



VIENNA CHAPTER

STATEMENT OF THE G-77 AND CHINA DURING THE 26TH SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMISSION FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN TREATY ORGANIZATION (2--23 JUNE 2006), DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR MR. HORACIO BAZOBERRY, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF BOLIVIA

Chairperson,

At the outset, let me once more express the satisfaction of the State Signatories of the Group of 77 and China in seeing you chairing the 26th session, Part II of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty Organization in 2006. The Group believes that under your stewardship and guidance, discussions will lead to fruitful conclusions and I assure you of our full cooperation.

The Group expresses its appreciation to Ambassador Abdulkadir Bin Rimdap, Chairperson of Working Group A, and to Mr Hein Haak, Chairperson of Working Group B, for guiding the work of the subsidiary bodies of the Preparatory Commission.

Chairperson,

We are pleased to note that, since the last session of the Preparatory Commission in November 2005, Viet Nam as one of 44 states listed in Annex 2 has ratified the Treaty. The Group reiterates the importance of the universalization of the Treaty and its early entry into force. The Group calls on all countries that have not yet signed and ratified the Treaty to do so at the earliest possible date, and looks forward to discussing future ways of promoting the entry into force of the CTBT.

The Group takes note with appreciation of the Executive Secretary's comprehensive written and oral reports and would like to express its views on the following agenda items, which will be considered during the present meeting of the Preparatory Commission:

AGENDA ITEM 3: CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT OF WORKING GROUP B

Chairperson,

The Group's position on the participation of experts from developing countries in Working Group B is well known and documented. The Group expresses its appreciation to Mr Andrea Gue', Chairperson of the open-ended working group, for holding informal consultations to achieve consensus on this issue. The Group extends its appreciation to the flexible manner in which delegations are prepared to find a solution.

The Group is of the view that the participation of experts from developing countries would greatly facilitate and enhance the work of WGB and make our Organization more representative and participatory. It would also in the long run permit achieving consensus during the initial session of the Conference of the States Parties supposed to adopt all the operational manuals and relevant technical documents. The Group reiterates its call that the best approach at this stage would be to make funds available in the regular budget to cover expenses for representatives of developing countries to participate in WGB meetings on the basis of three representatives each from the following regions: namely; Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean.

AGENDA ITEM 4: CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT OF WORKING GROUP A

Chairperson,

Concerning the report of WGA, the Group wishes to reiterate its principled positions on a number of issues that are important to the Group.

Concerning the composition of the Provisional Technical Secretariat, the Group of 77 and China wishes to re-emphasise that the seven year service limit for Professional and internationally recruited General Service staff members should be strictly observed. In exceptional circumstances, when the seven-year limit is exceeded, the PTS should endeavour to inform State Signatories accordingly.

Nevertheless, the Group notes with concern that the overall representation of developing countries in the Provisional Technical Secretariat remains unbalanced. In this regard, the Group would like to reiterate the need to increase the presence of staff members from developing countries in the PTS. The Group calls upon the Secretariat to give due attention to this criterion in the recruitment process of new staff members, who will replace those who have reached their service limit.

The Group notes that some developed countries are pushing very hard for greater participation of their nationals as PTS employees. Some developed countries insist on having a ratio that represented a size of a State Signatories financial contribution. There is no legal basis for this - Rule 4.2 of the Staff regulations states that "contributions" will be taken into consideration, as appropriate. The Group would like to point out that Rule 4.2 refers to contributions in general, not financial contributions. The deployment of IMS stations in developing countries is one of our main contributions to the PTS. Other contributions include ratification of the Treaty, hosting of CTBTO workshops, and promoting the early entry into force of the Treaty. The Group proposes that the composition of the Secretariat reflects the universalization of the Treaty.

The adequate representation of women should also be observed. The Group of 77 and China would like to request the Secretariat to report on efforts made on those two issues, for consideration at every session of the PrepCom.

AGENDA ITEM 5: CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT OF THE ADVISORY GROUP

Chairperson,

During the 29th Session of the WGA, the Group noted that it could not consider the report of the Advisory Group and its recommendations as contained in document CTBT.AG-26/1. The Group is still of the view that the Advisory Group's report should be circulated in a timely manner that would enable State Signatories to comment on the important issues contained therein. The Group reiterates that some of the recommendations are of a technical nature and require further in-depth consultations with State Signatories and Ratifiers. The Group therefore requests that informal consultations be held with the Advisory Group to discuss the possible financial and administrative implications the recommendations may have for developing countries.

More specifically and regarding the various recommendations of the Advisory Group, the G77 and China believes that the issues raised by the External Auditor following his review of Governance arrangements need more in depth consideration. The Group shares the view of the External Auditor that his role is to provide an audit opinion, not to provide an oversight body. However, the Group is of the view that the Evaluation section has a distinct mandate aimed at supporting professional evaluation practices throughout the organization and to enhance the overall credibility and utility of the evaluation function in line with the Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the UN System and the orientations the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) of which the PTS is member.

