



STATEMENT BY THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA DURING THE THIRTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMISSION DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR ISHAYA EL-KHOURY, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF LEBANON 24-28 OCTOBER 2011

Mr Chairman,

1. At the outset the group of G77 and China would like to express its sympathy and convey its heartfelt condolences to the Government and people of Turkey, in the wake of the devastating earthquake that has claimed so many precious lives.
2. The Group of 77 and China is pleased to see you, Ambassador Igor Davidovic, chair the Thirty-Seventh Session of the Preparatory Commission. The Group is certain that, under your guidance, the tasks ahead of the Preparatory Commission at the present session will be concluded successfully. The Group assures you of its support in this endeavour, and, on the eve of the conclusion of the term of your chairmanship, takes this opportunity to convey to you its recognition for your able stewardship of the deliberations of this august body.
3. The Group also takes this opportunity to thank the Executive Secretary, Mr Tibor Tóth, for his opening statement, and reiterates its appreciation to him and to the Provisional Technical Secretariat for its work in preparation for this session.
4. The Group notes that, in the process of bringing the CTBT to its much desired universal status, since the Thirty-Sixth Session of the Preparatory Commission, two more States Ghana and Guinea have ratified the Treaty, thus bringing the number of ratifications to 155.
5. The Group welcomes the Conference held in New York on 23 September 2011 with the aim of facilitating the entry into force of the CTBT at the earliest possible date, and endorses the goals and ideas embodied in its Final Declaration.

Mr Chairman,

6. The Group takes note of the report of the Fortieth Session of Working Group A (CTBT/PC-37/WGA/1) and its recommendations, and takes this opportunity to reiterate to Ambassador Guerreiro its recognition for his tireless efforts and the skill and diplomatic finesse with which he approached the challenging issues that came to the attention of Working Group A during the term of his chairmanship.
7. The Group also takes note of the report of the Thirty-Seventh Session of Working Group B (CTBT/PC-37/WGB/1) and its recommendations, and thanks Mr Hein Haak for his work in chairing this body.
8. On issues falling under the purview of Working Group B, the Group would like to make the following comments:
 - 8.1. The Group has repeatedly advocated for balance in the prioritization and distribution of resources across the three Major Programmes of the verification regime of the CTBT and, in this framework, for the need to further develop the OSI component. The Group welcomes the fact that the PTS has identified this as a key priority in the 2012 Programme and Budget Proposals, and encourages the PTS to persevere in its efforts to this end. As stated by Working Group B in its last session, further development of the OSI component of the verification regime remains a high priority for 2012.

8.2. The Group welcomes the intensification of the work on the draft OSI Operational Manual during the past session and, in this context, efforts aimed at resolving a number of issues in the Model Text. It also thanks the PTS for its support in the elaboration of this significant document, and encourages the continuation of discussions thereon.

8.3. The Integrated Field Exercise scheduled for 2014 is certainly a key milestone in the development of OSI capabilities. The OSI Operational Manual needs to be sufficiently developed by the time IFE14 takes place, and it should attain a level of maturity and internal coherence that enables its effective testing. It is up to us States Signatories to capitalize on the working modalities agreed by Working Group B at its Thirty-Sixth Session, and to gain further momentum in this important task ahead of us.

8.4. The capacity building and training programmes are essential to improve the ability of States Signatories to participate fully in the verification regime of the CTBT, as well as in PTS-related activities. The Group welcomes the work of the PTS on the Capacity Building Project, aimed at providing States Signatories with training courses and workshops on the data products and software of the PTS related to seismic, infrasound, hydroacoustic, radionuclide and Atmospheric Transport Models. The Group appreciates the continuing efforts of the PTS in ensuring the widest possible participation of developing countries in its capacity building and training programmes, and encourages it to keep working with this fundamental objective in mind.

9. The Group also encourages the PTS to continue working with States Signatories in strengthening their technical capabilities and in improving their ability to benefit more from the global verification regime, in particular from data collected by the IMS and from IDC products resulting from data analysis, as well as from technologies relevant to the understanding of natural hazard risks, earth processes and other scientific applications.

Mr Chairman,

10. The Group takes note of the report of the Thirty-Seventh Session of the Advisory Group (CTBT/AG-37/1), and of the recommendations to the Executive Secretary and to the Preparatory Commission and Working Group A, as contained in paragraphs 49 and 50, respectively. The Group takes this opportunity to thank the Advisory Group and its Chairman, Sir Michael Weston, for their work and for the report presented to the Commission at its current session.

11. On the 2012 Programme and Budget initial draft proposals (CTBT/PTS/INF.1123), the revised draft proposals (CTBT/PTS/INF.1123/Rev.1), and the budgetary adjustments paper (CTBT/PTS/INF.1142), the Group has already expressed its views as the consideration of this crucial matter has evolved in the course of the successive meetings of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies held thus far. The Group has repeatedly stressed the importance of considering the financing of IFE14 in conjunction with the 2012 Programme and Budget, in terms of the actual extent and implications of the financial burden to be borne by States Signatories. The Group thanks again the PTS for having acted upon the requests from States Signatories to partially fund the costs of the IFE14 within the 2012 regular budget, and for the proposed reallocations.

12. In light of the fact that the Group of 77 and China advocate for the need to consider the supplementary budget for the financing of IFE14 and the regular budget integrally, it is worth recalling the position of the Group in favour of a zero real growth budget. However, the Group considers that the PTS should be provided with the necessary financial resources it needs to carry out its mandate and, as has been clear to all, the Group has adopted an attitude of flexible and constructive engagement throughout the discussions over the financing of IFE14. In its statement at the Fortieth Session of Working Group A, the Group announced its readiness to consider favourably the proposal put forth by the PTS, with the following provisos:

12.1. The need to consider the supplementary budget in conjunction with further efficiency gains and

savings in future budgetary cycles.

12.2. The need for the funding of IFE14 to be rooted on facts and not on projections. The financing of this exercise goes beyond the approval of a specific decision at the present juncture, as it has to be viewed as an ongoing process. As the Group has stated in the past, it is important that the PTS give further precision and content to the estimates in the Concept for the Preparation and Conduct of the Next IFE (CTBT/PTS/INF.1105), as relevant information becomes available. In this latter regard, the Group asks the PTS that, when making the proposal of the site/host State, it give due consideration to the financial implications of the available options.

12.3. The need to continue to systematically seek efficiencies among the Major Programmes of the Preparatory Commission of the CTBTO.

Mr Chairman,

13. The Group welcomes the nomination by GRULAC of the distinguished Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Chile, His Excellency Alfredo Labbé Villa, to serve as Chairman of the Preparatory Commission in 2012, and the nomination by the Asian Group of the distinguished Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Mongolia, His Excellency Jargalsaikhan Enkhsaikhan, to serve as Chairman of Working Group A for a term of two years, upon conclusion of the term of office of Ambassador Guerreiro. It also welcomes the nomination of Mr Herbert Espinosa, Minister Counsellor of the Permanent Mission of Costa Rica, as member of the Management Board of the Provident Fund.

14. On personnel matters, the Group considers a balanced geographical distribution of the utmost importance, and calls on the PTS to pay due regard to the importance of recruiting staff on a wide geographical basis.

15. The Group of 77 and China concludes by expressing its support to you and to the work of the Commission, and renews its commitment to a session of fruitful and productive deliberations.

Thank you.