



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

Mr Chairperson,

1. At the outset, the G-77 and China expresses its deep condolences to the French and Lebanese Governments and people for the terrorist attack perpetrated last Friday, extending the deepest condolences to the victims and families. In the same line, the Group wishes to express its deep condolences to the Government of Russia and to the families of the victims of the plane crash over Egypt's Sinai Peninsula who innocently lost their lives earlier this month.
2. The Group of 77 and China is pleased to see you, Ambassador Ayoko, chairing the Forty-Fifth Session of the Preparatory Commission. The Group takes this opportunity to renew to you the assurances of its full support and cooperation.
3. 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 (PTS) of the Commission.
4. The Group takes note of the Article XIV conference held in New York on 29 September 2015 with the aim of facilitating the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and reaffirms the importance of all efforts undertaken to promote the universalization and entry into force of the Treaty at the earliest possible date. In this regard, the Group would like to express its appreciation to Japan and Kazakhstan for all the efforts they made while coordinating and chairing the conference. The Group would also like to express its appreciation to Hungary and Indonesia for their efforts in promoting the entry into force and universalization of the CTBT during their co-chairmanship of the Article XIV process from 2013 to 2015.
5. We welcome the commemoration, on 29 August, of the International Day against Nuclear Tests, as unanimously declared by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2009.

Mr Chairperson,

6. The Group takes note of the report of Working Group A (WGA) at its Forty-Eighth Session and the recommendations contained therein and thanks its Chairperson, Ambassador Azeez, for his leadership. We would like to seize this opportunity to thank once again Ambassador Azeez for his continued efforts and remarkable work throughout his chairmanship of WGA, and we wish him all the best in his future endeavours.
7. With respect to the draft 2016-2017 Programme and Budget proposals, the Group thanks the PTS for the initial proposal and for the revised version of Information Paper CTBT/PTS/INF.1321 and its Annex and Corrigenda, as well as for the briefings provided to States Signatories. The Group welcomes the exchange of views during the informal open-ended consultations chaired by Ambassador Azeez. The Group is 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.

Mr Chairperson,

8. The Group would like to seize this opportunity to thank Ambassador Ayoko for chairing the Forty-Fifth Session of Working Group B and appreciates all his efforts in striving to reach a consensus. In this regard, we encourage all parties to make all necessary efforts to reach a consensus as soon as possible, and we hope that a positive outcome will be attained before the end of the current PrepCom session.

9. The Group 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.

10. 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 allocating resources accordingly, seeking the necessary efficiencies in the process.

Mr Chairperson,

11. 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 Preparatory Commission at its current session. The Group has already expressed its detailed views of this report in the last WGA session.

Mr Chairperson,

12. Regarding the procedures for appointment of the chairpersons and vice-chairpersons of the subsidiary bodies of the Preparatory Commission, the Group would like to express its gratitude to Ambassador Ayoko for his relentless efforts in trying to reach a consensus on this issue. We hope that a consensus on the draft procedures will be reached at the end of this session. The Group has reiterated on several occasions its position, mainly that the two Working Groups should be treated on an equal footing despite the different nature of the topics under their purview, and that the principle of equitable geographic representation should be applied to the subsidiary bodies. 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 would also like to further reiterate the key significance of having vice-chairs in the subsidiary bodies of the Preparatory Commission, in order to ensure that the work of these bodies is transparent, smooth and effective.

13. 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 another year.

Mr Chairperson,

14. The Group thanks Ambassador Istrate for the informal consultations held on 20 October 2015 regarding preparations for the twentieth anniversary of the Preparatory Commission and welcomes the discussion on this issue. The Group believes that this anniversary should be an opportunity to reflect on and assess the 20 years since the opening for signature of the CTBT, especially since the CTBT has yet to enter into force. In this regard, this occasion is also an opportunity for States Signatories to promote the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and call for its early entry into force, which will constitute a necessary milestone in the international efforts for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

15. Finally, Mr Chairperson, the Group would like to thank you for assuming the chairmanship of the

PrepCom for the past year as well as for all the efforts you have undertaken in this very busy year for the Preparatory Commission of the CTBT.

Thank you, Mr Chairperson.