



STATEMENT BY THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA DURING DURING THE FORTY-FOURTH SESSION OF WORKING GROUP B DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR ARMIN ANDEREYA, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CHILE, 16 MARCH 2015

Mr Chairman,

1. The Group of 77 and China is pleased to see you chair the Forty-Fourth Session of Working Group B and would like to seize this opportunity to thank you for all your efforts as Chair of this Working Group. At the same, we would like to welcome Dr Joachim Schulze as the incoming chair. The Group trusts that the next two weeks will provide States Signatories with a good opportunity to engage in productive discussions, in the most efficient manner. I assure you of the full cooperation of the Group to this end.

2. The Group would like to thank the Executive Secretary for his written report on progress in the implementation of the verification related activities for the period July to December 2014, as well as for his opening remarks. The Group would also like to thank the PTS for preparing documents and making them available to State Signatories in advance of this session.

Mr Chairman,

3. The Group reiterates its principled position on the importance of sustaining a balanced approach, including in allocating resources, 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, it calls once more on the PTS to seek the necessary efficiencies in the process, so that the CTBT verification regime is balanced, coherent, as well as robust while efficient.

4. On specific verification related activities conducted by the PTS, the Group would like to make the following remarks:

(a) We congratulate the PTS for the successful completion of the 2014 Integrated Field Exercise (IFE), which took place from 3 November 2014 to 9 December 2014 in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. We would also like to thank the PTS for all the relevant documents made available to State Signatories in this regard, including the Report on the Preparation and Conduct of the 2014 Integrated Field Exercise contained in document CTBT/PTS/INF.1311. The Group also expresses its appreciation to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for their excellent cooperation and efforts as the host country and is pleased that the exercise was conducted successfully, in a timely manner and within the given financial framework, as contained in the report. The Group notes with satisfaction the participation of a large number of experts and dignitaries, including members of the G77. The Group therefore looks forward to the evaluation report, requests the PTS to brief State Signatories at every stage of the evaluation process, and reiterates the importance of such process being conducted in an inclusive manner.

(b) The Group is encouraged by the contribution made by IFE14 to help fulfil the requirements of the Treaty and its Protocol, in support of the capabilities of the On-Site Inspection Division so as to contribute to its readiness from the entry into force of the Treaty.

(c) The Group welcomes the fact that, as reported by the PTS, the data availability of certified IMS stations remained high during the reporting period, while we note with concern that data availability for radionuclide stations decreased within the same period.

(d) The Group welcomes the facility agreement signed between Ecuador and the PTS regarding two IMS stations to be established in the Galapagos Islands. These stations will make significant contribution to increase the detection capabilities of the IMS network, particularly in the Pacific region.

(e) The Group notes that the IDC has fulfilled all the requirements to move to Phase 5b of the IDC

Progressive Commissioning Plan, and that it will start its Phase 5b activities in 2015.

(f) The Group notes the establishment of the first certification of noble gas analysis capability at an IMS laboratory (RL3 in Austria), which contributes to the commissioning of the IMS network, because it adds a new functionality to the certified IMS activities and is crucial for quality assurance and quality control.

(g) The Group looks forward to the CTBT: Science and Technology conference in June 2015, and expects a wide participation and fruitful exchange of scientific expertise and information. The Group believes that science and technology, together with capacity building, play an important role in addressing development challenges across a wide range of issues, including the internationally agreed development goals. In this regard, the Group also notes the diverse activities conducted by the PTS in the area of capacity building and training, and requests further efforts in this area. The Group appreciates the efforts of the PTS to enhance the capabilities of States Signatories through its National Data Centre (NDC) and, in this regard, the Group notes with satisfaction the training events carried out at NDCs, the station operator courses and the technical workshops organized by the PTS. The Group encourages the PTS to continue to pursue and to enhance this kind of activities, which are of the utmost importance in the development of the national capacities of States Signatories, especially developing countries that are required in the build-up and long-term sustainment of the Treaty's verification regime.

(h) Regarding the IMS, the Group takes note of the activities undertaken by the PTS during the reporting period. Bearing in mind the advanced stage of the build-up of the IMS, the Group reiterates its position that a balanced approach is needed in the allocation of funds, safeguarding investments already made, work in progress and the advancement of the IMS. In this regard, the Group takes note of the activities reported under the section pertaining to the support of monitoring facilities.

(i) Regarding the management of life cycle costs, including post-certification activity (PCA) contracts for certified IMS stations, the Group takes note of the continued activities of the PTS in the standardization of the services provided under PCA contracts and reiterates its call on all States Signatories to cooperate with the PTS in a joint effort to lower life cycle costs, including those relating to PCAs. As stated by the Group in previous occasions, the Group requests additional information from the internal audit on this matter to be made available to all State Signatories.

(j) On the status of and options for the Equipment Storage and Maintenance Facility (ESMF), the Group thanks the PTS for preparing the document CTBT/PTS/ INF.1312 and looks forward to the discussions on this matter. Bearing in mind the urgency of this issue, the Group would appreciate receiving all other relevant information on the implication and estimated costs on the proposed options as soon as it is available.

5. The Group notes the radioxenon emission pledges signed by industries producing radio isotope for medical application, and further notes their voluntary nature. The Group would appreciate being kept apprised by the PTS of any actions it takes on this issue.

6. To conclude, Mr Chairman, the Group of 77 and China looks forward to working with you and the Task Leaders in a constructive and engaged manner, so that progress can be made on the different issues on the agenda of this Working Group.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.