Letter dated 24 November 1971 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I would request you to arrange to have the attached statement of the Government of the People's Republic of China, dated 30 July 1971, circulated as official documents of the Security Council and the General Assembly.

(Signed) HUANG Hua
Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations
STATEMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

30 July 1971

On 15 June 1971, the Soviet Government delivered a statement to the
Government of the People's Republic of China, proposing to "convene a conference
of the five Powers possessing nuclear weapons - the Soviet Union, the United
States of America, the People's Republic of China, France and Great Britain", at
which "the problems of nuclear disarmament as a whole should be considered". In
this connexion, the Chinese Government hereby makes the following statement:

All countries in the world, big or small, should be equal. Matters affecting
various countries in the world should be jointly discussed and settled by all of
them and permit of no monopoly by a few big Powers. This is a principle guiding
international relations which all countries must abide by. The prevention of
nuclear war, the elimination of nuclear threats and the complete prohibition and
thorough destruction of nuclear weapons are matters affecting the peace and
security of all countries of the world, and a few nuclear countries have no right
to brush aside the majority of countries in the world and arbitrarily hold a
conference to consider and decide upon matters of such great importance.

The history following the Second World War shows that it is absolutely
impossible to settle questions of nuclear disarmament by relying on negotiations
only between a few big Powers possessing nuclear weapons. In July 1963, the United
States, Britain and the Soviet Union concluded the "partial nuclear test ban
treaty". Subsequently, the Soviet Union and the United States jointly concocted a
series of treaties on so-called nuclear arms "limitation", including the treaty on
the "non-proliferation of nuclear weapons". In November 1969, the Soviet Union
and the United States started their "strategic arms limitation" talks. But none
of them have restricted in any way the nuclear arms race between the United States
and the Soviet Union. On the contrary, the United States and the Soviet Union
have continued their nuclear weapon tests without let-up, their production of
nuclear weapons is becoming ever more developed, their stockpiles of nuclear
weapons are becoming greater and greater and they are stationing in many other
countries their troops armed with nuclear weapons; this seriously threatens world
peace and the security of the people of all countries. The peoples of the world have long lost their confidence in the disarmament talks between the nuclear Powers. They rightly hold that it is impossible to settle the question of nuclear disarmament as a whole by depending on two nuclear super-Powers, nor can it be settled by the addition of some more nuclear Powers.

China develops nuclear weapons because it is compelled to do so under imperialist nuclear threats, and it does so entirely for the purpose of defence and for breaking the imperialist nuclear monopoly and finally eliminating nuclear weapons. China's nuclear weapons are still in the experimental stage, and at present it is not yet a nuclear Power, nor will it ever be a "nuclear super-Power" practising the policies of nuclear monopoly, nuclear threats and nuclear blackmail. At no time will China ever agree to participate in the so-called nuclear disarmament talks between the nuclear Powers behind the backs of the non-nuclear countries.

Therefore, the Chinese Government cannot accept the Soviet Government's proposal on the convening of a conference of the five nuclear Powers.

The Chinese Government's stand on the question of nuclear weapons has always been clear. Firstly, the Chinese Government has consistently stood for the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons; secondly, the Chinese Government has declared on many occasions that at no time and in no circumstances will China be the first to use nuclear weapons; thirdly, the Chinese Government has consistently stood for the convening of a summit conference of all countries of the world to discuss the question of the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons and, as the first step, to reach an agreement on the non-use of nuclear weapons. The Chinese Government hereby once again solemnly reaffirms its above stand.

The Chinese Government holds that, in order to realize the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons, the United States and the Soviet Union, which possess large quantities of nuclear weapons, should issue statements separately or jointly to undertake openly the obligation not to be the first to use nuclear weapons at any time or in any circumstances; and to dismantle all nuclear bases set up on the territories of other countries and withdraw to
their own countries the nuclear weapons stockpiled and nuclear armed forces stationed on those territories. Whether this is carried out or not will be a test as to whether they have the desire to realize nuclear disarmament.

The Chinese people will, as always, continue to make joint efforts with the peoples of the world, persevere in the struggle and strive for the noble aim of the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons.