmail doctrine was a comprehensive strategy*

From October 1964 to 1985, China was prepared to fight a war at short notice, on a large scale, and in which nuclear weapons might be used. According to the guideline of China's military strategy of active defense, it sped up the development of missiles with nuclear warheads. At the same time, China actively prepared for defending against nuclear wars.

In October 1966, China conducted its first flight test of a medium-range missile with a nuclear warhead. On May 18, China tested its inter-continental ballistic missile, which flew successfully from West China to the South Pacific. Since then, China has been able to attack a target on another continent.

From 1964, China began to build the areas of the big and small Third Defense Line. After the Armed Conflict between China and the Soviet Union in 1969, the Ninth National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party declared that China must be prepared to fight a war at short notice, on a big scale, and involving nuclear weapons from both the Soviet Union and the U.S.

From that point on, China began to establish air-raid shelters, some of which withstand nuclear attack, on a big scale throughout the country. In 1972, Chairman Mao Zedong put forward the concept of “Digging deep shelters, Accumulating food in big stockpile, and Not seeking hegemony”, which became the national strategy for China, guiding the process of the country and the process of fighting a war at short notice on a large scale and in which nuclear weapons might be used.

*3) China's counter-nuclear blackmail doctrine held the view that winning a war will require conventional weapons*

Preparation to fight nuclear wars meant that China not only prepared to defend against surprise nuclear attacks from a superpower, but also sought to defeat an invading enemy with conventional weapons.

Since 1985, China has gradually transformed its nuclear doctrine from a counter-nuclear blackmail strategy to a minimum deterrence strategy. The major reasons for this transformation have been as follows:

- With many years of great efforts, China has made great progress in developing its strategic nuclear forces. In September 1989, China finished establishing an integrated nuclear war-fighting system, which can effectively carry out strategic retaliation
- Since 1986, China has accepted the concept of nuclear deterrence and has regarded the nuclear deterrence as part of its nuclear doctrine
- After the PLA's large conventional force reduction, the importance of nuclear weapons in China has been increased. Since 1984, the PLA's Second Artillery has entered the list of day-to-day combat readiness on duty. So carrying out the minimum deterrence strategy has been beneficial for preventing nuclear war against China

### **The Foundation of China's Nuclear Doctrine**

There are two basic starting points for China's nuclear doctrine: China's national security and humanitarianism.

*1) The maintenance of China's national security is the fundamental motivation behind the development of nuclear weapons*

China has used its nuclear weapons as a means to prevent its enemies from imposing war on the Chinese people. China developed its nuclear weapons under a very special security environment during the Cold War, in which China was faced with nuclear threats from one or even two superpowers.

*2) Humanitarianism is one of the most important factors for China in developing its nuclear doctrine*

From the first day that China successfully tested its nuclear weapons, it has held that these weapons must be totally banned and thoroughly destroyed. China committed itself to never being the first to use nuclear weapons at any time or under any circumstances. This also means that China has regarded humanitarianism, which focuses most of all on the lives of people, as one of the pillars of the Chinese nuclear doctrine. Compared with the nuclear strategy of MAD (Mutual Assurance of Destruction) of the U.S. and the Soviet Union during the Cold War, the Chinese doctrine has commanded higher morality within the international community.

### **Major Features of China's Nuclear Doctrine**

China's current nuclear doctrine can be characterized as follows:

- China has implemented a self-defense nuclear strategy (Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, 2009: 51)
- China has a small amount of nuclear weapons only for self-defense (Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, 2000: 2)
- China has committed itself not to be the first to use nuclear weapons at any time or under any circumstances
- China has committed itself unconditionally not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states or nuclear weapon-free zones
- China does not participate in any nuclear arms race, and has never deployed nuclear

weapons abroad (Ibid.)

- China maintains a small in number yet effective nuclear strength of counterattack. In order to deter possible nuclear attacks against China by other countries, any nuclear attack by other countries against China would lead to China's retaliatory counterattack (Ibid.)
- The numbers of China's nuclear weapons have been maintained at relatively low level, and the scope, structure, composition and development of them are consistent with China's military strategic guideline of active defense (Ibid.)
- China's nuclear forces are commanded directly by China's Central Military Commission (Ibid.: 5)
- China has adopted an extremely prudent and responsible policy towards the management of nuclear weapons, created rigorous rules and regulations, and taken strict preventive measures so as to have assured the safety and reliability of its nuclear weapons (Ibid.)
- China's nuclear force is mainly responsible for deterring other countries from using nuclear weapons against China, and for conducting nuclear counterattacks. China's nuclear force takes as its fundamental mission the protection of China from any nuclear attack. In peacetime the nuclear missile weapons of China are not aimed at any country. But if China comes under a nuclear threat, the nuclear missile force of China will go into a state of alert, and get ready for a nuclear counterattack to deter the enemy from using nuclear weapons against China. If China comes under a nuclear attack, the nuclear force of China will use nuclear missiles to launch a resolute counterattack against the enemy

During the readjustment of the PLA in the late 1990s, the PLA Second Artillery force reduced its outdated equipment, adjusted part of organizations, and removed and merged some organic units (Ibid.: 3). Subsequently, the PLA Second Artillery force increased the proportion of technical units, and its structure has further tended to be reasonable (Ibid.). Until 2008, the PLA Second Artillery force has had weapon systems of short-range, mid-range, long-range



and intercontinental missiles, and has possessed the capability of quick reaction and mobile war-fighting (Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, 2009: 51).

American scholars hold that China is modernizing “the PLA's nuclear capability through the creation of a small yet more accurate and versatile triad-based strategic and tactical missile force” (Swaine, 2009: 38). According to “SIPRI Yearbook 2007: Armaments, Disarmament and international security”, China has 20 CSS-4 ICBMs and 35 CSS-5 medium-range missiles (Stockholm Institute of International Peace, 2007: 712). None of this has been confirmed.

### **The Structure of China's Nuclear Doctrine**

Similar to the nuclear doctrines of other nuclear-weapon states, China's doctrine has composed five policies: policy of declaration, nuclear development, nuclear deployment, nuclear employment, and nuclear disarmament. Because of China's strategic culture and its situation, its nuclear doctrine has the following characteristics:

#### *1) The declared policy of China's nuclear doctrine is no-first use of nuclear weapons and self-defense*

From the start, China has made it very clear that it will not use nuclear weapons first at any time or under any circumstances. No-first use of nuclear weapons has had strategic significance and is based on deep consideration.

China believes that the final results of wars are decided by people instead of advanced weapons and WMD. The most significant foundation for China's national defense is the concept of People's War. Therefore, the implementation of a policy of no-first use of nuclear weapons will affect the results of wars in the future.

The sacred commitment to no-first use of nuclear weapons fully reflects the point that China's holding of nuclear weapons is completely for self-defense only. China has been compelled to develop nuclear weapons as a deterrent.

This no-first use policy allows China to command high morality in the international

community. The countries and people that use nuclear weapons during invading wars will be viewed as pariahs of humanity in the years to follow.

China's final purpose in developing nuclear weapons is to destroy nuclear weapons. The policy of no-first use is beneficial because it encourages the international community to share this objective.

*2) China's policy of nuclear development is the building of a lean and effective strategic nuclear force*

Chinese national security has mainly depended on a foreign policy of peace and the integrated power of people's war. Nuclear force is one of the most important pillars and parts of China's armed forces. However, it is not the basis and the core of China's national defense forces. In order to reach the goal of deterring other countries from launching nuclear attacks against China, China must develop a strategic nuclear force with the capability of basic means of retaliation.

China has persisted in the principle of limited development of nuclear weapons, attaching a lot of importance to building a lean and effective strategic nuclear missile force. China does not seek the superiority of numbers in its nuclear force or to compete with other countries.

China has taken a very self-restrained attitude towards the development of nuclear weapons, so the Chinese nuclear arsenal has been kept at a minimal level for self-defense.

*3) China's policy of nuclear weapons deployment is to maintain a second strike capability*

China has focused on maintaining this capability in its nuclear weapons deployment; that is the capability of nuclear retaliation. China has never deployed nuclear weapons outside of it.

In 1979, the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party made the decision to build the "Great Wall" Project, the purpose of which was to enable China's land-based strategic nuclear force to be able to survive and retaliate after suffering a first nuclear strike by other countries.

In the summer of 1995, the "Great Wall" Project, under the Second Artillery, was completed. Therefore, the Chinese land-based strategic nuclear force has underground

positions for fighting, defending, being deposited, commanding and living. Even if struck by nuclear warheads launched from other countries, China's land-based strategic nuclear force can retaliate in ten minutes, or after a few days, or even live for one month in the underground bunkers (Zhang and Qin, 2006).

Some Western experts have said that the Second Artillery deploys land-based strategic nuclear missiles in "underground homes" hundreds of meters below ground, which allows them to endure hits from some nuclear bombs, equivalent to hundreds of thousands of kilotons of TNT.

Strategic nuclear submarines are also an important capability of a second strike; they are beneficial for improving strategic stability between China and other nuclear powers. As Deng Xiaoping said, "our strategy has always been defense and we will continue its strategic defense in the next twenty years, in which nuclear submarines are also weapons of strategic defense" (Office of Literature Research of the Central Committee of Chinese Communist Party, 2004: 512).

#### *4) China's policy of nuclear employment is self-defense and retaliation*

China has persisted in the principle of self-defense and retaliation. The CMC has directly controlled and commanded the nuclear force of China.

