

(Translation)

The Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and, recalling its Notes Verbales No. CML/63/2020 dated September 18, 2020, No.CML/32/2021 dated August 16, 2021, No.CML/96/2022 dated July 25, 2022, and with reference to the Letter No.A/79/674 submitted to the Secretary-General of the United Nations by the Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations on December 5, 2024, has the honor to state China's position as follows:

I. China has sovereignty over Nanhai Zhudao (South China Sea Islands), consisting of Dongsha Qundao (Dongsha Islands), Xisha Qundao (Xisha Islands), Zhongsha Qundao (Zhongsha Islands) and Nansha Qundao (Nansha Islands). China has internal waters, territorial sea and contiguous zone, based on Nanhai Zhudao. China has exclusive economic zone and continental shelf, based on Nanhai Zhudao. China has historic rights in the South China Sea.

II. China's territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests in the South China Sea are in line with international law. China's Dongsha Qundao, Xisha Qundao, Zhongsha Qundao and Nansha Qundao each constitutes an entity in geographic, economic and political terms, and has been regarded as an entity respectively throughout history, which is in line with customary international law and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (hereinafter referred to as "UNCLOS"). China's practice of drawing its territorial sea baselines for Xisha Qundao is in line with UNCLOS and general international law. China has yet to draw its

territorial sea baselines for other archipelagos. The discussion on the baselines for the above archipelagos in the Limits in the Seas No.150 study released by the United States Department of State is nothing but fabrication and conjecture.

III. Being a State Party to UNCLOS, China complies with and applies UNCLOS with a rigorous and responsible attitude. The eighth paragraph of the preamble of UNCLOS provides that “matters not regulated by this Convention continue to be governed by the rules and principles of general international law.” Archipelago constituting a legal whole has been established in general international law for a long time. In the course of concluding UNCLOS, the question of continental States' outlying archipelagos was deferred and not addressed in UNCLOS. After UNCLOS entered into force, this question continues to be governed by general international law. The practice regarding continental States' outlying archipelagos long-established in international law shall be respected.

IV. China always respects the freedom of navigation and overflight enjoyed by all countries in accordance with international law. Freedom of navigation and overflight in the South China Sea has never been an issue. No country, including the United States, can provide any example of the freedom of navigation and overflight in the South China Sea being affected. It is necessary to underscore that the United States, in the name of freedom of navigation and overflight, has been recklessly provoking in the South China Sea, with no regard for the lawful rights and interests of other countries. Such acts, which highlight the U.S. pursuit of maritime hegemony, are the primary challenge to the current situation in the South China Sea.

V. It has been over 30 years since UNCLOS entered into force. However, the United States still refuses to accede to the Convention and even attempts to impose its misinterpretation of UNCLOS on States Parties, which fully exposes the hypocrisy and double-standard of the

United States.

The Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations has the honor to request that this letter be circulated by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to all States Parties to UNCLOS and all Member States of the United Nations.

The Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretary-General of the United Nations the assurances of its highest consideration.

(Seal)

New York, 28 February 2025

H.E Mr. António Guterres  
Secretary-General  
United Nations  
New York