



**PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA**  
MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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(Translation)

**A China Committed to Reform and Opening-up  
And Peaceful Development**

Statement by H.E. Wen Jiabao  
Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China  
At the General Debate of the 63rd Session of the UN General Assembly

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Mr. President,

For China, this has been a special year. We experienced two major events. One was the devastating earthquake in Wenchuan, which caused grave losses of life and property. In the face of the disaster, the Chinese people showed great strength, courage, solidarity and resilience. By now, the people affected by the earthquake have been properly relocated and recovery and reconstruction work is well underway. The other was the successful hosting of the Beijing Olympic Games. This grand sporting event provided a good opportunity for athletes from around the world to show true sportsmanship. It also enabled the world to learn more about China and China more about the world. In our fight against the earthquake disaster and our efforts to host the Games, we received understanding, support and assistance from the international community. I wish to take this opportunity to express sincere gratitude on behalf of the Chinese Government and people.

Now the whole world wants to know in what direction China is heading, both politically and economically, after the Beijing Olympic Games. Let me tell you in unequivocal terms that China will remain committed to the path of peaceful development, unswervingly pursue reform and opening-up, and continue to adhere to an independent foreign policy of peace. This is in the fundamental interests of the Chinese people and the people of all other countries. It is also in keeping with the trend of the world.

The just concluded Olympic Games was held in China, the largest developing country in the world. The international community has highly commended the efforts made by the Chinese Government and people for the Games. And its success has greatly inspired the Chinese people and given them even more confidence and strength to achieve modernization of the country. At the same time, however, we are soberly aware that China is a country with 1.3 billion people. Though its total GDP is one of the highest in the world, it trails behind more than 100 countries in terms of per capita income. Development between urban and rural areas and among different regions in China is unbalanced. The rural areas, particularly those in western China, are underdeveloped. Tens of millions of Chinese lack adequate food and clothing. China is still a developing country, where productivity remains low and further development is constrained by the shortage of resources and energy and environmental consequences. Our socialist market economic system, democracy and the rule of law need to be further improved, and certain outstanding social issues are yet to be resolved. To achieve China's modernization is a daunting task and we still have a long way to go. Both the opportunities and challenges that we face are unprecedented. We will seize the opportunities, rise up to challenges, dedicate ourselves to nation-building and focus on development. This is what the Chinese Government and people have been thinking and doing.

People may ask: How does China achieve its development? The answer is through reform and opening-up. This year marks the 30th anniversary of China's reform and opening-up policy, a policy that fundamentally changed the closed, backward and ossified situation which had existed in China for years. It is a policy that freed people's mind and aroused their initiative, liberated the productive forces, generated great economic and social progress, and instilled vigor and vitality into the country. Without this policy, there would not have been such changes in China in the last 30 years. To achieve the goal of modernization and build a strong, prosperous, democratic, culturally advanced and harmonious country, we will stick to the reform and opening-up policy. It is a choice of vital importance to the development of China today. It is also a strategy that will shape China's future. We are firm in carrying this policy forward. The Chinese nation has all along cherished the fine tradition and benefited from the wisdom of being open to new ideas and drawing on the strengths of others. The Chinese people have learned from 30 years of reform and opening-up that only continued economic and political restructuring and reform in other fields can lead to sustained economic growth and social progress, and only continued opening-up in an

all-round way can lead the country to greater national strength and prosperity. This is the conclusion we have drawn both from our practice and exploration and from historical experiences.

Mr. President,

The world needs peace, for only with peace can there be development. China earnestly hopes to have a peaceful international environment in order to achieve its development goals. The Chinese Government is committed to an independent foreign policy of peace and stands ready to work with other countries to advance the noble cause of peace and progress of mankind.

Respect for sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries is the prerequisite for sound state-to-state relations. The Chinese people have learned from their modern history of humiliation that when a country loses sovereignty, its people lose dignity and status. China is firm in upholding its hard-won sovereignty and territorial integrity and will never tolerate any external interference. Following the principle of treating each other as equals, China also respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity of other countries as well as the independent choice of their people for social systems and development paths.

China is ready to develop friendly relations with all countries on the basis of equality and mutual benefit rather than on ideology or political system. In handling international affairs, we make our own judgment on the merit of each case and take our position in light of our national interests and the wellbeing of the world's people. We will neither blindly follow the position of others nor give way to the pressure of any forces. In international relations, China does not seek to build alliance or become a leader and will never do so in the future.

Peaceful settlement of international disputes is a founding purpose of the United Nations and a basic principle of international law. China is committed to addressing issues left over from history and current differences with other countries through dialogue and negotiation. As a permanent member of the UN Security Council, China will continue to play an active and constructive role in promoting peaceful settlement of international hotspot issues and regional conflicts.

China's development is peaceful in nature. It will not harm anyone or

pose a threat to anyone. China does not seek hegemony now, nor will it do so in the future. China keeps and develops an appropriate level of military capability solely for the purpose of safeguarding China's sovereignty and territorial integrity. The confidence and pride of the Chinese nation today are based on China's economic development, social justice, civility of the people and moral strength. China will, through its own development, contribute to peace and development of the world.

Mr. President,

In the long history of mankind, the destinies of countries have never been so closely linked as they are today. Given the global nature of issues threatening the survival and development of mankind such as climate warming, environmental degradation, resources constraints, frequent outbreaks of diseases and natural disasters and the spread of terrorism, and in the face of the intertwining challenges of finance, energy and food, no country can expect to stay away from the difficulties or handle the problems all by itself. The ongoing financial volatility, in particular, has affected many countries and its impact is likely to become more serious. To tackle the challenge, we must all make concerted efforts. So long as people of all countries, especially their leaders, can do away with hostility, estrangement and prejudice, treat each other with sincerity and an open mind, and forge ahead hand in hand, mankind will overcome all difficulties and embrace a brighter and better future. China, as a responsible major developing country, is ready to work with other members of the international community to strengthen cooperation, share opportunities, meet challenges and contribute to the harmonious and sustainable development of the world.

Thank you.