



STATEMENT OF THE G-77 AND CHINA DURING THE CTBTO-WORKING GROUP B 22ND SESSION, 9-27 FEBRUARY 2004 DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR TAOUS FEROUKHI, PR OF ALGERIA

Mr. Chairman,

On behalf of State Signatories of the Group of 77 and China, I am pleased to see you again chairing the 22nd session of Working Group B. I believe that under your able chairmanship and guidance, discussions will lead to fruitful conclusions and I assure you of our full support and cooperation.

The Group expresses its deepest condolence and sympathy to the government and people of the Islamic republic of Iran and also to the families and friends of the victims of the tragic earthquake in Bam. The Group wishes to pay tribute to H.E. Ambassador Federico Urruela Prado, Permanent Representative of Guatemala who suddenly passed away earlier this month in Guatemala City. The Group joins the staff of CTBT in mourning for Ms. Jane Ward dedicated Staff Council President.

The Group wishes to thank the Executive Secretary, Ambassador Wolfgang Hoffmann, for his comprehensive written and oral reports. We would like to express our appreciation for the diligent efforts of the PTS in implementing the mandates of the Preparatory Commission for the establishment of the international verification system at the Entry Into Force of the Treaty.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group would like to express its views on the following issues, which will be considered during the present meeting of Working Group B.

1. In considering the of guidance to the PTS for preparing the verification related work programme and budget elements for 2005, the Group would like to reiterate the views expressed in its previous statements, in particular that any proposal for the verification related work programme and budget elements for 2005 and thereafter, should be guided by the main principles of the G-77 which have been stated in previous occasion. Accordingly, the Group urges WGB to adjust the pace of its work to the above-mentioned principles and in line with the budget exercise of last year ask the PTS to prioritize and reallocate its resources between Major Programmes, under the principle of no overall programmatic increases.

Mr. Chairman,

2. The Group takes note of the initiative of WGB for the review of the organizational structure of the PTS and follows closely and with great care the informal consultation in this regard. The Group believes that the mandate of the Prep-Com and, subsequently, the tasks of the PTS are quite clear in accordance with the text of the establishment of the Preparatory Commission. Carrying out the necessary preparation for the effective implementation of the CTBT and preparation for the first session of the Conference of the States Parties are the main tasks of the Prep-Com and the PTS. From our point of view those tasks include two main pillars namely political issues and technical issues. Political issues include efforts for the EIF of the Treaty and taking into account the position of different countries and technical issues on the establishment of the verification system upon the EIF of the Treaty. In any attempt to restructuring, the balance between political and technical tasks of the PTS should be maintained. Therefore we believe that in the restructuring of the PTS, unnecessary changes should not be made. The purposes of the restructuring should be increasing coordination, enhancing efficiency and possible cost efficiency in the PTS. The experiences of the PTS should be taken into account. Should an external evaluation team be appointed to do the restructuring, then

the Group attaches utmost importance to the fair geographical representation in the team. Close interaction of the team and Member States is also of utmost importance so we support the establishment of a framework for consultations between the team and States Signatories. However, we should reiterate that this issue is very sensitive and that recommendations can be implemented only after thorough reviewing and decisions should be taken into account in the Working Groups and the Prep-Com. With regard to the funding of the team, it is our view that this exercise should be funded within available resources.

