



STATEMENT BY THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA DURING THE FORTIETH SESSION OF WORKING GROUP A, 3-5 OCTOBER 2011, DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR ALI ASGHAR SOLTANIEH, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE IR OF IRAN

Mr Chairman,

1. On behalf of the States Signatories of the Group of 77 and China, let me commence by expressing the satisfaction of the Group in seeing you, Ambassador Guerreiro, chair the Fortieth Session of Working Group A. The Group takes this opportunity to renew to you the assurances of its full support and cooperation, while conveying to you our sincere recognition for having so deftly guided the deliberations of Working Group A during your tenure. The Group wishes you the utmost success in your future endeavours.

2. The Group also thanks the Executive Secretary, Ambassador Tibor Tóth, for his opening remarks, as well as the Provisional Technical Secretariat for its written report covering non-verification-related activities for the period April to July 2011 (CTBT/ES/2011/3, dated 19 August 2011).

3. Regarding Agenda Item 4, pertaining to the review of the final draft 2012 Programme and Budget Proposals, the Group of 77 and China would like to express once again its gratitude to the PTS for the adjustments it has introduced to the initial proposals, as contained in document CTBT/PTS/INF.1142 of 26 August 2011. While the Group welcomes this document and appreciates the efforts undertaken by the PTS in describing further adjustments to the proposals contained in its initial submission (CTBT/PTS/INF.1123, dated 28 April 2011), the Group would like to recall what it has already stated at the seventeenth joint meeting of Working Groups A and B. Given that there has been no significant development warranting any specific observation or change in the position of the Group since then, such observations remain valid.

3.1. The Group fully supports the development of the OSI capabilities of the PTS, an important strategic objective that needs to be pursued in accordance with the guidelines provided by the Policy Making Organs. The Integrated Field Exercise scheduled for 2014 is a key component in this process.

3.2. As stated by the Group in its opening statement to the Thirty-Seventh Session of Working Group B, the Group endorses the request made to the PTS by Working Group B at its Thirty-Sixth Session, that it continue to systematically seek efficiencies among the Major Programmes of the Preparatory Commission of the CTBTO. The Group thanks the PTS for the new savings proposal presented on 28 September in the context of the informal consultations on the financing of the IFE14. The Group encourages the PTS to persevere in its efforts in this field, in the understanding that this is an ongoing process.

3.3. The Group of 77 and China reiterates its position in favour of a zero real growth budget. Nevertheless, it is always ready to engage constructively in discussions over the financing of the IFE14.

3.4. The supplementary budget to finance IFE14 needs to be considered 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. Bearing in mind that this supplementary budget is being considered in conjunction with further efficiency gains and savings in future budgetary cycles, the Group of 77 and China is ready to consider favourably the proposal put forth by the PTS.

3.5. The Group welcomes the information, proposals and prospects presented by the PTS in this respect, during the three rounds of informal consultations held to date. However, for the issue of funding of the IFE14 to be thoroughly and realistically considered by States Signatories, it is essential that the PTS envisage this as an ongoing process and that it continue to further adjust the estimated costs as contained in

the Concept for the Preparation and Conduct of the Next Integrated Field Exercise (CTBT/PTS/INF.1105, dated 27 January 2011) by giving further precision and content to the projected figures as the PTS obtains relevant information inexistent at the time of producing its proposal, and that, concomitantly, it seeks further efficiency gains and savings, as the discussions on the funding of the IFE14 via the Regular Budget evolve. It is with this in mind that the Group requests the PTS that, when making the proposal of the site/host State, due consideration be given to the financial implications of the available options.

Mr Chairman,

4. At the seventeenth joint session of Working Groups A and B, it was stated that Policy Making Organs have a responsibility to provide clear and realistic guidance to the PTS, and that general exhortations and platitudes such as "seeking efficiencies" "reallocating resources", or even "adhering to a programme driven budget" are not sufficient. Much to the contrary, the Group believes that, far from being a platitude or a general exhortation, the request for efficiencies and savings within the context of a zero real growth budget policy has been and continues to be a position coherently and consistently sustained by the Group of 77 and China.

5. Efficiencies and savings in the costs budgeted for IFE14 are not only reasonable, but also necessary, if the guidance to be provided to the PTS is to be, indeed, clear and realistic especially as new possibilities for reallocations and savings surface; as estimates based on variables heretofore unknown, become known; and as States Signatories convey to the PTS their positions on the criteria that should be prioritized at the time of making decisions that will inevitably bear on the costs of the IFE. Refraining from or sparing efforts to this end would simply be irresponsible.

Mr Chairman,

6. Let me conclude by stating that transparency and inclusiveness are fundamental principles in multilateral diplomacy. The Group thanks Ambassador Guerreiro for having conducted the informal consultations on the financing of IFE14 in a transparent and inclusive manner, and asks the PTS to be guided by those same fundamental principles, providing States Signatories with timely, valid and precise information. This is essential so that States Signatories can make informed decisions and thus provide the PTS with the guidance it needs to carry out its tasks.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.