Therefore, the Group cannot accept the WGA recommendation to the Commission that as an alternative to recommendation 3 of the EA, it consider testing, on a trial basis for three years, distributing to existing bodies the functions listed by the External Auditor in particular to the EA and the AG. The Group would rather prefer to wait for a report of the Executive Secretary on the measures he intends to undertake in

response to the EA's recommendation on governance, including strengthening the Internal Audit capacity, enhancing the visibility and authority of audit recommendations and improving coordination between Internal Audit and the Evaluation Section.

On Human Resources Management, the G77 and China would like to stress the importance it attaches to the Advisory Group's recommendation 17 which reads "the Secretariat should ensure that the number and reasons for contract extensions are reported to the Preparatory Commission in order to emphasise the exceptional nature of the contract extensions granted to staff members and that costs arising from the process are monitored."

Furthermore, the Group noted with concern the comments of the Advisory Group regarding underspending in the General Fund and for Common Staff Costs and stresses the need to implement in full previous recommendations related to these issues. The Group noted with the same concern the comments regarding the mix of inflation and staff cost increase, and supports the recommendation 12 contained in para. 92 of the AG report requesting the Executive Secretary to show changes in lapse rate as programme changes and not as price changes.

In more general terms, the Group urges the Secretariat to adopt a more prudent budgeting policy in order to minimize underspending and increase the overall budget implementation rate.

AGENDA ITEM 6: CONSIDERATION OF THE INITIAL DRAFT 2007 PROGRAMME AND BUDGET

Chairperson,

The Group of 77 and China thanks the Provisional Technical Secretariat for elaborating the budget proposal for 2007, and would like to make the following comments:

- (a) The Group is of the view that the 2006 Programme and Budget increase was an exception that included increases to cover the costs associated with the VIC Security Enhancement Costs. The 2007 budget should therefore be compared to the 2005 programme and budget which reflected zero real growth.
- (b) The Group notes that the PTS has made efforts to present a budget within a realistic and reasonable financial framework. The Group reiterates that the budget proposal should reflect the principle of zero real growth. In this context, the next draft budget proposal should take due account of the comments made by the Advisory Group during its 26th session.
- (c) The Group takes note that the 2007 budget for the verification related programme is based on a number of factors, such as the PTS capacity to absorb new work, and the need to propose a budget that is realistic and reasonable to cover the cost of the build-up of the International Monitoring System. The Group appreciates the PTS efforts to engage State Signatories on any significant additional costs that the verification process may cause.
- (d) The Group expresses its appreciation to the PTS for the substantive increase in the allocation of funds for the OSI Integrated Exercise. The Group thanks the Government of Brazil for agreeing to host the 2008 OSI exercise.
- (e) The Group is of the view that in the context of the efficient utilisation of scarce resources available to the PTS there is a need to focus on work methodology. In this regard, consideration should be given at the next meeting of the Preparatory Commission to rationalise and streamline the number of meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Prepcom, including through focused joint working group meetings. The existing programme of work places a logistical and financial burden on developing countries when participating in subsidiary bodies of the Prepcom.

AGENDA ITEM 7: CONSIDERATION OF POSSIBLE RESTRUCTURING OF THE PROVISIONAL TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT

Chairperson,

The Group takes note that at Part II of the 25th Session, the PTS adopted the final report of the external review team as a basis for proceeding with the restructuring of the PTS. The Group requests that the PTS should continue to keep State Signatories informed on the progress of the restructuring process.

AGENDA ITEM 8: POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTION OF THE COMMISSION TO A TSUNAMI WARNING SYSTEM

Chairperson,

The Group notes that the 26th Session of WGB tasked the PTS to prepare an options paper which covers technical, legal, administrative and budgetary implications concerning the utilisation of the primary and auxiliary seismic stations. The Group looks forward to participating in discussions concerning the options paper and notes that it will be discussed in Part 11 of the 27th Session of WGB in September 2006.

The Group would like to recall that the following information needs to be adequately addressed in the report:

- a) The PTS should consult with States Signatory and Ratifiers on the legal implications that the transmission of data and information for tsunami alert will have for developing countries;
- b) Technical information on what data would be transmitted by tsunami warning centres as recognised by UNESCO
- c) Information on confidentiality issues and the responsibility of the international and national institutions interested in receiving the data;
- d) Budgetary and financial implications of this proposal;
- e) Proposals for the establishment and capacity-building of NDCs in developing countries; and
- f) Technical information about the compatibility between the data that could be provided by the PTS and by other international disaster alert organizations.

AGENDA ITEM 12.1 REQUEST FROM PALESTINE FOR OBSERVER STATUS WITH THE COMMISSION

Chairperson,

The Group recalls the decision of the Commission at Part III of its 25th session to place this important issue on the agenda of the 26th Preparatory Commission. The Group expresses its strong support for the request by Palestine to be granted observer status within the Preparatory Commission for the CTBTO and that a decision to this end is taken at this session of the Preparatory Commission.

I thank you.