



STATEMENT BY THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA DURING THE FORTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMISSION, DELIVERED BY MR MOHAMED JAMAL ELDIEN OMER, PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE SUDAN

Mr Chairman,

1. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I would like to express our pleasure in seeing you, Ambassador Jan Petersen, chair the Forty-First Session of the Preparatory Commission. The Group believes that under your chairmanship and guidance, discussions will lead to fruitful conclusions, and I assure you of our full cooperation. Nevertheless, as your tenure of chairmanship is coming to an end, the Group takes this opportunity to convey to you its recognition of your able stewardship of the deliberations of this august body.

2. The Group notes that, in the process of bringing the CTBT to its much desired universal status, since the Fortieth Session of the Preparatory Commission, two more States, Guinea-Bissau and Iraq, have ratified the Treaty, thus bringing the number of ratifications to 161.

3. The Group takes note of the Article XIV conference held in New York on 27 September 2013, with the aim of facilitating the entry into force of the CTBT at the earliest possible date. In this regard, the Group would like to express its appreciation to Hungary and Indonesia for coordinating and chairing the conference.

4. The Group takes note of the Executive Secretary's written and oral reports, and would like to express its views on the substantive items of the agenda of the present session of the Preparatory Commission.

Mr Chairman,

5. On agenda item 3, on the consideration of the report of Working Group A (WGA), the Group takes note of the report and the recommendations contained therein and would like to thank Ambassador Gunaajav Batjargal for the work done in steering this body.

6. The Group welcomes the consultations held between States Signatories for further assessing the 2014 Programme and Budget due to the current fiscal austerity and global economic challenges.

7. The Group takes note that after the consultations, the proposed budget is close to zero real growth. The Group welcomes the acknowledgement of the importance of cost containment and cost control in the budgetary decisions.

8. The Group reiterates its position regarding the procedure for elaborating the "final" draft of the Programme and Budget. The Group therefore proposes that this procedure should be reviewed, so that the last WGA session of each year would consider possible adjustments to the initial draft, such as the one contained in document CTBT/PTS/INF.1250. The PTS would, then, take into account all comments and possible recommendations made by WGA in order to prepare the final draft, which would be presented to the last session of the Preparatory Commission of each year, for its consideration and action. The Group requests the Chair of WGA to hold consultations on further improving the procedure for elaborating the Programme and Budget.

Mr Chairman,

9. On agenda item 4, the Group takes note of the report of the Forty-First Session of Working Group B (WGB) and its recommendations, and thanks the Friends of the Chair, Messrs Svein Mykkeltveit and David McCormack, for coordinating the sessions.

10. The Group reiterates its position on the importance of promoting a balanced approach towards the three main dimensions of the verification regime, namely the International Monitoring System, the International Data Centre and On-Site Inspection. In this regard, the Group continues to encourage the Provisional Technical Secretariat (PTS) to seek efficiencies and revisit prioritization across the Major Programmes in order to achieve the desired balanced and efficient verification regime.

11. The Group is encouraged by the flexibility of WGB in reviewing its method of work, examining ways to strengthen its intersessional work and basing the planning of its future meetings on an assessment by Task Leaders of the actual needs of the agreed work programme.

12. The Group appreciates the continuing efforts conducted by the PTS aimed at enhancing the technical capacity of all States Signatories in CTBT related technologies. In this regard the Group appreciates the continuing efforts by the PTS in this field, and encourages the PTS to ensure the widest possible participation of developing countries in its capacity building and training programmes.

Mr Chairman,

13. Pertaining to agenda item 5, the Group takes this opportunity to thank the Advisory Group and its Chairman, Mr Michael Weston, for their work and for the report presented to the Commission at its current session. The Group has already expressed its detailed views of these reports in the WGA sessions.

Mr Chairman,

14. The Group also reaffirms the sovereign right of each signatory State to seek higher office in the Preparatory Commission. We recall in this regard Rule 8 of the Rules of Procedure, especially with regard to the election of the Chairman of the Preparatory Commission, and Rule 13 which requires the Chairman to ensure observance of all Rules including Rule 8 in discharging his responsibility.

15. At the last Preparatory Commission, the Group of 77 and China expressed its view that the Commission should consider the appointment of Vice-Chairpersons or equivalent to its subsidiary bodies, namely WGA and WGB. The Group looks forward to consultations with States Signatories on this matter before the next Preparatory Commission.

16. The Group welcomes and supports the recommendation made by the Executive Secretary to extend the term of Mr Genxin Li, Director of the Legal and External Relations Division, for a period of another two years. The Group also welcomes the appointments of Mr Wilbur Bell as the Director of the International Data Centre Division and Mr Thierry Dubourg as the Director of Administration at the last Special Session of the Preparatory Commission on 12 September 2013.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.