



STATEMENT BY THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA DURING THE THIRTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF WORKING GROUP A, 4 - 6 OCTOBER 2010 DELIVERED BY H.E. 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 Working Group A at its Thirty-Eighth 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, in particular the report covering non-verification-related activities of the Provisional Technical Secretariat (PTS) for the period April to July 2010 as contained in CTBT/ES/2010/3.

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 35th Session, to be introduced by the Chairperson of the Advisory Group, Mr Michael Weston, later on during this session of Working Group A.

Regarding agenda item 4, on Review of the final draft 2011 Programme and Budget proposals, the Group recalls its position expressed in its statement to the 35th Session of Working Group B, and the 15th joint meeting of WGA and WGB and would like once again to reiterate the importance of the four key elements underpinning its position as regards budgetary matters, 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;
- The need to minimize the financial burden to be borne by States Signatories.

As a corollary to these elements, the Group of 77 and China has been consistently calling for a strict observance of a zero real growth budget policy. The Group has taken note of CTBT/PTS/INF.1069/Rev.1 and is pleased to note that the revised proposal is below zero real growth level compared to the 2010 budget.

This pragmatic approach followed by the PTS in preparing the final draft is particularly commendable, since it takes into account the economic and financial crisis that has been affecting all States Signatories. In addition to avoiding making excessive financial demands, the proposal demonstrates that the PTS has undertaken efforts towards identifying and focusing on priority tasks and activities. The Group also believes that the proposal represents a step in the right direction towards achieving an adequate balance in the distribution of resources among the three elements of the verification regime, namely the International Monitoring System, the International Data Centre and On-Site Inspection. Therefore, the Group believes that the final draft constitutes a good basis for the adoption of the Budget for 2011.

As regards the reference to long term unfunded capital items mentioned in page 25 of the document, the Group once again encourages the PTS to continue to focus on issues of higher priority and leave other matters for consideration at a later stage, especially those pertaining to post-entry into force requirements and activities.

Mr Chairman,

Regarding the issue of additional funds for priority unfunded projects in the 2011 Programme and Budget, namely the reconstruction of stations in the Juan Fernández Islands and the implementation of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) platform, the Group expresses its appreciation for the ongoing consultations on this issue that are being undertaken by you, Mr Chairman. The Group strongly encourages the concerned parties to make every effort to reach consensus-based modalities for financing these projects for the 2011 Programme and Budget.

As to the reconstruction of stations HA3 and IS14 in the Juan Fernández Islands, the Group believes this to be one of the priority projects, due to the importance of such stations within the IMS, and expresses its expectation that both stations can be rebuilt.

Turning to the issue of the financing ERP platform, the Group reiterates its support to its implementation as envisaged by the PTS and outlined in document CTBT/PTS/INF.1068. Given the expected discontinuance of IMIS within the next three to five years and the prospects for efficiency gains to be obtained by the introduction of an ERP platform, the Group also believes this project to be a priority. In this regard, the Group is in a position to support the option of a supplementary appropriation on the 2011 Budget for this purpose, which should be compensated by the 2008 cash surplus. The Group underscores, however, that this additional appropriation would not affect the negotiations for the 2012 Budget, which should be based on the overall level of expenditures to be approved for 2011.

Mr Chairman,

Regarding the staffing challenges, the Group once again encourages the Secretariat to explore all appropriate avenues to ensure that the PTS has the required level of qualified human resources to carry out the critical functions entrusted to it within approved budgetary allocations. In this regard, the Group recalls the need to continue efforts towards ensuring a proper geographical distribution and gender balance in the PTS staff.

In this regard, the Group takes note that in response to this staffing challenge 10 new professional regular posts have been proposed for 2011 and the full costs of these staff changes are met through a reallocation of resources from other items of expenditure.

However, the Group recalls its concern with the fact that some non-regular staff are currently carrying out tasks typical of regular staff, and in this regard the Group expects that the PTS will continue to strive to replace such positions with regular positions within available resources.

The Group also wishes to recall that Working Group A at its 37th Session encouraged the PTS to consider revising the benefits offered to non-regular staff in order to enhance the attractiveness of the organization to a wider range of applicants, in particular for nationals from developing countries.

As to agenda item 8, 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.

As to agenda item 9 on schedule of sessions of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies in 2011, the Group reiterates its position as regards the schedule of sessions of Working Group B. We believe that experience in the past two years has proven that, through further streamlining in terms of efficiency, the current practice of holding no more than two regular sessions, with a duration of three weeks each, allows for proper and

effective consideration of issues currently on the agenda of Working Group B, while at the same time avoiding excessive burdens for States Signatories, especially developing ones, in terms of attendance of meetings by experts from capitals.

With regard to agenda item 12 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 Brazil as the appointed coordinator to address this issue.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.