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Statement by Chinese Premier Li Qiang at the General Debate of the 80th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

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Madam President,
Colleagues,

This year marks the 80th anniversary of the victory of the World Anti-Fascist War. It is also the 80th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations (U.N.). Eighty years ago, fascism was defeated in fearless battles by countless heroic men and women around the world, and the U.N. was created upon their ideal of a world free of war.

An important outcome of the victory of the World Anti-Fascist War, the U.N. was born out of a deep reflection on the scourge of two world wars.

Its founding initiated a historic experiment to escape the law of the jungle, and marked the beginning of an extraordinary journey, i.e. building the postwar international order and pursuing peace and development. The past 80 years have been tortuous but purposeful. Today, the U.N. is the world's most universal, representative, and authoritative intergovernmental organization, and plays an irreplaceable, key role in global governance. With an international system centered around the U.N. and an international order based on international law, human society has realized overall peace, and achieved unprecedented levels of development and prosperity. The past 80 years have witnessed tectonic changes in our world. Straddling two centuries, this period saw human society leapfrog from the age of electricity and computers into a digital intelligence era. While the world we live in has changed enormously, the ideal of making it a better place remains unchanged. Looking back, we can draw a number of valuable inspirations.

First, peace and development are the strongest aspirations shared by the people of all countries. Throughout history, while the shadows of war and conflict have never fully gone away, no force has ever stopped humanity in its quest for peace and development. Having gone through two world wars, we must never forget the bitter lessons learned through bloodshed and loss of lives. For 80 years, a generally peaceful international environment has led to remarkable growth in the global economy. Today, as the desire for peace and development grows even stronger around the world, it is incumbent upon our generation to further strengthen the force for peace and development.

Second, solidarity and cooperation are the most powerful drivers for human progress. In the ferocious years of the World Anti-Fascist War, countries with different social systems, histories and cultures rose above their differences, fought side by side, and prevailed together. In the 80 years that followed, they weathered a succession of vicissitudes, such as the Cold War standoff, financial crises, and global pandemics, by staying connected and working together. All this proves a simple yet powerful point -- solidarity lifts everyone up, while division drags all down. The road ahead might be hard and bumpy, but when all countries unite as one and collaborate in good faith, our strengths will converge into a mighty force with which we can withstand any headwind and cross any hurdle.

Third, fairness and justice are the most important values pursued by the international community. In the past 80 years, the world saw the demise of the old colonial system, the establishment of the existing international order, and the strengthening of international rule of law. History keeps reminding us that when might dictates right, the world risks division and regression; when fairness and justice prevail, societies enjoy stability and thrive. Should the era of the law of the jungle return and the weak be left as a prey to the strong, human society would face even more bloodshed and brutality. As members of the global family, we must uphold justice while pursuing our own interests. This is particularly true for the major countries. Only when all countries, big or small, are treated as equals and true multilateralism is practiced, can the rights and interests of all parties be better protected.

Every moment of historical reflection is an opportunity for us to recalibrate our direction and avoid going astray. At present, the world has entered a new period of turbulence and transformation. Unilateralism and Cold War mentality are resurfacing, the international rules and order built over the past 80 years are under serious challenge, and the once-effective international system is constantly disrupted. The various problems induced are distressing and worrying. Humanity has once again come to a crossroads. Anyone who cares about the state of affairs in the world would want to ask: Why couldn't we humans, having emerged from tribulations, adopt a greater sense of conscience and rationality, and treat each other with kindness and coexist in peace? How could we, in the face of deplorable incidents such as humanitarian disasters, turn a blind eye to atrocities that trample blatantly on fairness and justice and sit on our hands? How could we, when confronted with unscrupulous acts of hegemonism and bullying, remain silent and submissive for fear of might? And how could we let the ardent passion and dedication of our forefathers in founding the U.N. simply fade into the pages of history? We Chinese people often say, "Never forget why you started, and you can accomplish your mission." Arriving at the U.N. headquarters this time, I saw over 190 national flags lined up in front of the building and fluttering in the breeze; I saw the sculptures "Let Us Beat Swords into Ploughshares" and "Non-Violence" with their time-tested message ever so loud; and I saw staff members from different regions, of different races and with different skin colors working in collaboration for the common goals of humanity. What I saw got me thinking: Those people, objects and scenes that embody peace, progress and development are exactly why we choose to commemorate victory. They are also what inspires us to forge ahead hand in hand. While we may not be able to go back in time and relive the victory, we can definitely create a better future together.

As a founding member of the U.N., China has all along taken an active part in global affairs and worked for the betterment of humanity. Over the years, President Xi Jinping has put forward the vision of building a community with a shared future for humanity, the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative, the Global Civilization Initiative and the Global Governance Initiative, sharing China's wisdom and solution for navigating global transformations and overcoming pressing challenges. In particular, the Global Governance Initiative proposed at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Tianjin Summit at the beginning of this month underscores the principles of adhering to

sovereign equality, abiding by international rule of law, practicing multilateralism, advocating the people-centered approach and focusing on taking real actions. It points the right direction and provides an important pathway for building a more just and equitable global governance system. China is ready to take coordinated and effective actions together with all sides to offer more concrete solutions and promote world peace and development.

