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(Translation)

Multilateralism, Shared Peace and Development

Statement by H.E. Wang Yi

State Councilor and Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China
At the General Debate of the 73rd Session of the UN General Assembly

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Madam President,

Every September, global attention focuses on the United Nations and on this stately Assembly Hall. People watch closely what is happening here, hoping that the United Nations will deliver to the world peace, development, harmony and prosperity. People look to the UN to help realize their dream for a better life, a UN that is committed to “Making the United Nations Relevant to All People”, thus making our world a better place for everyone to live in.

The contemporary international order, which began with the founding of the United Nations, is based on the purposes and principles of the *UN Charter* and enhanced by the vision and practice of multilateralism. It has, over the past 70 years or more, brought about general peace and rapid development. A people-centered philosophy has gained wide acceptance, and broad consensus has formed on the need for inter-dependence and win-win cooperation. Yet, it is also true that the international order today

faces problems and challenges and needs steady reform and improvement.

The world is changing. As we celebrate mankind's proud achievements and progress in an ever-changing world, we must never lose sight of the challenges and difficulties we face, and must remain vigilant. What we see today is that international rules and multilateral mechanisms are under attack, and the international landscape is filled with uncertainties and destabilizing factors.

Should we stay committed to multilateralism or let unilateralism have its way? Should we seek to uphold the architecture of the world order or allow it to be eroded upon and collapse? These are questions of critical importance bearing on the future of all countries and the destiny of mankind, questions that all countries must carefully reflect on and seek answers to.

China's answer is clear-cut. All along, China has upheld the international order and pursued multilateralism. Though once kept out of the UN for 22 years, China has never wavered in its conviction to multilateralism and to the purposes and principles of the *UN Charter*. China stayed true to its commitment throughout the negotiation process on its return to the GATT and then accession to the WTO, negotiations that lasted 15 long years and were concluded at a certain price. China fulfilled its promise and integrated itself into the world economic system. After the international financial crisis broke out, China chose not to stand idly by but to work together with other countries to tide over rough times. For years running, China has contributed to over 30% of global growth. It has played its part in helping restore global recovery.

In the face of new developments and severe challenges, China will keep to its commitment and remain a champion of multilateralism. Standing at this podium back in 2015, Chinese President Xi Jinping, in his statement reflecting the keen understanding of mankind's common interests and the future of our planet, called for building a community with a shared future for mankind. This major initiative is in keeping with the trend of history, and it echoes the call of the times. It adds to our conviction and strength as we pursue the common endeavor to protect this global village. It points to the direction for us to work together to open up an even better future for mankind. To uphold multilateralism in the new era, we believe the following principles need to be adhered to:

First, we must pursue win-win cooperation. Our world is undergoing profound changes unseen in a century. Also unseen before are the problems and challenges we are faced with. No country can meet them alone or stay immune to their impact. What we need to do is to replace confrontation with cooperation and coercion with consultation. We must stick together as one big family instead of forming closed circles. We must promote common development through consultation instead of taking a winner-takes-all approach. This is a sure way for a bright future to be ushered in to the world.

Second, we must act upon rules and order. State-to-state relations should be based on credibility, not willful revocation of commitments. International cooperation should be guided by rules, not impulse. Practicing multilateralism is, first and foremost, about upholding the *UN Charter*, observing international law and the basic norms governing international relations and honoring international agreements reached

upon through negotiations.

Third, we must uphold fairness and justice. In international affairs, fairness and justice means equality between all countries, big or small. It means responsibility for big countries to help the small and the rich to assist the poor. Fairness and justice also means respect for other countries' sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, as well as their choice of development path and the right to a better life and to more development opportunities.

Fourth, we must act to deliver real results. Multilateralism is not about making empty rhetoric. It must be pursued to solve problems. Efforts must be targeted, results-oriented, and measured by visible progress. Whether a multilateral mechanism works depends on the will and engagement of countries in the world. It is imperative that we work together to uphold the international system with the United Nations at its core as well as the multilateral trading system centering on the World Trade Organization.

