



STATEMENT BY THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA DURING THE THIRTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF WORKING GROUP A, 7 - 9 JUNE 2010 DELIVERED BY HE AMBASSADOR TAOUS FEROUKHI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ALGERIA

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, let me express on behalf of the States Signatories of the Group of 77 and China our satisfaction in seeing you, Ambassador Antonio José Vallim Guerreiro, chairing for the first time Working Group A at its Thirty-Seventh Session. I am confident that under your chairmanship and guidance, discussions will lead to fruitful conclusions and I assure you of our full support and cooperation.

The Group also thanks the Executive Secretary, Ambassador Tibor Tóth, for his opening remarks as well as for his written reports, namely the report of the period October-December 2009 contained in document CTBT/ES/2009/6, Annual Report 2009 contained in document CTBT/ES/2009/7, and the report for the Period January-March 2010 contained in document CTBT/ES/2010/1, that deals with non-verification-related activities.

Mr Chairman,

Regarding agenda item 3, on the recommendations by the Advisory Group, the Group of 77 and China takes note of the report of the 34th Session, to be introduced by the Chairperson of the Advisory Group, Mr Michael Weston, later on during this session of Working Group A.

As regards agenda item 4 of the agenda, on the Accounts of the Preparatory Commission for 2009, contained in document CTBT/PTS/INF.1065, the Group of 77 and China welcomes the fact that the External Auditor has placed an unqualified audit opinion on the 2009 financial statements of the Commission. The Group takes note of the recommendations issued by the External Auditor, in conjunction with the clarifications provided to the Advisory Group during its 34th Session. The Group endorses the observations and recommendations made by the AG in this regard.

Regarding agenda item 6, on the review of the initial draft Programme and Budget for 2011, the Group recalls its position expressed in its statement to the 34th Session of Working Group B, it indicates that the preparation of the above mentioned draft Programme and Budget should be once again based on a target of zero real growth as a ceiling for the overall expenditures, without precluding the possibility of identifying possible reductions and savings.

The Group has consistently emphasized that the following key elements should be taken into account in the current and future budgetary cycles of the PrepCom with reference to the verification-related activities of the PTS, namely:

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

The Group takes note of document CTBT/PTS/INF.1069, and is of the view that the current economic and financial crisis also reinforces the need for budgetary austerity. The Group welcomes the recent announcement by the Secretariat as to its intention to revise the document with a view to bringing it to a level slightly below zero real growth.

While the Group believes that the PTS should be provided with the necessary financial resources it needs to carry out its mandate, the Group is of the view that the establishment of the verification regime should be carried out in a practical, prudent and feasible manner. Furthermore the Group believes that there is a need to strike an appropriate balance in the allocation of the resources among its three pillars, namely the IMS, IDC and OSI.

Regarding the proposal to create new posts in the Secretariat, the Group recognizes the importance of reinforcing the human resources of the Organization and takes note with appreciation of the modifications introduced by the Secretariat with a view to further prioritizing the positions proposed.

The Group also recalls its concerns over the use of consultants for tasks typical of regular staff. While recognizing that the Secretariat has a need for flexibility in maintaining an adequate pool of human resources, the Group believes that a balanced and well-defined framework for the use of consultants should be established, based on the following elements:

Subject to availability of resources, the Commission should strive to substitute long-term consultant contracts used for permanent, non-discrete tasks with regular staff positions;

The Commission should adopt clear and objective criteria for recruitment of consultants, including the need to observe the principle of equitable geographical representation and gender balance;

The Commission should consider revising the benefits offered to short and medium term consultants in order to enhance the attractiveness of the Organization to a wider range of potential applicants, in particular for nationals from developing countries.

In this regard the Group takes note with interest of the Proposal for Additional Resources to Finance Priority Unfunded Projects in 2011 as contained in document CTBT/PTS/INF.1072. The Group believes this is a positive proposal in principle, as it may allow the Commission to utilize funds that would otherwise be returned to States Signatories via cash surplus. The Group underscores, however, that it regards the proposal as a potential supplementary funding mechanism and not as an alternative for increases in the regular budget.

The Group considers the reconstruction of HA3 and IS14 as a priority project, due to their importance within the IMS, and believes that both stations should be rebuilt as soon as possible. In this regard the Group asks the PTS to conduct a thorough investigation on the current status of the stations without delay and provide more clarification to the Signatory States.

The Group supports the PTS plan for the implementation of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system and takes note of the PTS proposal as contained in document CTBT/PTS/INF.1068. In this regard the Group welcomes the partnership approach, deemed to be the most cost effective and least risky.

Regarding agenda item 7 on human resources in the Provisional Technical Secretariat, the Group takes note of the 2009 Human Resources Management Report. Bearing in mind the difficulties being faced by the PTS in the field of human resources, the Group encourages the Secretariat to explore all appropriate options to ensure that the PTS has the required level of qualified human resources to carry out the critical functions entrusted to it within the approved budgetary allocations.

The Group also reiterates its concern over the fact that the overall representation of developing countries in the PTS remains unbalanced. The Group strongly requests the PTS to proactively address this issue with a view to redressing the recurrent situation, in particular by increasing the number of staff members from developing countries, with due regard being taken of gender balance.

Regarding consultants, the Group favours an increased degree of transparency as to the terms of reference of

their contracts, as well as national and regional representation, amongst other relevant criteria.

With regard to agenda item 9.2, related to the procedures for changing responsibility for an IMS station from one State Signatory to another, the Group takes note of the Joint Informal Paper contained in document CTBT/WGA-34/INF.5, and appreciates the efforts and informal consultations by the appointed coordinator to address this issue.

Regarding agenda item 10 on status of on-site inspection inspectors and inspection assistants, the Group takes note of the Information Paper presented by the PTS contained in CTBT/PTS/INF.1036 which sets out model arrangements for future inspectors and inspection assistants and is looking forward for the consideration of the issue at its current session.

As to agenda item 11, related to the status of Facility Agreements and their effect on data availability, the Group takes note of the document reporting on the status of national implementation measures and the programme of legal assistance provided by the PTS (CTBT/PTS/INF.544/Rev.7). Also, the Group recalls the fact that the conclusion of Facility Agreements is mandatory for Member States only after entry into force of the Treaty. Nevertheless, the Group recognizes the value of such agreements in enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the construction, maintenance and provisional operation of the verification system by the Preparatory Commission.

Before concluding, the Group of 77 and China wishes to support the request presented by Brazil for the restoration of its voting right, and to express its expectation that the acceptance of such request is recommended to the Preparatory Commission by Working Group A.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.