



STATEMENT BY THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA DURING THE FORTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMISSION, DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR LOURDES O. YPARRAGUIRRE, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PHILIPPINES

Mr Chairman,

1. The Group of 77 and China is pleased to see you, Ambassador Das, chairing the Forty-Third Session of the Preparatory Commission. The Group takes this opportunity to express its appreciation for the informal consultations prior to the current session, and to convey to you the assurances of its full support and cooperation.

2. The Group thanks the Executive Secretary, Dr Lassina Zerbo, for his opening statement and welcomes the ratification by the Republic of the Congo on 2 September 2014, bringing the number of ratifications to the Treaty to 163, as part of the process of bringing the CTBT to its much desired universal status, since the Forty-Second Session of the Preparatory Commission.

3. The Group of 77 and China takes note of the Seventh CTBT Ministerial Meeting held on 26 September 2014 at the UN headquarters in New York, and reaffirms the importance of all efforts taken to promote the universalization and entry into force of the CTBT, which are in line with the objective of the Article XIV process. In a similar vein, the Group takes note of the efforts of the Group of Eminent Persons supporting and complementing the attainment of this lofty goal.

4. It is significant and worth recalling that the Seventh Ministerial Meeting was preceded by the commemoration, on 29 August 2014, of the International Day against Nuclear Tests, as unanimously declared by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2009.

Mr Chairman,

5. The Group notes with satisfaction of the progress reported by the Executive Secretary in the preparatory work of the Integrated Field Exercise (IFE) which will take place in Jordan in November and December 2014. We reiterate the importance conferred by our Group to the upcoming IFE, in terms of its contribution to the development of the OSI component of the verification regime and of the latter as a whole. The Group appreciates the commitment shown by the host country during the run up to this important event.

6. The Group takes note of Dr Zerbo's reports on the verification and non-verification-related activities undertaken by the Provisional Technical Secretariat (PTS) of the Commission during the current year.

7. The Group takes note of the report of Working Group A (WGA) at its Forty-Sixth Session and of the recommendations contained therein, and thanks its Chairman, Ambassador Azeez, for deftly guiding the deliberations. The Group of 77 and China has already expressed its views on the substantive issues dwelt on in this report in its statement at the October session of Working Group A. The Group reiterates its call on host States and on the PTS to work together to curb the increase of fixed costs resulting from the increase of related costs in post-certification activities (PCA), and encourages the PTS to continue to keep States Signatories appraised, as contracts are negotiated and as the PTS further refines its assessment of the different aspects relevant to the variances registered in PCA costs. As stated by the Group during the Forty-Sixth session of Working Group A, the Group looks forward to receiving additional information from the internal audit conducted on the negotiation of procurement contracts by the PTS.

8. The Group takes note of the report of Working Group B (WGB) at its Forty-Third Session, and takes this

opportunity to reiterate the importance it attaches to capacity building and training as a means of improving the ability of States Signatories to fully participate in the Treaty's verification regime. The Group appreciates the efforts of the PTS aimed at enhancing the technical capabilities of States Signatories in CTBT related technologies, and encourages the PTS to further pursue these efforts with a view to ensuring the widest possible participation of developing countries in the programmes offered by the PTS in the field of capacity building and training. The Group reiterates its principled position on the importance of promoting a balanced approach among the three Major Programmes of the verification regime, namely, the International Monitoring System (IMS), the International Data Centre (IDC) and On-Site Inspection (OSI). To this end, the Group reaffirms the importance of assessing priorities and assigning resources accordingly, seeking the necessary efficiencies in the process, so that the CTBT verification regime is balanced and coherent, as well as robust while efficient.

9. On the duration of WGB sessions, the Group is of the view that the time allocated to them is sufficient to address the different technical issues under consideration. The Group commends the Chairman of Working Group B and the Task Leaders for the efficient use of the time assigned to the Forty-Third Session of WGB, and reiterates its view that the duration of WGB sessions should not be an obstacle for the participation of experts from developing countries.

10. The Group of 77 and China takes note of the report of the Advisory Group (AG) at its Forty-Third Session and of its recommendations. We thank the Advisory Group and its Chairman, Mr Michael Weston, for their able and dedicated work. The Group reaffirms the importance of this body and its substantive contribution when considering the different topics brought to its attention.

11. The Group looks forward to further consideration of the proposed changes to the Financial Regulations and Rules related to the introduction of biennial budgeting at the PTS, and further discussion on the establishment of a multiyear funding modality for the activities of the Commission.

12. With respect to the draft 2015 Programme and Budget proposals, the Group thanks the PTS for the initial proposal and for the revised version of Information Paper CTBT/PTS/INF.1280, as well as for the briefings provided to States Signatories. The Group welcomes the exchanges of views during the informal open-ended consultations chaired by Ambassador Azeez on the week preceding the October session of Working Group A. As stated by the Group during the said WGA session, the Group welcomes the fact that the final draft presents the highlights of the proposed deliverables against the strategic priorities in 2015 as set out in the Midterm Strategy: 2014-2017, and that explanations are provided on the variances between 2014 and 2015 by Major Programme, programme and item of expenditure. The Group is also pleased to note that efficiencies have been sought in terms of allocation of resources among the Major Programmes, bearing in mind the prevailing climate of international economic and fiscal austerity.

13. Finally, Mr Chairman, on the agenda item pertaining to the election of officers of the subsidiary bodies of the Preparatory Commission, the Group of 77 and China thanks you for the informal consultations led by you on the procedures for the appointment of the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission. As stated by the Group of 77 and China during the past three sessions of the Preparatory Commission, the Group is of the view that Working Groups A and B are both subsidiary bodies of the Preparatory Commission and that, notwithstanding the different nature of the topics falling under the purview of one and the other, Working Groups A and B should be treated on an equal standing, in accordance with the basic principle of multilateralism. In this regard, the Group would like to recall that in accordance with Rule 7.2 of the Rules of Procedure of the Preparatory Commission, it is the responsibility of the latter to determine the composition, competence and rules of procedure of its subsidiary bodies. In this spirit, the Group of 77 and China welcomes the procedure outlined in Information Paper CTBT/PTS/INF.1304, since the proposed approach is consistent with Rule 7 of the Rules of Procedure of the Preparatory Commission and accords due consideration to both geographical distribution and gender balance.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.