



STATEMENT BY THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA DURING THE THIRY-THIRD SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMISSION DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR EUGENIO MARIA CURIA, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ARGENTINA, 16 NOVEMBER 2009

AGENDA ITEM: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Mr. Chairman,

The Group would like to add the issue of amending rule 5 of the rules of procedures as a separate Agenda Item for this session and to engage in constructive and substantive discussions on this important matter.

The current rule only allows representatives of States that are going to host IMS stations in the meetings of "Working Groups" which are not defined in the rules of procedure and not in the PrepCom itself. The Group would like to point out that, in its opinion, the rule as it stands, is flawed and outdated.

The objective of the amendment proposed by the Group is to overcome this mistake, to allow for more transparency and to encourage the participation by all States and interested relevant entities and organizations in the work of the PrepCom in a manner that supports achieving universality.

The Group urges all States Signatories to seek a constructive, objective, and timely decision on this issue, and wishes to express its readiness to tackle any substantive concerns relating to the proposed amendment by the Group.

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to express the sincere appreciation of the States Signatories of the Group of 77 and China in seeing you, Ambassador Michael Potts, chairing the 33rd Session of the Preparatory Commission. We are confident that under your guidance we will conclude our tasks successfully and we reiterate our willingness to support you in this task.

The Group of 77 and China notes that since the last Session of the PrepCom progress has been made towards bringing the CTBT to its much-desired universal status, with the signature by Trinidad and Tobago and with the ratification by the Marshall Islands and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, thus elevating the total number of States Signatories to 182 and the number of ratifying States to 151.

The Group thanks the Executive Secretary Mr Tibor Tóth for his oral and written reports, and would like to express its views on the substantive items of the agenda of the present Session of the Preparatory Commission.

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

Mr. Chairman,

The Group takes note of the report of the 33rd Session of Working Group B. The Group wishes to recall its concerns with the imbalance between the three main dimensions of the verification system, namely the IMS, the IDC and OSI, due to the excessive focus on station building. The PTS should continue to seek efficiencies across Major Programmes, taking into account the balance among them.

Regarding the On-Site Inspection action plan as contained in the document CTBT/PTS/INF.1020, whilst this document serves to be as a "guideline" for the development of the OSI regime, and appreciating that further

development is needed to reach an acceptable level of readiness as highlighted by the evaluation of the 2008 Integrated Field Exercise (IFE), caution should be exercised in view of current budgetary realities and of the prospects of entry into force of the Treaty.

The Group would also like to reiterate its position on this issue as expressed in its statement to the 33rd Session of Working Group B, in which it requested the Secretariat to outline more clearly numerous components of the project areas of the action plan according to timetables and their corresponding budgetary implications.

Regarding the work programme for WGB for 2010 as contained in Para. 88 of the report of the Thirty-Third Session of WGB, the Group recalls its views that have been expressed in its statement during the Working Group B meetings in this regard.

AGENDA ITEMS 4 & 5: CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORTS OF WORKING GROUP A AND THE ADVISORY GROUP

Mr. Chairman,

As regards the reports of the 36th Session of WGA the Group takes note of all recommendations contained therein, regarding the recommendation 9 which concerns a Memorandum of Understanding between the Commission and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The Group reiterates its view that the provision of available data for tsunami warning purposes shall be without prejudice to the objectives and purposes of the Treaty, shall not detract from the provisional function and integrity of the IMS, or infringe upon the confidentiality of information.

The Group also welcomes the draft individual plans for the payment of assessed contributions in arrears negotiated between the Secretariat and Brazil, and recommends its adoption by the PrepCom. The Group expects that, in accordance with the terms of its decision mandating the PTS to negotiate such payment plans, the PrepCom restores Brazil's voting right.

The Group takes note of document CTBT/PTS/INF.1043 pertaining to the Report for 2009 on the Status of Implementation of the Pilot Project. The Group fully supports the continuation of this project and calls for sufficient and sustainable funding and a more transparent process for the selection of experts.

The Group of 77 and China also welcomes the recommendations made by the AG to the Executive Secretary at its 33rd Session and following the practice of WGA, the Group of 77 and China proposes that the PrepCom endorses such recommendations.

AGENDA ITEM 6: CONSIDERATION OF THE FINAL DRAFT 2010 PROGRAMME AND BUDGET PROPOSALS

Mr. Chairman,

As regards item 6 of the agenda, the Programme and Budget for 2010, the Group has expressed its general views during the previous meetings of Policy Making Organs. At this occasion, the Group would like to reiterate once again the following four key elements that must be taken into account in all budgetary cycles of the PrepCom.

- The current well-advanced status of the verification system
- The mandate of the PrepCom on the provisional operation of the system
- The actual prospect of entry into force of the Treaty
- The financial burden on States Signatories.

The Group recalls that the 32nd PrepCom has approved the 15 million Supplementary Appropriation for the 2009 Budget and, as a consequence, the 2010 Budget could maintain a zero real growth. The Group would

like to emphasize that the above-mentioned practice should not be regarded as a precedent for future programme and budgets. The Group reiterates that in the next budgetary cycle, the PTS should continue to explore any possible reductions, savings and efficiency measures to reach a zero real growth budget.

AGENDA ITEM 8: SCHEDULE OF SESSIONS OF THE PREPCOM AND ITS SUBSIDIARY BODIES IN 2010 AND POSSIBLE AGENDA OF THE NEXT SESSION

Mr. Chairman,

With regard to item 8 of the agenda, related to the calendar of Sessions of the decision making bodies in 2010, the Group of 77 and China would like to recall the agreement reached in the last Working Group B concerning the number of its regular Sessions programmed for 2010, and in this respect, believes that experience in the last two years has shown that through further streamlining, the annual programme of work of WGB can be carried out in two Sessions per year, without the need for additional Sessions. The Group takes note of the two scheduled PrepCom meetings in 2010 and would encourage the PTS to consider the necessity of holding two PrepComs per year to avoid repetition of discussion of agenda items that could be streamlined into one PrepCom.

AGENDA ITEM 10.1: REQUEST FROM PALESTINE FOR OBSERVER STATUS WITH THE COMMISSION

Finally, Mr. Chairman, as regards the request from Palestine for observer status with the Commission, the Group regrets that after four years, and eight Sessions of the PrepCom, the Commission has still not reached a positive decision on this issue, only because of the objection of one State Signatory. Bearing in mind the fact that Palestine has been accorded observer status in other United Nations Organizations, the Group is of the view that its request to receive this recognition at the Preparatory Commission should not be treated any differently. The Group therefore reiterates its strong support for the legitimate request by Palestine to be granted observer status within the Preparatory Commission for the CTBTO, in a manner consistent with the goal of achieving the objectives and the universality of the Treaty.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

AGENDA ITEM 10.2: AMENDMENT OF RULE 5

Pertaining to the Proposal by the Group of 77 and China to amend rule 5 (Observers) of the PrepCom of the CTBTO, the Group would like to strongly urge all States Signatories to take a positive decision on this proposal/matter at the current Session of the PrepCom.

Thank you Mr Chairman.