

always been described by the Chinese government as in conformity with the long-standing pursuit of complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons.⁴⁵

Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). China's positions during the CTBT negotiations revolved around two issues: the inclusion of a clause on peaceful nuclear explosions (PNEs) in the CTBT, which it proposed in August 1994; and the question of verification. Regarding the former, China's view was that only nuclear explosions with an overt military purpose should be prohibited. Beijing argued that PNEs could have potential civilian benefits for the peaceful use of nuclear energy.⁴⁶ China eventually dropped its demand for the PNE exemption clause on the condition that the treaty would undergo review after ten years.⁴⁷ One of the reasons for this last-minute 'softening' of position may be the political cost of holding out to the PNE demand and potentially wrecking the treaty, especially given the fact that China's position was not supported by the developing countries.⁴⁸

Chinese positions on verification issues are that any verification clauses and arrangements should be strict, effective, fair and reasonable, and provide equal rights and obligations to all treaty members. Out of concern over potential abuse, Beijing opposed the use of national-technical means (NTMs) in CTBT verification and proposed an international monitoring system (IMS) instead. China also proposed a number of principles for on-site inspections (OSIs) ranging from the objective, the triggering procedure, and the limits of such inspections.⁴⁹ OSIs should be minimally intrusive and applied only as a last resort after all other means of verification have been exhausted.

Fissile Materials Production Cut-off. On 4 October 1994, Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher signed the "Joint Declaration on the Cessation of Production of Fission Materials Used in Nuclear Weapons."⁵⁰ Apart from this Sino-US joint declaration, China has said little about its positions on the cut-off issue but has reiterated the importance of measures such as NFU in contributing to disarmament. China has been unwilling to commit itself to a moratorium on production although reportedly it has long stopped production of fissile materials. A number of factors will likely affect Chinese positions on the cut-off issue. These include the development of the theatre missile defence (TMD) and the national missile defence (NMD); current size of

⁴⁵ 'Statement by the Government of China on the Question of Nuclear Testing', 5 October 1993. A/C 1/48/3.

⁴⁶ 'CTBT article on "Peaceful uses of nuclear energy and peaceful nuclear explosions"', Chinese working paper. CD/NTB/WP.167. 23 August 1994.

⁴⁷ Robert Karniol, 'China to sign pact after one more nuclear test', *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 19 June 1996, p.25.

⁴⁸ Johnson, 'Endgame Issues in Geneva', p.15.

⁴⁹ 'China's position on CTBT on-site inspection'. Working Paper, CD/NTB/WP.266, 5 September 1995, p.1; Ambassador Sha, CD/PV.717, p.7.

⁵⁰ 'Accords on Nuclear Weapons', Xinhua Domestic Service, 4 October 1994, in *FBIS-CHI*, 5 October 1994, pp.8-9.