



VIENNA CHAPTER

STATEMENT OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA DURING THE 30TH SESSION OF WORKING GROUP B OF THE PREPARATORY COMMISSION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN TREATY ORGANIZATION FEBRUARY 12th-29th, 2008, DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR A. VALLIM GUERREIRO, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF BRAZIL

Chairperson,

At the outset, allow me to express once more the satisfaction of the States Signatories of the Group of 77 and China in seeing you chairing Working Group "B" of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization at its 30th Session. The Group is confident that, under your stewardship, our discussions will reach fruitful conclusions and I assure you of our full cooperation in that respect.

Chairperson,

The Group is also pleased to note that, since the last session of the Preparatory Commission in November 2007, the CTBT has been ratified by Bahamas, Barbados, Malaysia and Colombia all of which are members to the Group of 77 and China. The ratification by Colombia in particular marks a significant step forward, as Colombia is one of the 44 States listed in Annex II to the CTBT, which must sign and ratify the Treaty before it can enter into force. In this context, the Group of 77 and China encourages all countries that have not yet signed and ratified the Treaty to do so at the earliest possible date.

Chairperson,

The Group of 77 and China reiterates its satisfaction with the improvements introduced in the method of work of Working Group B, an accomplishment that owes much to your consensus-building efforts. These improvements, which include the elimination of parallel sessions, have facilitated the participation from all delegations regardless of their size. The Group nevertheless underlines the need to keep under consideration the issue of the number and duration of the WGB meetings, with a view to reducing the financial burden its attendance imposes on States Signatories.

In this context the Group recalls that the May/June meeting of WGB in 2008 was scheduled only as a contingency, for the sole purpose of possible additional discussions on IFE08 if need be, and only if so decided by the 30th Session of WGB. In this regard, the Group expresses its expectation that the discussions of the present Session of WGB are held in a manner as efficient and expeditious as possible, with a view to avoiding the need for such a contingency meeting. The Group also expects that the process of streamlining and reduction of the meetings of WGB continues in 2009 and in subsequent years.

Chairperson,

With regard to the implementation of the Pilot Project for financing the participation of technical experts from developing countries in official technical meetings of the Commission, the Group expresses its satisfaction on the successful implementation of this project during 2007. The Group regards the Project as a valuable and successful initiative, and in this context we express our satisfaction with the fact that additional voluntary contributions by States Signatories have allowed the PTS to support the participation of three additional experts in 2008 through the pilot project. In particular, the Group of 77 and China would like to express its appreciation for the generous contribution by South Africa to the Project.

In this context, the Group of 77 and China supports the recommendation of the PTS on the improvement of

project performance, including sufficient and sustainable funding. The Group continues to believe that a combination of inter alia voluntary contributions from States Signatories and relevant institutions, and using the surplus could constitute ways to ensure the sustainability of this project.

The Group of 77 and China also recalls the appeal of the PrepCom to the States Signatories for the provision of additional voluntary contributions for this project with a view to achieving its original goal of supporting the participation of 9 experts, and invites the Executive Secretary to continue to utilize his good offices in this regard. The Group also calls upon the PTS to continue exploring other ways and means to ensure the predictability of this project including by, inter alia, the establishment of a reserve fund.

Chairperson,

Regarding the implementation of the 2007 verification-related work program and the current status of the verification system, the Group takes note that, as of December 31st, 2007, a total of 214 international monitoring stations have already been certified and 35 stations are completed and awaiting certification. The Group also notes that the construction of 26 stations is underway and the contracts of 9 stations are under negotiation. In this regard the Group remains of the view that due to the financial constraints currently faced by the PTS and to the need to minimize further financial burdens pending the entry into force of the Treaty, the PTS should focus its activities on certifying the 35 stations already completed and postpone the negotiation of new contracts and installation of new stations.

Chairperson,

As regards the agenda for the Joint Session of Working Groups A and B, the Group of 77 and China would like to reiterate once again the importance of four key elements which should guide the preparation of the verification related Programme and Budget of the PrepCom for 2009, namely:

- the current well-advanced status of the verification system,
- the mandate of the PrepCom on the provisional operation of the system,
- the actual prospects of entry into force of the Treaty, and
- the need to minimize the financial burden to be borne by States Signatories.

As a corollary to these key elements, the Group emphasizes that the verification related budget for 2009 shall once more be based on a principle of zero real growth. In light of the above-mentioned realities and review of the assumptions, the Group expects that the Budget for 2009 and for the following years could be decreased. The Group also expects that the Budget for the coming years should be proposed based on the actual estimate of the received assessed contributions, as well as the other mentioned key elements.

As regards the Medium Term Plan for 2009-2013, the Group wishes to express its concern with the fact that this important document has not been issued in advance of the current WGB meeting, thus leaving little time for it to be analyzed properly. As a consequence, the Group reserves its right to issue its comments on the Medium Term Plan for 2009-2013 on the occasion of the Joint WGA/WGB Session at February 25th.

Regarding the assessed contributions and current financial situation, the Group reiterates its grave concern about the non-payment by a major contributor of its financial obligations in full to the PrepCom and notes that during the recent years a large amount has not been paid by this major contributor. Such a situation has created a serious challenge to the CTBT verification regime and if it continues would jeopardize the future of the whole system. In this regard the Group urges this State Signatory to reconsider its political position and selective approach towards the Treaty, and support fully the PrepCom. Chairperson,

The Group recalls the decision of the 26th Session Part II of Working Group B that established a set of principles and operating rules for the provision of data related to tsunami warning organizations. In this regard, the Group reiterates its view that available data for tsunami warning purposes shall be provided without prejudice to the objective and purpose of the CTBT, shall neither detract from the function and

integrity of the IMS, infringe upon the confidentiality of information, nor add any additional financial burden on States Signatories, especially on the part of developing countries.

Chairperson,

With regard to the development of the Noble Gas Measurement Technique, the Group has taken note of the document CTBT/PTS/INF.898 in which the PTS indicated the need for additional resources including for analysts and the current human and financial resources for the development of and contracts for software coding and installation and testing. In this regard, while the Group appreciates the efforts by the PTS for its progress in this field, it is of the view that due to the current serious financial situation of the PrepCom the remaining phases of the project should be either postponed or offset by further reductions in the pace of installations of IMS Stations.

I thank you, Chairperson.