



STATEMENT BY THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA DURING THE FORTIETH SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMISSION, DELIVERED BY DR YOUSIF ELKORDOFANI, CHARGE D'AFFAIRES OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE SUDAN, 13-14 JUNE 2013

Mr Chairman,

1. The Group of 77 and China is pleased to see you, Ambassador Jan Petersen, the Permanent Representative of Norway, chairing the fortieth session of the Preparatory Commission. The Group is certain that under your guidance, deliberations of the current session of the Preparatory Commission will be concluded successfully.

2. The Group would like to thank Ambassador Tibor Tóth for his opening remarks and for the dedication he has given to the Commission in the past eight years, as Executive Secretary. Ambassador Tóth's political and managerial skills contributed to the operationalization of the CTBT verification regime, as well as to the promotion of the universalization of the Treaty. The Group appreciates, in particular, the initiatives to promote capacity building and training and believes that such activities will be further improved by the Executive Secretary elect. The Group wishes Ambassador Tóth success in his future work.

Mr Chairman,

3. It is a privilege and an honour for the Group to welcome Mr. Lassina Zerbo as the new Executive Secretary, initiating duties in August, since it will be the first time that a national from a member of this Group will lead the PTS. The Group would like to assure Mr. Zerbo of its continuous cooperation and full support, and wish him every success for his forthcoming tenure of office.

4. The Group appreciates the presence of His Excellency Mr. Blaise Compaoré, President of Burkina Faso, to the Fortieth session of the Preparatory Commission.

Mr Chairman,

5. The Group also welcomes the ratification by Brunei Darussalam and Chad, bringing the number of ratifications to the Treaty to 159, as part of the process of bringing the CTBT to its much desired universal status, since the Thirty-Ninth Session of the Preparatory Commission.

6. The Group looks forward to the next Science and Technology Conference that will take place from 17 to 21 June 2013 at the Hofburg Palace. The Group believes that the Conference will continue to be a forum for interaction for those interested in the CTBT.

Mr Chairman,

7. The Group takes note of the report of the Forty-Third Session of Working Group A (WGA) and its recommendations, and takes this opportunity to express its gratitude to the tireless efforts of Ambassador Enkhsaikhan as the Chairman of Working Group A.

8. The Group reiterates its call on host states and the Secretariat to work together to curb the increase of fixed costs resulting from the increase of post-certification activities'(PCA) related costs.

9. The Group looks forward to receiving clarification from the PTS on the increase in Management and Coordination costs as requested by the Group at the Forty-Third Session of WGA.

10. The Group takes note of the briefing held by the PTS on the implementation of an IPSAS-compliant ERP system and regrets that the information on operation and maintenance costs were not brought to the States Signatories' attention when the Commission considered the decision to implement the system.

Mr Chairman,

11. The Group takes note of the report of the Fortieth Session of Working Group B (WGB) and reiterates the importance it attaches to capacity building and training programmes as a means of improving the ability of States Signatories to fully participate in the verification regime of the CTBT. In this regard, the Group appreciates the continuing efforts by the PTS in this field, and encourages it to ensure the widest possible participation of developing countries in its capacity building and training programmes.

12. Regarding the duration of the WGB sessions, the Group is of the view that the time allocated should be sufficient to cope with the different technical issues under consideration and that the duration should not be an obstacle for the participation of experts from developing countries.

Mr Chairman,

13. Regarding the agenda item on the recommendations by the Advisory Group, the Group of 77 and China takes note of the report of the Fortieth Session of the Advisory Group and of the recommendations to the Executive Secretary and to the Preparatory Commission. The Group takes the opportunity to thank the Advisory Group and its Chairman, Sir Michael Weston, for their work and the report presented to the Commission at its current session.

14. The Group takes note that as stated in the 2014 Programme and Budget Proposals: Initial Draft, the budget proposed by the PTS is slightly above zero real growth.

Mr Chairman,

15. At the last WGA session, the Group of 77 and China expressed its view that during this session, the Commission should consider the appointment of Vice-Chairpersons or equivalent to its subsidiary bodies, namely the WGA and WGB. The Group considers geographic rotation a fundamental criterion when deciding Chairpersons and that it should be applied to the Vice-Chairpersons as well, in all subsidiary bodies.

16. On personnel matters, the Group continues to emphasise the importance of a balanced geographical distribution. While the Group recognises the efforts made by the PTS to improve the statistics, further efforts should be made to recruit staff on a wide geographical basis as possible.

17. The Group would like to take this opportunity to thank the PTS for organizing the Observer Visits to Kistréti Utca, Veszprém, Hungary, on 31 May and 5 June 2013.

18. With these remarks, the Group of 77 and China concludes by expressing its support to the work of the Chair, and by reiterating its commitment to fruitful and constructive deliberations.

Thank you.