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Item Subject: CHINESE VIEWS ON NPT EXTENSION

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RELEASED IN FULL

SUBJECT: CHINESE VIEWS ON NPT EXTENSION

REF: BEIJING 29541

1. CONFIDENTIAL- ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY: PRC PARTICIPANTS AT A RECENT ARMS CONTROL CONFERENCE GENERALLY VIEWED THE NPT AS A FLAWED TREATY THAT CHINA SIGNED PARTLY AS A RECOGNITION OF THE DANGERS OF NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION AND PARTLY TO FACILITATE CHINESE NUCLEAR-BELATED EXPORTS. CHINA'S PRIORITIES AT THE NPT REVIEW CONFERENCE WILL BE TO PUSH FOR A NO FIRST USE PLEDGE AND TO USE THE NPT RENEWAL PROCESS TO POSITION CHINA TO PLAY A LARGER ROLE IN PROVIDING NUCLEAR ASSISTANCE TO NON-NUCLEAR WEAPONS STATES. END SUMMARY.

3. PRC PARTICIPANTES, INCLUDING OFFICIALS FROM THE FOREIGN MINISTRY AND DEFENSE INDUSTRY-BELATED
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INSTITUTES, DISCUSSED THE NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY, CHINA'S RECENT ADHERENCE TO THE NPT AND CHINA'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE EXTENSION OF THE NPT DURING AN OCTOBER BEIJING ARMS CONTROL CONFERENCE HELD WITH CHINA, FOREIGN ARMS CONTROL ADVOCATES AND ACADEMICS (REFTEL).

LOOKING AHEAD -- CHINESE VIEWS ON NPT EXTENSION

4.. DURING A FORMAL SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE, THE MFA'S TOP DISARMAMENT EXPERT DISCUSSED CHINA'S POSITIONS ON ISSUES LIKELY TO ARISE AT THE NPT EXTENSION CONFERENCE. HE FORECAST:

-- PRESSURE FOR AN INCREASED AND MORE EFFECTIVE ROLE FOR NUCLEAR WEAPONS STATES IN ASSISTING THE NON-NUCLEAR WEAPONS STATES IN PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR ENERGY;

-- A STRONG PUSH FOR NEGATIVE SECURITY ASSURANCES, I.E. A UNIVERSAL NO FIRST USE PLEDGE AND PLEDGES NEVER TO USE NUCLEAR WEAPONS AGAINST NON-NUCLEAR WEAPONS STATES;

-- LITTLE SERIOUS DISCUSSION OF POSITIVE ASSURANCES, DISMISSING THEM AS POLITICALLY UNREALISTIC; AND

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-- DEMANDS BY "MANY STATES" FOR PROTECTION FOR STATES THAT ACTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE NPT FROM "EXTRAORDINARY DEMANDS" BY LARGE STATES. (A CLEAR REFERENCE TO U.S. OBJECTIONS TO CHINESE ASSISTANCE
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TO PAKISTANI AND IRANIAN NUCLEAR PROGRAMS).

5. MANY OTHER PRC ATTENDEES, ESPECIALLY THOSE LONG INVOLVED IN CHINA'S NUCLEAR WEAPONS PROGRAM TOOK A DIM VIEW OF THE NPT AND CHINA'S DECISION TO ADHERE TO THE TREATY. THEY SAW THE CHINESE DECISION TO JOIN AS DUE MAINLY TO INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE ON NON-PROLIFERATION AND INDICATED THAT IN INTERNAL DISCUSSIONS THE MAIN SELLING POINT USED BY THE FOREIGN MINISTRY WAS THE EXPANDED OPPORTUNITIES FOR SALES OF PEACEFUL NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY THAT NPT MEMBERSHIP COULD PROVIDE. IN OUR INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS WITH SOME CHINESE AT THE CONFERENCE THIS "BARGAIN" WAS SEEN BY THEM AS SCANT CONSOLATION FOR CHINA'S ABANDONMENT OF DECADES OF PRINCIPLED OPPOSITION TO THE NPT.

LOOKING BACK -- CHINA AND THE NPT

6. IN PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS, A FEW CHINESE REPEATED PRC ANALYSIS, DATING FROM THE 60'S, THAT OTHER STATES, E.G. PAKISTAN, IF THOSE STATES FOUND IT IN THEIR NATIONAL INTERESTS. IN THEIR VIEW THE U.S.-SOVIET NUCLEAR ARMS RACE PRODUCED A DE FACTO POLITICAL STABILITY THAT PREVENTED DIRECT CONFLICT. THEY QUESTIONED WHETHER OTHER RIVAL STATES, SUCH AS PAKISTAN-INDIA, ISRAEL-ARAB STATES, SHOULDN'T BE ALLOWED THE SAME CHANCE TO PREVENT CONFLICT THROUGH NUCLEAR DETERRENCE. THIS MINORITY VIEW WAS CHALLENGED IN THESE PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS, BOTH BY
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FOREIGN PARTICIPANTS AND CHINESE CLOSER TO THE FOREIGN AND ARMS CONTROL POLICY-MAKING PROCESS.

7. COMMENT: THE COMMENTS OF CHINESE AT THE CONFERENCE GAVE US A WINDOW INTO CHINESE THINKING ON NPT EXTENSION AND ON THE CHALLENGES FACED WITHIN THE CHINESE BUREAUCRACY BY THOSE WHO ADVOCATE INVOLVEMENT IN MULTILATERAL NON-PROLIFERATION EFFORTS. FROM OUR CONTACTS AT THE CONFERENCE AND

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ELSEWHERE WE EXPECT THAT CHINA WILL WORK HARD IN THE RUN-UP TO THE NPT EXTENSION CONFERENCE TO MOBILIZE SUPPORT FOR INCLUDING NO FIRST USE IN AN EXTENDED NPT AND FOR GREATER EMPHASIS IN THE NPT ON TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO NON-NUCLEAR WEAPONS STATES. THESE ISSUES ARE NOT ONLY MATTERS OF PRINCIPLE, LONG SUPPORTED BY THE PRC, BUT ALSO -- IN THE CASE OF THE LATTER -- A NECESSARY BARGAINING CHIP TO USE IN CONVINCING THOSE IN THE NUCLEAR INDUSTRY HERE TO ACCEPT CHINESE PARTICIPATION IN THE NPT PROCESS.
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