The Second Artillery Force sticks to China's policy of no first use of nuclear weapons, implements a self-defensive nuclear strategy, strictly follows the orders of the CMC, and takes it as its fundamental mission the protection of China from any nuclear attack. In peacetime the nuclear missile weapons of the Second Artillery Force are not aimed at any country. But if China comes under a nuclear threat, the nuclear missile force of the Second Artillery Force will go into a state of alert, and get ready for a nuclear counterattack to deter the enemy from using nuclear weapons against China. If China comes under a nuclear attack, the nuclear missile force of the Second Artillery Force will use nuclear missiles to launch a resolute counterattack against the enemy either independently or together with the nuclear forces of other services (The State Council Information Office of China, 2009: 26).

After the armed conflicts between China and the Soviet Union at treasure Islands along the

China-Soviet border in 1969, the Soviet attempted to launch surgical nuclear attacks against important military and political targets. Therefore, the Second Artillery Force made final preparations for battle, which showed the firm resolution of China to retaliate and made Soviet leaders give up their attempt to launch nuclear attacks against China. This was the first and only time that China's nuclear missile force entered the position of final preparation for battle.

In 1988, Deng Xiaoping put forward the concept of using strategic nuclear missiles as a form of guerrilla warfare ("Military of China...", 2011), which meant that Deng Xiaoping asked for an increased mobilization of strategic missiles, so as to improve the capability of nuclear retaliation. Mao Zedong talked about the concept of putting-off nuclear counter-attacks (Li, 1994: 136-137). This would be one of the ways of nuclear counter-attacks, which China may choose according to the strategic situation and within the principle of self-defense and retaliation in the future.

Because the possibility exists of the U.S. being militarily involved in an armed conflict between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait, which could lead to further armed conflict - even a Sino-U.S. nuclear conflict, China has to develop the capability to deter the U.S. from interfering militarily in an armed conflict in the Taiwan Strait. China is not a superpower and has a small number of nuclear weapons, so the model of MAD is not suitable for Sino-U.S. nuclear relations. China has some capability for nuclear retaliation. So long as China has the capability for one nuclear warhead to penetrate the U.S. missile defense systems and hit American territory after a U.S. launched nuclear attack against China. Or as long as the U.S. cannot assure that it could destroy all of China's strategic nuclear force after an American first strike against China, it will be very difficult for the U.S. to make the decision to launch nuclear attacks against China.

*5) China's policy of nuclear disarmament regards the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons as the final goal in nuclear issues*

Since 1963 China has consistently called for the "complete prohibition and thorough destruction" of nuclear weapons. Thus, China was the first country to regard a nuclear

weapon-free world as its final goal within the international community.

In 1994, in an effort to gradually realize the objective of building a world free from nuclear weapons, China put forward a complete, interrelated proposal for the nuclear disarmament process at the 49th session of UN General Assembly. All nuclear-weapon states should unconditionally declare that they will not be the first to use nuclear weapons and immediately begin negotiations towards a treaty to this effect; efforts to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones should be supported and guarantees given not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states; a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty should be negotiated and concluded no later than 1996; the major nuclear powers should implement existing nuclear disarmament treaties as scheduled and further substantially reduce their nuclear weapon stockpiles; a convention banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons should be negotiated and concluded; a convention prohibiting all nuclear weapons should be signed, whereby all nuclear-weapon states undertake to completely destroy existing stocks of nuclear weapons under effective international supervision; the proliferation of nuclear weapons should be prevented while the promoting of nuclear disarmament process and international cooperation in peaceful uses of nuclear energy should be pursued (Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, 1995: 28-29).

Since then, China has also put forward some more views about nuclear disarmament. Up until now, China's stance on nuclear disarmament can be catalogued as follows:

- Nuclear major powers should give up their nuclear first-use policy
- Nuclear-weapon states with big nuclear arsenals should further reduce their nuclear weapons (Xia, 2002: 603)
- All nuclear-weapon states should commit themselves to not being the first to use nuclear weapons, and should conclude international legally binding documents on this issue as soon as possible
- All nuclear-weapon states should commit themselves not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states or nuclear weapon-free zones, and

should conclude international legally binding documents on this issue as soon as possible

- All states deploying nuclear weapons abroad should commit themselves to supporting the appeal of establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones, respecting their positions, and bearing their relevant responsibilities
- All states deploying nuclear weapons abroad should withdraw their nuclear weapons (Ibid.: 604)
- All states should not develop and deploy weapon systems in outer space and missile defense systems which will disturb strategic security and stability
- All states should negotiate and conclude international legally binding documents on complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons (Ibid.)

China has repeatedly called for an international convention to ban nuclear weapons, similar to the chemical and biological weapons conventions. China has been officially opposed to the policy of nuclear deterrence, based on the implicit or explicit threat to use nuclear weapons first, and to the deployment of nuclear weapons outside of national territories.

