

Remarks delivered by

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Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization

Handover Ceremony of the Chairmanship of the G-77 Vienna Chapter

30 January 2019

Mr Chairman,
Ms Gomez,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am honoured to speak on this auspicious occasion and extend my sincere congratulations to Ambassador Omar Amer Youssef on his new responsibilities as Chair of the G-77 Vienna Chapter. I also wish to thank Chargée d'affaires Verónica Gomez for her kind invitation to attend this year's handover ceremony.

The past year saw enhanced engagement between the CTBTO and its stakeholders – and more so with countries of the Group of 77 and China.

An encouraging milestone was achieved in September 2018 when the Kingdom of Thailand ratified the CTBT. By doing so, Thailand helped give further impetus to efforts toward universalization of the Treaty, thus contributing to our common objective of a world free from nuclear testing – an objective that is strongly shared by the Group of 77 and China.

The numbers testify to this commitment: countries in the Group of 77 and China represent around two thirds of CTBT States Signatories and the same proportion of ratifying States. We are grateful, in this context, for the repeated calls by the G77 and China regarding the need for an early entry into force of the CTBT.

With regard to the work of the CTBTO itself, we are grateful for the active participation of the Group and its Member States, as witnessed through Morocco's excellent leadership as Chair of Working Group A.

In order to improve the ability of all States Signatories to take part in the Treaty's verification activities, every effort has been placed into facilitating participation in our capacity building and trainings programmes, in particular for developing countries.

Many States have also generously supported us by helping organize CTBTO activities. In 2018, for example, several capacity-building and training events were hosted by G-77 countries, including three NDC workshops in Algeria, Mongolia and Tunisia; and two OSI courses in Argentina and South Africa. Many of you will have already met the "new" head of IDC's Capacity-Building and Training section, who hails from Madagascar.

In fact, the highest attention has been and will continue to be given to geographical distribution and gender balance in the recruitment process of staff, at all levels. Gender parity among the Directors is one illustration of the Organization's commitment to equitable representation. As you know, I have also appointed, among my most direct advisors, a focal point for issues related to G-77 and NAM.

Returning to capacity-building and training, the Commission continues to implement a project to facilitate the participation of experts from developing countries in its official technical meetings. In 2018, the project supported the participation of 12 experts, from Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Iraq, Malaysia, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Niger, Sudan and Tunisia. Since its inception in 2007, the project has supported 48 experts from 37 States, including 10 least developed countries. Of these 48 experts, 15 are women.

Such engagement in the activities of the CTBTO allows Member States not only to take part in monitoring activities as set out in the Treaty but also to reap the benefits of the civil and scientific applications of the Treaty's monitoring technologies. These benefits can be used to contribute in very tangible ways to development and human well-being, including in the context of the UN sustainable development goals.

In this regard, I am pleased to say that preparations are well under way for this year's edition of the biennial *CTBT: Science and Technology* conference, scheduled to take place from 24 to 28 June in the Hofburg Palace.

Building on the previous six editions, the conference will seek to broaden and strengthen the engagement of experts working in test ban monitoring, including young scientists, while enhancing geographic and gender representations; and

foster partnerships and discussions with (and within) the scientific communities, in support of the CTBT and related national needs.

Around 1000 scientists, experts, practitioners and youth from over 120 countries attended the 2017 edition of the conference – about a third of whom hailed from countries in the Group of 77 and China. We look forward to the same level of enthusiasm in June of this year, and hope to welcome even more scientists from G77 countries and China – women and men, of all ages.

As I have pointed out before, it is imperative to remember that entry into force and implementation of the CTBT will likely be in the hands of the next generation of leaders and policy makers. It is with this generational transition in mind that the young women and men in the CTBTO Youth Group are directing their careers towards making a tangible contribution to global peace and security by actively promoting the CTBT and its verification regime.

Among the participants in the *2018 CTBTO GEM – Youth International Conference* that took place in Astana, Kazakhstan, a good number represented G-77 countries. Let us all continue encouraging our youth to lend their voice to initiatives such as this one and become dynamic and inspiring advocates for international peace and security.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I commend Ambassador Játiva and Chargée d'affaires Verónica Gomez for Ecuador's excellent leadership of the Group throughout 2018.

I look forward to working with Ambassador Youssef to continue developing the fruitful and cordial relations that have traditionally existed between the Group of 77 and China, and the CTBTO. I know that Ambassador Youssef's abilities and competencies will lead the Vienna Chapter in the most effective way towards the attainment of the Group's goals.

The CTBTO stands ready to further strengthen and deepen its partnership with G-77 countries and China, and explore fresh paths of cooperation towards our common objective to finish what we started: the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

Thank you.