



Security Council

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Letter dated 29 April 2021 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

In its capacity as President of the Security Council for the month of May, China intends to organize a high-level meeting on the theme “Maintenance of international peace and security: upholding multilateralism and the United Nations-centred international system” on 7 May 2021.

In order to guide the discussions on this topic, China has prepared a concept note (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) **Zhang Jun**
Permanent Representative and
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
of the People’s Republic of China to the United Nations



Annex to the letter dated 29 April 2021 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: Chinese]

Concept note for the Security Council high-level meeting on the theme “Maintenance of international peace and security: upholding multilateralism and the United Nations-centred international system”

I. Introduction

1. During its presidency of the Security Council for the month of May, China will host a high-level meeting on the theme “Maintenance of international peace and security: upholding multilateralism and the United Nations-centred international system” on 7 May 2021. As the world today faces global challenges, including the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, economic recovery and climate change, it is the common choice of the international community to uphold multilateralism and promote a greater role for the United Nations in international affairs. It is hoped that members of the Security Council will take this meeting as an opportunity to reaffirm their strong commitment to multilateralism, defend the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, uphold the United Nations-centred international system and support the continuous strengthening of global governance.

II. Background

2. The United Nations is the central platform for the practice of multilateralism and the basic framework for upholding multilateralism. In 1945, after the scourge of war that had twice brought untold sorrow to mankind, the international community drew a lesson from the pain and resolved to take the path of multilateralism by establishing the United Nations, the most universal, representative and authoritative international intergovernmental organization. This opened a new chapter in the cause of world peace and development. Over the past 76 years, new world wars have been averted, more than 1 billion people have been lifted out of poverty, considerable progress has been made in the cause of human rights worldwide and the concept of international cooperation has taken hold in the heart of humanity.

3. Facts have proved that the concept and practice of multilateralism have brought substantial benefits to the peoples of all nations. The United Nations-centred international system and the basic norms governing international relations based on the Charter have played an essential and indispensable role in maintaining the post-war world order and have become the cornerstone for maintaining the overall stability of the contemporary international order.

4. On 31 January 1992, at the first summit of the Security Council, member States reaffirmed their commitment to multilateralism and the collective security mechanism established by the Charter. On 14 September 2005, at the summit of the Council on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations, it was widely agreed that multilateral mechanisms should be strengthened to ensure that the United Nations could respond effectively to global challenges. On 9 November 2018, at the Council’s open debate on the theme “Maintenance of international peace and security: strengthening multilateralism and the role of the United Nations”, all parties agreed that multilateralism was an inevitable choice in order to meet global challenges.

5. In recent years, multilateralism has encountered many serious challenges. Group politics and ideological confrontation have taken on new forms, undermining the authority and effectiveness of multilateral institutions and eroding the nature of impartiality and the equality of multilateralism. The COVID-19 pandemic has once again reminded us that all countries are interconnected and share a common future. In the face of continuous global threats and challenges, the only correct path to solutions is to uphold and practise multilateralism. According to a global poll conducted by the United Nations, 87 per cent of respondents believe that international cooperation is essential to addressing global challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic, while 74 per cent indicate that the role of the United Nations is crucial. On 21 September 2020, world leaders unanimously adopted the declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, in which they emphasized that multilateralism was not an option but a necessity and that the United Nations must be at the centre of our efforts. This reflects the common voice and aspirations of the international community.

III. Focus of discussion

6. The discussion may focus on the following questions:

(a) To review the development of multilateralism, take stock of lessons learned and explore how to better consolidate the multilateral system and prevent the resurgence of unilateralism;

(b) To discuss the core values and basic principles of multilateralism, namely, what kind of multilateralism the world needs, and how multilateralism should be upheld;

(c) To explore what efforts the international community should make to better uphold the United Nations-centred international system and the basic norms of international relations based on the Charter, to persist in harmonizing and regulating relations among countries through institutions and rules, and to persist in resolving differences through consultation and dialogue;

(d) To explore ways to strengthen international solidarity and cooperation and to use multilateralism to address the most pressing security issues, conventional or non-conventional, currently facing the international community;

(e) To look towards the future and put forward views and proposals on how to strengthen the authority of the United Nations, how to promote the central role of the United Nations in international affairs and how to maintain the international collective security mechanism with the Security Council at its core.

IV. Format of the meeting

7. The meeting will be held in the form of a videoconference of the Security Council, to be chaired by the State Councillor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, Wang Yi. Members of the Security Council are invited to send high-level representatives to attend the meeting and make statements. The President of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session, Volkan Bozkır, will brief the meeting.