China advocates the prevention of proliferation of nuclear weapons as part of the process of eliminating such weapons. Chinese holds that in the process of reaching the objective of complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons, nuclear proliferation should be prevented.

China advocates the total prohibition of nuclear weapon explosion tests during the process of advancing towards the objective of complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons, and a nuclear-free world.

On July 29, 1996, the Chinese government declared that China suspended its nuclear explosion tests. China actively participated in the negotiations of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), showing a constructive spirit and flexible attitude during the negotiations. On September 24, 1996, China signed the CTBT treaty. The treaty is the first international legally binding document, prohibiting any nuclear weapon explosion test or other nuclear explosion

test in any environment, in any spot in the world. This is conducive to the process of nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear proliferation, and it improves international peace and security.

China endorses the verification measures to be taken in accordance with the regulation of the CTBT treaty. At the same time, China opposes any country that would seek to interfere with China's internal affairs and harm China's security interests.

China holds that a prohibition of nuclear tests itself is not the objective, but just one of the steps to realizing the final goal of complete prohibition and destruction of nuclear weapons.

However, on October 13, 1999, the U.S. Senate failed in ratifying the CTBT. This failure has exerted great negative influence over the process of international arms control and may lead to new nuclear proliferation. Because of the failure, both India and Pakistan still refuse to sign the CTBT. Concerned with the intention of the U.S., some other countries have slowed down the process of their ratification to the Treaty. The Russian state Duma ratified the CTBT on April 21, 2000. If the U.S. Senate ratifies the CTBT Treaty in the future, the Chinese National People's Congress will ratify it the next day.

During recent years, China has made progress in nuclear arms control and non-proliferation:

*Making Good Progress in Establishing Nuclear Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs)*

In September 1994, the leading figures of China and Russia issued a joint statement "on no first use of nuclear weapons against each other and on not targeting their respective strategic nuclear weapons at each other". This is the first bilateral agreement on no first use of nuclear weapons against each other in the world.

In June 1998, during a China-U.S. summit meeting in Beijing, both sides decided that the two countries would not target the nuclear strategic weapons under their control to each other. This is the first bilateral agreement of Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs) on nuclear

weapons between China and the U.S. The agreement is beneficial for the security and peace of both countries.

In May 2000, China and four other nuclear-weapon states made a joint statement that all nuclear weapons owned by them would not target any state (Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, 2000: 3).

On April 5, 1995, China made an official statement, reiterating its unconditional provision of "negative security assurance" to all non-nuclear-weapon states, at the same time undertaking to provide these nations with "positive security assurance." The positive security assurance means that if a non-nuclear-weapon state is attacked by nuclear weapon, China will take action in the Security Council of the United Nations (UN), so that the UN Security Council can take appropriate measures to provide necessary aids to the victim state, and to impose serious and effective sanctions against the attacker state. These positions taken by China have won the support of many countries without nuclear weapons.

In the efforts by China and other members of the UN Security Council, on April 11, 1995, the UN Security Council passed the historical Resolution 984, in which China and other four nuclear-weapon states (namely the U.S., Russia, Britain and France) committed themselves to standing by the side of non-nuclear-weapon states threatened by nuclear threats.

China as a nuclear-weapon state always insists on its due obligations, advocating that nuclear-weapon states should undertake not to be the first to use nuclear weapons and repeatedly proposing that nuclear-weapon states negotiate and conclude an international treaty on the no-first-use of nuclear weapons against each other. In January 1994, China formally presented a draft for the Treaty on the No-First-Use of Nuclear Weapons to the U.S., Russia, Britain, France and other countries, proposing that the five nuclear-weapon states hold first-round discussions on the treaty in Beijing as soon as possible.

#### *Pursuing Positive Policy of Prevention of Nuclear Proliferation*

The Chinese Government has persistently pursued the policy of no advocating, no encouragement, no engagement of nuclear proliferation, and no helping other countries in



developing nuclear weapons. China advocates the prevention of proliferation of nuclear weapons as part of the process of eliminating such weapons. The Chinese government holds that in the process to reach the objective of complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons, nuclear proliferation should be prevented.

China supports the three major goals set forth in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapon (NPT): preventing the spread of nuclear weapons, accelerating nuclear disarmament, and promoting international cooperation in the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy. In March 1991, China formally became a party to the NPT treaty. In May 1995, at the Conference on the Review and extension of the NPT treaty, the Chinese government expressed its support for the decision to indefinitely extend the treaty. China believes that the indefinite extension of this treaty reaffirms the objectives of international cooperation in nuclear disarmament, the prevention of nuclear proliferation and the promotion of the peaceful use of nuclear energy and should not be interpreted as permitting the nuclear-weapon states to retain their possession of nuclear weapons forever (Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, 1995: 28).

