Statement by Ambassador Wang Min at the Third Committee of the 68th Session of the General Assembly on Human Rights (Agenda Item 69 b&c)
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Mr. Chairman,

The current world today is undergoing profound and complex changes. Multipolarization and economic globalization are gaining momentum. Cultural diversity and social informatization are going to greater depth. Countries are more interdependent than ever before. Dialogue and exchanges among civilizations become more dynamic. Global cooperation is expanding at multiple levels and on all fronts. However, world economic recovery is based on an infirm foundation and at a dissatisfactory speed. Development has become more unbalanced in different parts of the world. Regional turbulences and hotspots flare up from time to time.

Against this backdrop, global human rights endeavors face a range of challenges. People in developing countries have not effectively realized their right to development and are facing daunting difficulties in the achievement of the MDGs as scheduled. There is a continued tendency of politicizing human rights issues. Some countries are fond of imposing “double standards”, politicizing human rights issues and arbitrarily interfering in others’ internal affairs. In hotspot regions stuck in instability and conflicts, ensuring people’s rights to life and development remains a long and uphill journey. Discrimination based on
religion, color, gender and race remains a concern worldwide. Many traditional human rights issues are yet to be effectively addressed.

Mr. Chairman,

Although the promotion and protection of human rights is a common goal of human being, there is no one-size-fits-all approach to attain such a goal. Western countries should fully respect the endeavors made by all other countries, particularly those developing countries, in ensuring human rights on the basis of their own national conditions. They should carry out exchanges and cooperation with developing countries in a constructive manner and completely abandon such wrong approaches as going for political confrontation. The Chinese delegation believes that the international community should also uphold the following principles for the proper handling of differences on human rights issues and work together to protect and promote human rights:

First, the principles and purposes of the UN Charter must be strictly observed. They are the cornerstone of international relations in contemporary times and the guarantee for world peace and stability. Respecting state sovereignty and opposing interference in others’ internal affairs, maintaining peace and opposing aggression, promoting equality and opposing power politics, these are important principles that must be upheld at all times. International efforts to protect and promote human rights should also be based on these principles. The attempt of individual countries to create humanitarian crisis under the cloak of humanitarian intervention should be guarded against. All countries should treat each other as equals in addressing human rights issues and refrain from politicizing these issues or adopting double standards so as to ensure human rights development on the basis of inclusiveness and mutual trust.
Second, attach equal importance to and make balanced effort to the promotion of the two categories of human rights. There is no human right that is more important than the other. Some countries deliberately highlight political and civil rights and intentionally or unintentionally ignore or even misinterpret economic, social and cultural rights. In fact, in many parts of the world that are plagued by war, poverty and hunger, people’s first want is stability and bread. Some countries should redress wrong approaches and treat the two categories of human rights equally in an objective manner.

Third, respect the choice of all countries regarding the path of human rights development. Only the wearer knows if the shoe fits his foot. It has been proven time and again that a country must proceed from its own realities and rely on the unremitting efforts of its own government and people if it is to effectively promote and protect human rights. External forces can only play a supporting role and should not overstep the mark. The international community should fully respect developing countries’ demand for prioritizing the rights to life and development, provide them with technical assistance and help them strengthen capacity building. More importantly, developed countries should demonstrate political sincerity, faithfully fulfill their ODA commitment, increase financial and technical support to developing countries and effectively realize the right to development.

Last but not least, address human rights differences through dialogue and cooperation. Power politics does not serve the principle of democracy. Imposition of pressure doesn’t result in a culture for human rights development. It is a matter of fact that countries differ in social system, development level, religious tradition and ideology. It is impossible to promote human rights with one size model. Countries with different social systems and development levels should dedicate
themselves to dialogue on an equal footing and practical cooperation, respect each other, understand each other, learn from each other, support each other, share experience related to human rights protection and promotion, use others’ strengths to offset their own weaknesses and work together to promote the healthy development of the international cause for human rights.

Mr. Chairman,

Thanks to decades of efforts, China has found a socialist human rights development path with Chinese characteristics that serves China’s own realities. Respect for and protection of human rights has become both a constitutional and a governance principle. China now enjoys rapid economic growth, substantial improvements in people’s living standards and steady progress in the development of democracy and the rule of law. China’s human rights endeavors have entered a new stage of well-planned, steady and comprehensive advancement. No country has a perfect human rights record. There always will be this problem or that. China is no exception. We welcome good-willed suggestions and even criticism and stand ready to take them according to China’s realities.

The Chinese government is an active advocate for and participant of international human rights exchanges and cooperation. China has acceded to and earnestly implemented 26 international conventions on human rights. Every year, we conduct human rights dialogue and consultation with nearly 20 countries. China has maintained sound cooperation with OHCHR and its special mechanisms. We are ready to receive the visit of the Working Group on the Issue of Discrimination Against Women in Law and in Practice to China within this year, and will invite the Special Rapporteur on the Right of Everyone to the Enjoyment of the Highest Attainable Standard of Physical and Mental Health, the
Special Rapporteur on the Human Right to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation, and the Independent Expert on the Effects of Foreign Debt and other Related International Financial Obligations of States on the Full Enjoyment of All Human Rights, Particularly Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to visit China next year. We also look forward to the visit of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to China at a time of mutual convenience.

That said, I wish to stress that we are strongly opposed to unwarranted finger-pointing and attack at China’s human rights record by some western countries with condescending arrogance as preacher of human rights. Their real purpose is not to help China improve human rights, but to change China’s political system and reroute China’s development path. To such noise, our response is clear. We will stand rock firm in face of all attacks. Both history and the reality show that China’s choice of social system and development path is right. This is the conclusion from history and the choice by our people. We will stay firmly committed to both our system and our path. As China develops, China’s social system will be even mature, the superiority of our system will further be demonstrated and our road will be broader and broader.

The new collective leadership of China has put forward the vision of realizing the Chinese dream, which stands for the renewal of the Chinese nation. It has set forth two centennial goals to lead the 1.3 billion Chinese people towards the grand goals, namely, by 2021 when the Communist Party of China celebrates its centenary, we will have succeeded in building a moderately prosperous society in all respects; by 2049 when the People’s Republic marks its 100th anniversary, we will have turned our country into a socialist modern country that is prosperous, democratic, harmonious and culturally advanced. We are convinced that with the gradual realization of the Chinese dream, China will make
greater achievements in its human rights development endeavors. The world will witness a China that enjoys greater economic prosperity and social harmony, higher level of democracy and the rule of law, better lives of its people and more effective protection of human rights.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.