First, amid the volatility and turbulence in the world, we must work together for peace and shared security. All countries belong to the same global village and rely on each other for security. We should uphold the vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, and respect the legitimate security concerns of all countries. We should work in solidarity to address complex and serious security challenges, and settle differences and disputes peacefully through dialogue and consultation. Persisting in camp-based confrontation or willful resort to force only drives peace further away.

China has all along acted as a staunch defender of world peace and security. China is the second largest contributor to U.N. peacekeeping budget and the largest provider of peacekeepers among the permanent members of the Security Council. China has been working actively to promote peace talks on hotspot issues such as the Ukraine crisis and the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. This year, China established the International Organization for Mediation together with over 30 countries. China will continue to uphold fairness and justice, proceed from the merits of the issues concerned and the common interests of the international community, and work with all sides to seek the greatest common denominator for peace and play a constructive role in promoting the political settlement of hotspot issues.

Second, amid sluggish global growth, we must reinvigorate cooperation and pursue win-win results. Self-isolation cannot produce lasting development. Only through openness and cooperation can we bolster the momentum of development. A major cause of the current global economic doldrums is the rise in unilateral and protectionist measures, such as tariff hikes and erection of walls and barriers. Ultimately everyone will be worse off. We should collaborate more closely to identify and expand convergence of interests, promote universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalization, and help each other succeed by moving forward in the same direction.

China has always been a key driver of global common development. Over the years, the Chinese economy has maintained steady development, contributing around 30 percent to global economic growth. China has consistently opened its door wider to the world. It has lowered its overall tariff level to 7.3 percent and remained the world's second largest importer for 16 consecutive years. An active player in international cooperation on sci-tech innovation, China has encouraged the sharing of cutting-edge technologies, such as 5G and AI, and engaged in joint efforts to foster new drivers of economic growth. China has also advanced high-quality Belt and Road cooperation with over 150 countries. Currently, China is taking solid steps to promote high-quality development at home, with a focus on expanding domestic demand and fostering new quality productive forces at a faster pace. China has the confidence and capability to keep its economy on an upward trajectory and continue to provide important support for global economic growth.

Third, amid dynamic interactions among civilizations, we must champion dialogue and mutual enlightenment. We Chinese people often say, "A single flower does not make spring; one hundred flowers in full blossom bring spring to the garden." Every civilization has its unique value and heritage, and deserves acknowledgment and respect. Obsession with so-called "civilizational superiority" or ideology-based circles only breeds more division and confrontation. Adopting an

inclusive attitude and engaging in exchange and mutual learning is a sure way to build more consensus and collective strength.

China has all along engaged in active civilizational exchange and mutual learning. Philosophical concepts such as harmonious coexistence are deeply ingrained in the DNA of the Chinese nation. We actively promote the common values of humanity and never impose our ways on others. Over the next five years, China will carry out 50 development cooperation programs in the field of culture and civilization for fellow developing countries and host 200 thematic training and seminar programs, contributing its part to inter-civilizational dialogue and the progress of civilizations.

Fourth, amid emerging challenges, we must respond with concerted efforts and protect our shared home. Climate change is a major challenge confronting all of us. We should uphold the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, promote the effective implementation of the Paris Agreement, and enhance international collaboration on the green economy. In recent years, technologies such as AI, network communications, and biomanufacturing have advanced rapidly. Along with the benefits, they also bring potential risks. We should adhere to the principles of people-centered development, technology for good and equitable benefits, improve relevant governance rules at a faster pace and strengthen global governance cooperation, so that technological progress could bring real benefits to humanity in a better way.

China has always been a responsible stakeholder in addressing global challenges. Committed to green and low-carbon development, China has established the world's largest and fastest-growing renewable energy system, and built the most extensive and complete new energy industrial chain. Two days ago, at the United Nations Climate Summit, President Xi Jinping solemnly announced China's 2035 Nationally Determined Contributions that cover all economic sectors and all greenhouse gases. This is another major step taken by China in responding to global climate change. China is dedicated to deepening cooperation with other countries in areas such as cybersecurity, biosecurity and outer space. China has proposed the Global AI Governance Initiative and advocated the establishment of a World AI Cooperation Organization. This time during the 80th session, China will present to the U.N. the lunar soil samples collected by Chang'e-6 from the far side of the moon. Going forward, China will take more proactive actions and work with all parties to advance global governance in relevant areas.

Colleagues,

China stands ready to work with all members to uphold the standing and authority of the U.N., safeguard the purposes and principles of the U.N. Charter, support U.N. reforms to improve its efficiency and capacity to fulfill its mandate, and advocate greater representation and voice of developing countries. China will work with the U.N. to set up a China-U.N. Global South-South Development Facility and provide it with US\$10 million in budgetary support. China will also partner with the United Nations Development Programme to establish a global center for sustainable development in Shanghai to accelerate the implementation of the U.N. 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The tide of history surges forward, and the Great Way remains smooth and steadfast. Going forward, China will continue doing its best to contribute to global peace and development. A steadily developing and highly open China will bring more fresh opportunities to countries around the world. A China that bears in mind the greater good of humanity and stands ready to take up responsibilities will bring more positive energy into the world. China hopes to work with the rest of the world to uphold the ideals of the U.N., carry forward the spirit of multilateralism, actively implement the four

major global initiatives, advance toward the lofty goal of building a community with a shared future for humanity, and make our world a more harmonious and beautiful place.

Thank you.

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