When cooperating with other countries in peaceful use of nuclear energy, the Chinese government has stuck to the three principles: 1) To make sure that all projects must be used for peaceful objectives; 2) All projects must be under the supervision of the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA); 3) Relevant items and technologies should not be transferred to a third party without China's permission. China does not provide help for any nuclear facility, which has not accepted the safeguards of the IAEA. China holds that the safeguards regime of the IAEA is an important component of the efforts to assure the effectiveness of the NPT. Even prior to acceding to the treaty, China undertook to fulfill the obligations stipulated by the IAEA statute, including the obligation to apply IAEA safeguards. Since 1992 when it became a party to the Treaty, it has strictly fulfilled all its obligations under the Treaty, including the obligation to cooperate fully with the IAEA in safeguard application. China follows three principles regarding nuclear exports: exports serving peaceful uses only, accepting IAEA's safeguards, and no retransfers to a third country without China's consent. The Chinese government regulates that all export of nuclear materials and

equipment should be subject to IAEA safeguards.

In 1985, China declared that it would of its own free will submit part of its civilian nuclear facilities to the IAEA for safeguards. In 1987, the Chinese government issued the Regulation on Management of Nuclear Materials. In 1988, China and the IAEA signed an agreement on voluntary safeguard, under which China provided the IAEA with a listing of facilities subject to such safeguard and established SSAC. The system is supervised, administered and operated, respectively, by the competent government department, the facility concerned and technological support unit. The competent government department is responsible for organizing the implementation of the safeguard agreement between China and the IAEA. The nuclear facility management is responsible for establishing measurements, recording and reporting regimes in line with the requirements of the agreement, as well as receiving on-site inspections by IAEA inspectors (Ibid.: 19-20).

With a view to supporting the IAEA, in November 1991, China officially declared that on a continuing basis, it would report to the IAEA any export to or import from non-nuclear-weapon states involving nuclear materials of one effective kilogram or above. In July 1993, China formally promised that it would voluntarily report to the IAEA any imports or exports of nuclear materials, and all exports of nuclear equipment and relevant non-nuclear materials.

On March 28, 2002, the Chinese government informed the IAEA that China had completed the legal procedure of making effective the Additional Protocol of Safeguard Agreement with IAEA (Head of Chinese Delegation Zhang Huazhu, 2002). The Agreement has been formally effective since that day. China is the first country out of the five nuclear-weapon states that has completed the legal procedure.

In May 1997, The State Council of the People's Republic of China (PRC) issued "the Notice on Strictly Pursuing China's Policy of Nuclear Exports", which clearly regulates that none of the nuclear materials, nuclear equipment and their technologies, non-nuclear materials to be used for nuclear reactors, and dual-use equipment, materials and technologies related to nuclear are permitted to be exported to nuclear facilities of other countries, which are not

under the supervision of the IAEA, none of the Chinese companies are permitted to cooperate and to exchange experts and technology information with nuclear facilities of other countries.

On September 10, 1997, the State Council of the PRC issued “the Regulation on Nuclear export management”, which regulates: 1) All business of nuclear exports should be monopolized by the units, assigned by the State Council of the PRC, and no other units or personnel in China are permitted to do this business; 2) A system of license is applied to all nuclear exports, and every item and relevant technology listed on the List of Nuclear Export Management should apply for permission and license; and 3) the List of Nuclear Export Management will be the same as “The Trigger List” of the Zangger Committee (ZAC).

In October 1997, China became a party of the ZAC. On June 1, 1998, the State Council of the PRC passed the Regulation on Export Management of Nuclear Dual-use Items and Their Relevant Technologies.

China has taken positive measures towards the negotiation of the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT). In March 1995 at the Conference on Disarmament (CD) in Geneva, a mandate was given to establish an ad hoc committee to consider how to ban fissile material production for weapon purposes. However, because of a disagreement concerning existing stockpiles of military plutonium and highly-enriched uranium (HEU), and the relation between nuclear disarmament and arms control in outer space, negotiation remained deadlocked until recently. Although in August 1998, the decision was made to start negotiations on a treaty to halt the production of fissile material, the process has been thwarted since the CD has been unable to reconvene the ad hoc committee charged with negotiating the treaty.

#### *Playing an Important Role in the Prohibition of Nuclear Tests*

China advocates the total prohibition of nuclear weapon explosion tests with the aim of advancing towards the objective of complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons, and a nuclear-free world.

On July 29, 1996, the Chinese government declared that China suspends its nuclear

explosion tests. China actively participated in the negotiations of the CTBT, displaying a constructive spirit and flexible attitudes during the negotiations. On September 24, 1996, the Chinese government signed the CTBT treaty. The treaty is the first international legally binding document, prohibiting any nuclear weapon explosion test or other nuclear explosion test in any environment and any spot in the world, which is conducive to the process of nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear proliferation, so as to improve international peace and security.