Multilateralism requires a strong United Nations. China supports Secretary-General Guterres in his endeavor to advance reform of the UN system in the three critical areas of peace and security, economic development and internal management. Such reform should be led by member states. It should be designed to prioritize concerns of developing countries, make the UN more efficient and enhance oversight and accountability. Crucial to the UN's proper functioning is stable and predictable funding. China will continue to fulfill its due financial obligations, and China calls upon other member states to pay their membership contributions and peacekeeping assessments on time and in

full.

Madam President,

The course of development and progress for humanity is unstoppable. Peace, reconciliation and harmony are the surging trend, while war, conflict and terror are opposed by all. Equality, mutual trust and win-win cooperation are the call of our times, whereas power politics and the law of the jungle find no support. As a major responsible country, China commits itself to the path of peaceful development, and China will work with other countries and contribute its share to global peace and security.

Since this year, the situation on the Korean Peninsula has seen a major turnaround thanks to the efforts of all parties concerned. China, on its part, has contributed to such development. China supports all-out improvement of relations between the North and the South of the Peninsula, as well as efforts to facilitate dialogues between the DPRK and the US. China encourages the DPRK to continue moving along the right direction of denuclearization. At the same time, we believe it is also right for the US to make timely and positive responses so as to truly meet the DPRK half way. China will continue to honor its due international responsibility and obligation, and will strictly implement Security Council resolutions related to the DPRK. Meanwhile, China calls upon the Security Council to take timely actions in light of the development and changes of the situation to create more favorable conditions for a peaceful settlement of the Peninsula issue through political and diplomatic means. Effective settlement of the issue requires complete denuclearization as well as establishment of a peace mechanism. Only when the two wheels move in tandem can the issue be truly resolved and

can peace start to dawn.

Regarding the Iranian nuclear issue, now is a crucial time for continued implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). The JCPOA is a consensus-based multilateral agreement endorsed by the UN Security Council. It serves the common interests of all parties concerned and the international community at large. If the agreement fails to be implemented, the international nuclear non-proliferation regime will be undermined, the authority and role of the Security Council challenged, and peace and stability in both this region and the wider world jeopardized. That is a scenario in which no one stands to gain. China urges parties concerned to continue observing and implementing the JCPOA. On this basis, possibility could be explored for a dialogue platform that is inclusive and transparent to facilitate proper settlement of each party's concerns through dialogue and consultation.

The question of Palestine must not be marginalized. For more than seven decades, peace and justice have remained elusive in that part of the world. On this issue, what the international community needs most is not proposal or initiative, but rather resolve and action. To implement the two-state solution, a new round of peace-promoting efforts need to be made to explore a new mediation mechanism. To that end, China will play its part and Chinese humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people will continue.

The issue involving Rakhine State of Myanmar cannot be resolved overnight, and steady progress needs to be made through a three-phased process involving cessation of violence, return of displaced persons and economic development. Myanmar and Bangladesh are inseparable

neighbors, and could well be inseparable partners. Yesterday, at my meeting with colleagues from Myanmar and Bangladesh and also in the presence of Secretary-General Guterres, agreement was reached between Myanmar and Bangladesh on accelerating the return of the first batch of displaced persons. We believe Myanmar and Bangladesh are capable of resolving this issue properly through friendly negotiations.

China supports the UN's leading role in coordinating responses to non-traditional security challenges. In the new frontiers of global governance like cyber space and outer space, state sovereignty must be upheld, rules observed, and responsibilities honored. Terrorism, a menace to the entire human society, should by no means be justified. Security Council resolutions must be earnestly implemented to counter cyber terrorism, terrorist financing and the spread of radical narratives, so as to remove the breeding ground of terrorism.

Madam President,

Development is essential for our world today. We need to address both insufficient development and, more important, the imbalance in development. There is no one-size-fits-all model. Every country is entitled to explore a development path that suits itself to deliver happiness and security to its people, and bring a future of confidence and hope to its children. Countries face various questions in development. Questions themselves could be turned into drivers for reform, and solutions to problems could bring about development.

