

## **The Statement of ACUNS Annual Meeting in Geneva on 24 June 2022:**

**Ms. HU Wenli**

**Vice President and Director-General of the United Nations Association of China, China**

Ms. Hu greeted and welcomed all participants. She stated that nowadays changes in the world are unfolding in ways like never before which is posing challenges that must be taken seriously by the international community. Firstly, multilateralism has been severely undermined. In recent years it has encountered an unprecedented adverse current. Some countries with the pretext of multilateralism engage in a small circle and group politics inside division and confrontation, and vigorously practice hegemony and power politics. These acts harm global peace and security. Geopolitical tensions are on the rise and even burst into a crisis like what we saw in Ukraine.

Secondly, the COVID 19 pandemic has been raging for more than two years, taking more than 6 million lives, and bringing political, economic, and social damage. So far it has not been effectively controlled around the world. Factors such as uneven vaccine distribution and continuous virus mutations, have greatly hindered the pace of global pandemic prevention and control and cast a shadow on the economic recovery.

Thirdly, COVID 19 has slowed down the improvement in global poverty reduction over the past years. International efforts to implement the UN 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development have been greatly undermined. The global extreme poverty rate rose for the first time in more than 20 years, 119 million to 124 million people in the world have been returning to extreme poverty. If the current trend remains unchanged, the global poverty rate is expected to be 7% in 2030, which will not meet the goal of poverty eradication in 2030. The economic recession and slowing down caused by COVID 19 did not alleviate the climate crisis, the biodiversity loss and ecological environment continue to deteriorate. COVID 19 has also exacerbated the existing inequality among and within some countries. The north-south development divide continues to deepen.

Fourthly, global climate change has continued to intensify. The intergovernmental panel on climate change recently released an assessment report titled “Climate change 2022 – impacts, adaptation, and vulnerability”. The report shows that if human beings do not strictly limit carbon emissions, nature-harming phenomena will increase significantly in the next few decades, and the spread of disease will further accelerate. There are traditional and non-traditional security threats emerging one after another and peace and development are facing severe challenges. The fundamental reason is that multilateralism with the UN as the core has not been effectively practiced. The role of the UN cannot

be undermined. All member states of the UN should resolutely uphold the authority and standing of the UN, ensuring the UN plays a leading role in advancing peace, development, and human rights.

Multilateralism is a master key to addressing all global challenges. On one hand, we need to firmly uphold the purposes and principles of the UN charter, advance democracy in international relations, promote equity for all countries in rights, opportunities, and rules. Adhere to the principle of extensive consultation, joint contribution, and shared benefits in global governance. Increase the representation and voice of developing countries. On the other hand, we must oppose the practice of small circles and group politics, working together to ensure that international affairs are handled by all, international rules are formulated by all, and development achievements are shared by all. Fighting against the COVID-19 pandemic should be a collective action of the international community. All countries need to actively strengthen international solidarity, ensure adequate distribution of vaccines, contribute multiple lines of defense against COVID-19, and speed up efforts to build a global community of health for all. With the principle of putting the people's life first, China has a dynamic and strong line of defense against the virus, consolidating the gains made in the COVID-19 response. Not only the people's lives have been protected, but the overall stable performance in economic and social development has also been maintained. Development issues should remain a priority for the UN. The international community should further promote the building of an open world economy, and create conditions for the implementation of the 2030 agenda as scheduled. Last year, China raised the Global Development Initiative and called for the international community to pool efforts to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 agenda – for the united, equal, balanced, and inclusive global development partnership, and promote cooperation in a wide range of areas such as poverty alleviation, food security, COVID-19 response and vaccines, development financing, climate change and green development, industrialization, digital economy and connectivity, and work together to build a global community for development. The UN and other international financial institutions should make double efforts to mobilize more resources for developing countries to enhance their ability to cope with external shocks. Developed countries should honor their commitments to help developing countries achieve sustainable development. Fighting climate change is an urgent cause for each country. It is vital to enhance mutual trust among member states, uphold the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, and promote the implementation of the outcomes of the COP26 to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Developed economies should take a lead in bearing the emission reduction responsibilities and deliver commitment of financial and technological support.

Security in Asia is in our common interest. It is necessary to keep pace with the times and establish a security concept in the 21 century. China has called for common, comprehensive, cooperative, and

sustainable security in Asia and promoted extensive consultation and joint contribution to common security. It meets the historical trend of building a community with a shared future for Asian countries and responds to the urgent needs of all parties, jointly addressing the security challenges. This year China put forward a global security initiative during the Boao Forum for Asia, which is a new approach to solving the global security dilemma. The main points of the global security initiative are six commitments. It calls all countries to stay committed to the vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative, and sustainable security. Stay committed to respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries. Stay committed to abiding by the purposes and principles of the UN charter. Stay committed to taking the legitimate security concerns of all countries seriously. Stay committed to peacefully resolving differences and disputes between countries through dialogue and consultation. Stay committed to maintaining security in both traditional and non-traditional domains. We should be clear, that we are a community in which all countries share a common stake. We, in the international community, should reject zero-sum thinking and work together to build a new type of international relations based on mutual respect, fairness, justice, and win-win cooperation.

Asian countries should stay vigilant and reject actions undermining peace and development together. People in Asia deeply cherish the value of peace and understand that development does not come easily. Over the past decades, Asia has enjoyed overall stability and sustained rapid growth, and other countries have benefited. It demonstrates Asian resilience, wisdom, and strengths, and makes Asia an anchor of peace and stability. As important countries and major economies in the world, China, Japan, and the Republic of Korea should focus on a fundamental and long-term interest in the region and international area.

Today's world needs multilateral cooperation, coordination, and compromise more than ever before. UN lays a foundation for collective actions in sustaining peace and development of the whole world. Let's hope for a future of mutual respect and equality, and let's work together.

In responding to questions and comments, Ms. HU Wenli agreed that Asia has enjoyed peace and stability over the past few years because of the focus on development rather than mutual suspicion and panic. For Asia to maintain stability and peace is to eradicate the cold war mentality. Countries should regard each other as partners rather than adversaries and rivals. See each other's development as an opportunity rather than a threat. It is on this basis we could cooperate and work together to fight the challenges.

Regarding the reform of the Security Council, it is a very complicated issue and there is not a simple solution for that. Of course, China supports the reform of the UN Security Council and believes that the reform should enhance the authority and effectiveness of the Council, increase the representation and voice of developing countries, and give more opportunities for small and medium-sized countries to participate in the decision making. There is not a single solution to it, it should be a package solution.

Regarding development, and how to reduce inequalities among nations, people's attention is all caught in the geopolitical tensions but the problem is that the development is getting more and more marginalized on the international agenda. Why did China put forward the Global Development Initiative? The main purpose is to bring development back to the center of the international agenda, to offer an effective platform for all parties to coordinate development policies and deepen practical cooperation as well as an impetus to pool resources, address difficulties holding back development and promote greater coordination and efficiency. The developed countries should provide more financial and technological support for the developing countries, to build the infrastructure, and capacities, and help fight the challenges. From a global point of view, there is still a divide between the north and the south and it is deepening.