China endorses the verification measures to be taken in accordance with the regulation of the CTBT treaty. At the same time, China opposes any country seeking to interfere with China's internal affairs and harm China's security interests.

China holds that a prohibition of nuclear tests itself is not the objective, but one of the steps to realizing the final goal of complete prohibition and destruction of nuclear weapons.

However, on October 13, 1999, the U.S. Senate failed in ratifying the CTBT. This has exerted great negative influence over the process of international arms control and may lead to new nuclear proliferation. Because of the failure, both India and Pakistan still refuse to sign the CTBT. Concerned with the intention of the U.S., some other countries have slowed down the process of their ratification to the Treaty. The Russian state Duma ratified the CTBT on April 21, 2000.

#### *Strongly Supporting the Establishment of Nuclear Weapon-free Zones*

China supports the establishment of nuclear weapon-free zones (NWFZs) in general because China thinks that the establishment of such zones is of great importance to the advancement of nuclear disarmament, the prevention of nuclear proliferation, and the promotion of international and regional peace and security ("Speech by Head of...", 1997). In a statement to the NPT Review and Extension Conference on April 18, 1995, the Chinese Foreign Minister stated: "China supports the efforts of relevant countries and regions to establish nuclear weapon-free zones or zones free of weapons of mass destruction through voluntary consultations" (CNS, 1995).

On September 15, 1997, China presented its seven principles on the Creation of NWFZs,

in which there are four important principles: 1) The establishment of nuclear weapon-free zones should follow the purpose of the Charter of the United Nations and established principles of international laws; 2) Nuclear-weapon-free zones should be established on the basis of equality and voluntary consultations between relevant countries according to the reality of the region; 3) The geographical scope of nuclear-weapon-free zones should not include continental shelves and exclusive economic zones (EEZ) as well as areas over which there are disputes with countries outside the nuclear-weapon-free zone about territorial sovereignty and marine rights; 4) The position of nuclear-weapon-free zones should not be influenced by other security mechanisms, and none of the parties of nuclear-weapon-free zones should refuse to do their duty regardless of any excuse they may have, including military alliances.

Up until now, China has signed and ratified the following relevant legal binding documents related to nuclear-weapon-free zones: the Additional Protocol II of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco), the relevant protocols of the South Pacific Nuclear-Free Zone (Treaty of Rarotonga), and the African Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (Treaty of Pelindaba). On July 15, 1999, during his visit to Mongolia, Chinese President Jiang Zemin expressed that China respects the nuclear-weapon-free status of Mongolia. On July 27, 1999, during the ASEAN Regional Forum, Chinese Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan said that the Chinese government has agreed in principle to sign the Protocol of the Southeast Asia nuclear-weapon-free Zone Treaty.

The other four nuclear-weapon states (NWS) have also signed the relevant protocols of the Tlatelolco, Rarotonga and Pelindaba, committing themselves not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against regional state parties. Nuclear-weapon-free zones are part of the architecture that can usefully encourage and support a nuclear-weapon-free world. The progress of NWFZs has helped us to come closer to the ultimate realization of a nuclear-weapon-free world. Until now, there are four existing populated NWFZs, created by the Treaty for Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco), the South Pacific Nuclear-Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Rarotonga), the African Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba) and the Southeast Asia Nuclear

Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Bangkok). In addition, the Antarctic Treaty demilitarizes the Antarctic continent. The combined areas of the zones created by the Antarctic, Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Pelindaba and Bangkok treaties constitute about 45 per cent of the earth's surface. With the entry into force of the Pelindaba Treaty, virtually all of the southern hemisphere and parts of the northern hemisphere have been covered by NWFZs (Acharya et al., 1998: 454).

The progress has demonstrated that regional nuclear non-proliferation mechanisms based on NWFZs have been playing important roles as global nuclear non-proliferation mechanisms, in some cases, even more important than the latter. For example, both non-nuclear-weapon states and nuclear weapon states undertake more responsibilities in NWFZs than in global non-proliferation mechanism. All four existing NWFZs have their own supplementary safeguards with regional mechanisms and procedures, so the scope of the verification regimes of NWFZs goes beyond the full application of IAEA safeguards. Nuclear-weapon states provide negative security assurance to regional parties, including a commitment not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against regional state parties. Furthermore, the return of nuclear threshold states or de facto nuclear weapon states to the status of non-nuclear weapon states depends mainly on the relaxation of the regional security situation. Both NWFZs and the IAEA must supplement each other to prevent the status of the states from reversing.