Economic globalization should not be a process for some to gain and others to lose, still less should it result in widening the gap between the

North and the South. It is important that we adapt ourselves to the trend of economic globalization, and see to it that such a process is open, inclusive, balanced and win-win to deliver benefits to all.

International trade is complementary and win-win by nature. It should not be a zero-sum game in which one gains at the expense of others, and no one should be allowed to place its own interest above the interest of others. Protectionism will only hurt oneself, and unilateral moves will bring damage to all. Regarding trade frictions, China stands for a proper settlement based on rules and consensus through dialogue and consultation on an equal footing. China will not be blackmailed or yield to pressure. China has taken steps not just to defend its own legitimate rights and interests. China is also acting to uphold the free trade system and international rules and order for the benefit of global recovery and the common interests of all countries.

Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development should top the agenda of the current session of the General Assembly. We need to incorporate the implementation of this agenda into the development strategies of member states and pursue innovation-driven, coordinated, green and open development that benefits all. We need to forge closer partnerships for development and pursue international development cooperation with the UN at its center, North-South cooperation as the main channel, supplemented by South-South cooperation. To meet climate change is crucial to achieving sustainable development. China hopes to see negotiations on the implementation guidelines of the Paris Agreement be concluded, as scheduled, by the end of this year to boost joint efforts for global ecological conservation.

Madam President,

In pursuing our common cause for development and progress for humankind, China has worked in partnership with other countries of the international community. This year marks the 40th anniversary of China's reform and opening-up program. Over the past 40 years, we have worked hard and forged ahead successfully along a path of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

This path has brought fundamental changes to China. Over the past 40 years, more than 700 million of the Chinese population have been lifted out of absolute poverty, which accounts for over 70% of the global total in the same period. A basic medical insurance system has been set up to cover the 1.35 billion Chinese people, and a social pension network accessible to over 900 million people is now fully instituted. These are truly remarkable achievements in the history of human development. Starting from scratch, China has built some 25,000 kilometers of high-speed railway. This accounts for two thirds of the global total and helps elevate global infrastructure construction. According to polls conducted by authoritative international polling agencies, China tops global rankings in terms of public satisfaction with its development and of public confidence in the future of development.

The path of development China pursues has provided the world with opportunities for common development. Over the past 40 years, China's foreign trade has registered an average annual growth of 14.5%. This has sustained impetus for global growth and offered the world a huge Chinese market. We have every confidence to maintain the momentum and realize high-quality development. China will speed up efforts to build an

advanced economic system, and this will create greater trade opportunities and an even better investment environment for other countries. Going forward, China will not reverse course or shut the door close. China will open still wider to the world. China will not erect market barriers but will expand access to the Chinese market. Of all developing countries in the world, China has been the fastest in opening up to a level that is unparalleled by others. When it comes to overall tariff reduction, China has accomplished more than what it committed when joining the WTO. The breadth of China's openness in services is close to the average level of developed countries. This November, China will host the first International Import Expo in Shanghai. It will be yet another major step to open China's market. Countries are welcome to take an active part in the event.

The Belt and Road Initiative proposed by President Xi Jinping is a public good China offers the world. Indeed, it has grown into the largest platform for international cooperation. It aims to deliver benefits for all through consultation and cooperation. The Initiative is open, transparent and inclusive; it is based on international rules and laws, and it aims to achieve green, environment-friendly and sustainable development. It is about pursuing common prosperity through greater complementarity among participating countries. By September this year, over 130 countries and international organizations have signed agreements on Belt and Road cooperation with China. Next year, China will host the second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, and we welcome all parties to go and attend this event.

China is the largest developing country in the world. To strengthen cooperation and solidarity with other developing countries has been and

will continue to be the staunch strategic priority for China's diplomacy. This is determined by what defines China as a country and by the system and values China upholds. No matter how much China has grown in strength, and however the international landscape may change, this strategic priority of China will remain unchanged.

Madam President,

The United Nations is the premium platform to advocate and practice multilateralism. We hope the current session of the General Assembly will go down in the record for its part in upholding multilateralism and world peace and development. We hope that all of us in the international community will support the UN in playing its central role in international affairs. And we call upon people of all countries to join hands and work together to build a community with a shared future for mankind.