



GENERAL REMARKS BY GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA  
TO PART I OF THE 29TH WORKING GROUP B MEETING, DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR  
SAYED ELAMIN, PR OF SUDAN, 22 MAY 2007

RE-EXAMINATION OF THE DURATION AND ORGANIZATION OF WORKING GROUP B  
MEETINGS, INCLUDING AVOIDING THE HOLDING OF PARALLEL SESSIONS

Mr. Chairman,

The Group of 77 and China thanks the Chairperson of Working Group B for preparing the information paper dated 24 April 2007, and takes note of it. The Group would like to express the following remarks on this paper;

The Group recalls the decision of part II of the 27th Session of the Preparatory Commission in which the Commission tasked the Working Group B to "Re-examine in 2007 the duration and organization of its meetings, including avoiding the holding of parallel sessions, in order to prepare a proposal on how to organize these sessions from 2008 onwards."

The Group takes note that the information paper has examined the method of work of Working Group B. However the Group is of the view that this information paper needs to also examine the number and duration of Working Group B meetings, including avoiding the holding of parallel sessions, as mandated by the Preparatory Commission, as requested by the G77 and China in its working paper distributed in the same PrepCom meeting.

The Group underlines that 10 years after the establishment of the Preparatory Commission and advanced phase of the build-up of the verification system, Working Group B has already accomplished a large portion of its tasks on guiding the PTS. Therefore Working Group B meetings need to be restructured in a way that focuses mainly on outstanding issues.

The Group believes that restructuring the method of work of Working Group B need to consider this reality as well as the actual prospect of entry into force of the Treaty. In this context, Working Group B needs to focus more on oversight and guide the PTS based on lessons learned. Since the oversight and guidance tasks are interlinked it would be better to combine them into one task, rather than creating more tasks. The simplification of the method of work should also lead to producing papers and documents to the minimum extent.

The Group is of the view that the Working Group B could be more efficient and effective if the agenda of every meeting focuses on one or maximum two major tasks. Doing so, the States Signatories could also benefit by sending only relevant technical experts to each Working Group B meetings, rather than all their experts to all meetings.

On the OSI discussions, the Group underlines that the OSI Test Manual has already been finalized for IFE08 and WGB is not under any time pressure in this regard. Therefore this could help WGB to avoid further parallel sessions in this year as well as following years.

The Group takes note of the new introduced tasks on Confidence Building Measures (CBMs), Cooperating National Facilities (CNFs), and Consultation and Clarification (C&C). Since these tasks had not been defined before in Working Group B, the Group needs more clarification, including a background of these tasks and their relationship with the mandate of the Working Group B. The Group also underlines that re-examining of the duration and organization of the WGB meetings should lead to a simple and more

understandable meeting, rather than complicating its work through creating new tasks.

In conclusion, the Group of 77 and China would like to know how this new proposals by the Chair would affect the duration of the meetings as well as avoiding parallel sessions. The Group hopes that the above mentioned concerns be addressed in a way that the WGB come out with a proposal to the Preparatory Commission on how to organize its sessions from 2008 onwards. In this regard the Group requests the Chairperson of the WGB to report to the next PrepCom in June on the steps taken toward this goal.

Thank you Mr. Chairman