### **Factors Affecting China's Current Nuclear Doctrine**

China's current nuclear doctrine depends on China's defense policy and military strategy, which are decided by China's national development strategy. Other factors, which have also affected China's current nuclear doctrine, include: the objective of China's foreign policy, China's assessment of the international situation, China's relations with other major powers, other major powers' nuclear posture, China's concepts of security, the Taiwan issue, and so on.

#### *China's National Development Strategy*

Since the early 1980s, China has been focusing its efforts on internal economic development in order to improve the living standard and educational level of its people. China will continue

to move forward in this way for a long time. The long-term purpose of China's national development strategy is to make China a mid-level developed country, which will be strong, democratic and civilized by 2050 (Jiang, 1997). To achieve this objective, China will continue to pursue the policy of reform and opening, and need a long-term peaceful international environment, especially stable surroundings. This means that China does not want to do anything which may seriously disturb the current international economic and political mechanisms except when its own critical national interests are threatened. Even if China can achieve this objective according to the plan, because China has a very big population and its economic development is very unbalanced, it will continue to focus its attention on internal issues. At the same time, the more prosperous China is, the more co-operative it will be with other countries because, under the circumstances, China will be influenced more easily from the outside world.

#### *China's Defense Policy and Military Strategy*

China's defense policy is purely defensive in nature. The small nuclear arsenal of China is only for the purpose of self-defense. China has unilaterally committed itself to responsibilities not yet taken by other nuclear-weapon states, including the declaration of a no-first-use policy, the commitment not to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states and nuclear weapon-free zones. China has not retained any military presence beyond its own territory. China's military strategy is "Active Defense", which means that China's armed forces assume a self-defensive posture and is non-provocative; but if war is ever imposed on China, its military forces will certainly retaliate. China has been reducing its armed forces by half a million of its military personnel from 1996 to 2000 following the reduction of one million military men during the 1980s. China's military expenditures have been kept at a very low level for more than one decade. In the past few years, China's military expenditure has been about 1.1-1.8% of China's GDP. Furthermore, China has declared that it will never become a superpower. So China will never impose any military threat to other countries.

*The Objective of China's Foreign Policy*

China has been pursuing its independent foreign policy of peace since the mid-1980s. The objective of China's foreign policy is to strive for a peaceful international environment, which will be beneficial for China's long-term economic and social development. So there are two outstanding characteristics in China's current foreign policy: peace and independence. Peace indicates that China formulates its foreign policy from the viewpoint of whether it is beneficial to international and regional peace and stability, instead of focusing on military superiority. Independence indicates that China formulates its foreign policy according to its national interests and the common interests of peoples of all the countries in the world. The core of China's independent foreign policy of peace is to continue to develop its friendly cooperation based on the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence with all the countries in the world, including the U.S.

*China's Assessment of the International Situation*

According to China, there are two major subjects and two important trends with regard to the international situation. The two major subjects are peace and development. Since the 1980s, especially after the end of the Cold War, peace and development have become the two major subjects in the world situation, although unstable factors are existing, including terrorism, regional hot spots, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, etc. The trends of peace and development will continue as the main trends of the world, which will be beneficial for nuclear arms control and disarmament.

The two important trends with regard to the international situation are:

1) The trend of multi-polarization. Although the U.S. wants to realize a single-polar world and the process of multi-polarization has been tortuous, the trend of multi-polarization will continue to develop, which will be beneficial for world peace in general. There will be several centers of power: the U.S., Russia, the European Union, Japan, China, India, the ASEAN, etc. As middle-range powers and many Third World countries play an increasingly important role in international politics, they will push more and more for a nuclear-weapon-free world.



2) The trend of economic interdependence between states. During recent years, economic globalization and regional economic integration have become strong trends. One of the results, economic interdependence between states, especially between major powers, has made big progress. Under the circumstances, more countries are willing to resolve their disputes through peaceful means, and major powers are less willing to enter into conflict, which will reduce the possibility of using nuclear weapons in the future.

#### *China's Relationship with the U.S.*

China and the U.S. still share many interests in terms of security as well as economy. The September 11 incident has expanded the basis for China-U.S. security cooperation, and constitutes a new basis for their strategic cooperation. Since then, the China-U.S. relationship has made some important developments. Especially, they have developed their security and strategic cooperation. However, the two countries still have negative factors in their relations. If both sides can prioritize the cooperation between them, and deal properly with the negative factors in their relationship, they can continue to improve their security cooperation and military relations, which will not only be in the interest of the two countries, but also benefit the Asia-Pacific region and the rest of the world. After the Obama Administration got into office, China-U.S. relations have been relatively stable, although some people in the U.S. still talk about the "China threat" and the two countries have different views on many issues.

