



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA DURING THE FORTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMISSION, DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR ARMIN ANDEREYA, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CHILE

Mr Chairperson,

1. The Group of 77 and China is pleased to see you, Ambassador Ayoko, chairing the Forty-Fourth Session of the Preparatory Commission. The Group takes this opportunity to renew to you the assurances of its full support and cooperation.

2. The Group thanks the Executive Secretary, Mr Lassina Zerbo, for his opening remarks and takes note of his reports on the verification and non-verification-related activities of the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the Commission, as well as of the Annual Report for 2014.

3. The Group welcomes the ratification by Angola on 20 March 2015, bringing the number of ratifications to the Treaty to 164, as part of the process of bringing the CTBT to its much-desired universal status, since the Forty-Third Session of the Preparatory Commission.

4. The Group supports the participation of Cuba as an observer to the Preparatory Commission of the CTBT.

Mr Chairperson,

5. The Group takes note of the report of Working Group A (WGA) at its Forty-Seventh Session and the recommendations contained therein, and thanks its Chairperson, Ambassador Azeez, for his leadership.

6. The Group welcomes the recommendations made by WGA on the introduction of biennial budgeting as well as the proposed amendments to the Financial Regulations and Rules in this regard. As previously stated, the Group sees merit in the notion of introducing biennial budgeting as a means to streamline the budgetary process and supports its implementation in the 2016-2017 budgetary cycle. The Group also stresses the importance that this should be done in a way which would not reduce information flow, transparency or accountability to the States Signatories or restrict their control over, or flexibility in, governing the activities of the PTS.

7. The Group also welcomes the recommendation of the WGA to approve the introduction of multiyear funding modality in the PTS. In this regard, the Group looks forward to receiving information identifying and detailing the funds to be established under the multiyear funding modality and the relevant appropriations for each fund, as requested by WGA. The Group recalls that the establishment of the multiyear funds for specific projects that require long term funding shall be approved by the Preparatory Commission. The Group takes note of the fact that the multiyear funding mechanism will not require additional funding.

8. The Group also takes note of the report of Working Group B (WGB) at its Forty-Fourth 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.

9. 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.

10. The Group would like to congratulate once again the PTS for the successful completion of the 2014 Integrated Field Exercise, which took place in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in November 2014. The Group reiterates the importance it gives to integrated field exercises in terms of their contribution to the development of the OSI component of the verification regime, for its readiness from the entry into force of the Treaty. In this regard, the Group looks forward to the evaluation report of IFE14, which is expected in August 2015. As expressed during the Forty-Fourth Session of WGB, the Group requests the PTS to brief States Signatories at every stage of the evaluation process, and reiterates the importance of such process being conducted in an inclusive manner.

11. The Group of 77 and China takes note of the report of the Advisory Group (AG) at its Forty-Fourth Session, including recommendations. We thank the Advisory Group and its Chairman, Mr Michael Weston, for their able and dedicated work.

Mr Chairperson,

12. The Group takes note of the initial draft 2016 Programme and Budget proposals, and thanks the PTS for the briefing to States Signatories held on 18 May 2015. The Group notes that the overall budget for 2016 was proposed at the level slightly below zero real growth compared to 2015, and takes note with appreciation of the savings made by the PTS. In this regard, and since allocations to capacity building activities are less than 10% of the current Regular Budget, the Group would like to reiterate its view that any proposed savings should not harm those activities.

13. The Group thanks Ambassador Azeez for the informal consultations on budgetary issues held on 22 May, and as mentioned in its statement at the Forty-Seventh Session of WGA, the Group looks forward to continued substantive discussions on the Programme and Budget proposals, as well as further clarifications by the PTS on the Major Programmes, as needed.

14. Finally Mr Chairperson, on the agenda item pertaining to the appointments of officers of the subsidiary bodies of the Preparatory Commission, the Group of 77 and China thanks you for the informal consultations and the relentless efforts you and your team have undertaken with the aim of reaching consensus on a draft decision on the procedures for the appointment of the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the subsidiary bodies of the Preparatory Commission. In line with its previous statements during past 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. Furthermore, the Group reiterates that the principle of equitable geographical representation must be observed, in order to ensure the participation and representation of developing countries. The Group would like to recall that this is an established principle in the United Nations system. The Group also holds that States Signatories should seek consensus for the appointment of the officers of the subsidiary bodies of the Preparatory Commission. The Group encourages all States Signatories to continue all necessary efforts to reach consensus on a decision to appoint Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the subsidiary bodies of the Preparatory Commission.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.