3. The Group believes that according to the resolution on the establishment of the Prep Com, technical testing and provisional operations, as necessary, pending the Entry Into Force (EIF) of the Treaty, are a task of the Prep Com. The operation of IMS stations before the EIF of the Treaty is provisional and testing in nature and only for the purpose of evaluating the performance and data quality of IMS stations. The Group welcomes the adoption of the guidelines for technical testing and provisional operation of certified IMS stations, the GCI and the IDC in the last Working Group B [CTBT/PC-19/1/AnnexII, para 13]. We believe that the mode of operation of IMS certified stations should be determined exclusively in the light of actual needs of testing and maintenance of the IMS network. The legal and financial concerns of State Signatories should also be duly taken into account during the negotiation of contracts for post certification activities. We welcome the decision of Working Group B in its 21st session, as stipulated in para 10-12 of CTBT/WGB-21/1, on the proposed system-wide performance test. We are of the view that this test should be carried out when the majority of the IMS stations, especially certified stations, are in place and connected to the IDC and after enough preparation for this wide scale test had been made by the PTS. The only purpose of this test is to evaluate the performance of the whole system. We take note of the fact that Working Group B in its latest meeting (para 12 of CTBT/WGB-21/1) agreed that "the schedule for the phases of wide scale testing as well as their duration should be flexible". However, we believe that the test should be done in a very limited timeframe, taking into account the sole purpose of testing the system.

4. The Group attaches great importance to the National Data Centers (NDCs) and welcomes the establishment of joint theme Task of NDC in the framework of Working Group B and supports the main objectives of this Task as articulated by its distinguished task leader in the report of last WGB. We believe that the PTS should play a more active role in promoting the NDCs of developing countries especially in providing hardware and software. More training courses for NDCs are required to provide the necessary capabilities for the States Signatories, especially for developing countries, to take greater advantage of the data, products and services of the IDC. In this regard we welcome the initiative of the PTS to convene 3 regional training courses on the NDC data analysis for regional groups of the G-77. The Group encourages wider participation of the developing countries in NDC and IDC training courses.

5. The Group believes that all the elements of the verification regime of the treaty including IMS, IDC and OSI, are important and in this regard attaches great importance to a balanced approach dealing with all those elements. Due to the complexity of the OSI issues, active participation of all members is important. From our point of view the elaboration of the draft OSI Operational Manual, based on the Initial Draft Rolling Text (IDRT), remains a priority task for all members of the Commission. We appreciate the efforts of the PTS in supporting the elaboration of the draft On-Site Inspection (OSI) Operational Manual, especially the contribution of the PTS in chapter 6 on inspection of underground events, search logic, software checking, point of entry and base camp activities. We ask for the continuation and increased contribution of the PTS, based on the experience of workshops, tabletop exercises and field experiments, to the discussion of draft OSI Operational Manual.

From our point of view, adequate resources should be allocated to the OSI major program in order to enable the necessary preparations for the establishment of the OSI regime at Entry Into Force of the Treaty. We believe that the report which has been prepared by the External Evaluation Team of the OSI (CTBT/WGB-21/INF.5), contains many important recommendations for further improving the functionality and effectiveness of the OSI Major Programme, so we would like to ask the WGB to discuss and consider this report in full and with great care, as well as the response of the PTS in this regard.

We take note with appreciation of the convening of the ninth OSI Workshop, the third tabletop exercise on managed access in Snezhinsk, Russian Federation, and the fourth Experimental Advanced Course for the visual observation and survey sub-team in Paris. To ensure that the lessons from operational activities are not lost, we welcome the initiative of the PTS to recording them carefully in a special database of OSI lessons learned.

6. In accordance with the provisions of the Treaty, the text on the establishment of the Prep Com and the development of the work of the PTS, we believe that adopting a Confidentiality Policy for the PTS is a real and urgent need. The confidentiality policy should create a strict regime for handling all data and information available to the PTS and should not be limited to the procedures of the PTS in classification of the information. In this regard, we take note of the paper of the PTS on its policies and procedures in handling the sensitive information in document CTBT/PTS/INF.614. This document could be a basis for further discussion. However, we believe that a comprehensive approach, including definition of information, list of types of information available to the PTS, criteria for the classification and declassification, Procedures and Modalities for handling the classified information, changing the Classification or Designation of Information, roles and responsibilities of States Signatories, is necessary for the confidentiality policy of the PTS. We believe that more time should be allocated in WGB discussions to this important task.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.