#### *Other Major Powers' Nuclear Posture*

On May 8, 2010, U.S. President Obama and Russian President Medvedev signed the New START Treaty. Thus, both sides committed themselves to reducing their deployed strategic nuclear warheads to no more than 1,550 for each Party within seven years after entry into force of the Treaty. If the two countries can fulfill their obligation, it will be beneficial for the international nuclear disarmament. However, U.S. reduced deployed strategic nuclear warheads will not be destroyed. Instead, they will be deposited at some place in the U.S. So if the U.S. finds it necessary, it will deploy them again soon.

Furthermore, in April 2010, the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) submitted the

Nuclear Posture Review report to the U.S. Congress. Although this report declared that it would place the prevention of nuclear terrorism and proliferation at the top of the U.S. nuclear policy agenda, and the U.S. would reduce the role and number of nuclear weapons, it has not accepted the no-first use of nuclear weapons policy. On December 31, 2001, in the another Nuclear Posture Review report, the DOD established a New Triad, composed of: 1) An offensive strike system (both nuclear and non-nuclear); 2) Defenses (both active and passive); and 3) A revitalized defense infrastructure that will provide new capabilities in a timely fashion to meet emerging threats (U.S. Department of Defense, 2001). In this report, the DOD holds that: “Nuclear weapons could be employed against targets able to withstand non-nuclear attack, (e.g., deep underground bunkers or bio weapon facilities)” (Ibid.). This will greatly increase the possibility for the U.S. to use nuclear weapons and encourage non-nuclear-weapon states to develop nuclear weapons. In a testimony before the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Joseph Cirincione, Director of Carnegie Non-Proliferation Project, criticized the report as a deeply flawed review, saying that “the proposed policies could make the use of nuclear weapons by the United States or other nations more likely” (Cirincione and Joseph, 2002). Moreover, in this report, the Pentagon holds that: “Due to the combination of China’s developing strategic objectives its ongoing modernization of its nuclear and non-nuclear forces, China is a country that could be involved in an immediate or potential contingency (U.S. Department of Defense, 2001).” This means that the Pentagon puts China on the list of targets of its nuclear weapons.

Russia still intends to maintain its position as a nuclear great power and has made smooth progress in pursuing the plan, which gives priority to the development of strategic missiles. Russia has been deploying a huge amount of a new type of strategic missiles called Poplar-M (SS-27), and is quickening its steps to construct a new type of strategic submarine to replace the old type of strategic submarine called “Typhoon”. The continued development of nuclear weapons by the two countries with the largest nuclear arsenals has increased the danger using nuclear weapons in future armed conflicts. This has become one of the major excuses for nuclear threshold states to stay out of international nuclear non-proliferation regimes.

*New Security Concepts*

Since the end of the Cold War, China has adopted more and more new security concepts. In 1996, according to the new trends and characteristics of the Asia-Pacific region, China put forward the proposal to jointly cultivate a new kind of security concept, focused on the improvement of trust through dialog and security through cooperation. Subsequently, China holds that the core of the new security concept should be mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and coordination (Chinese Delegation, 2002). The new security concept should also be the guideline to resolve disputes in international arms control and disarmament (China Daily, 2002).

The new security concepts that China has adopted include: 1) The concept of “mutual security”. During the Cold War, the concept of “Zero Sum Games” played the most important role in international politics. After the end of the Cold War, countries should accept the concept of “mutual security” because of the changed situation. We should oppose any country that wants to establish its own absolute security at the price of the insecurity of others. According to the concept, nuclear powers, especially two nuclear superpowers, should speed up their process of nuclear disarmament. 2) The concept of cooperation. At present, all countries are facing many untraditional security threats or transnational problems, such as environmental problem, greenhouse effect, drug trafficking, terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and so on. They should make common efforts and cooperate to deal with the challenges. Especially, they should pay more attention to nuclear disarmament, because nuclear weapons are still hanging like the Sword of Damocles above mankind and have never ceased to threaten the survival of humanity. 3) Emphasis should be changed from military security to comprehensive security. After the end of the Cold War, although geopolitical, military security and ideological factors still play an important role in the minds of some politicians, the role of economic factors is becoming more outstanding in international relations. So, all countries should make great efforts to settle divergences and disputes through peaceful means.

*The Taiwan Issue*

Both the mainland and Taiwan belong to China. The Taiwan issue is China's internal affair and remains one of China's national key interests. In this respect, China favors a peaceful reunification. But China cannot commit itself to the renouncement of the use of force as a final resort to prevent the independence of Taiwan and foreign intervention into Taiwan. Therefore, force is also the guarantee that the Taiwan issue might be resolved peacefully.

Economic and personnel exchanges across the Strait have been steadily developing. In the long run, with the integration of economy and society between the two sides, the mainland and Taiwan will finally be reunified, although it will take time. Because the Taiwan issue is one of the major issues that may lead to armed conflicts and even nuclear exchanges between China and the U.S., China has to maintain the minimum nuclear deterrence to deter a nuclear attack from the U.S.

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