



STATEMENT BY THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA DURING THE FORTY-SIXTH SESSION OF WORKING GROUP B, DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR H.E. Mr. Abel Adetakun AYOKO, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF NIGERIA ON BEHALF OF AMBASSADOR SIMON MADJUMO MARUTA OF NAMIBIA

Mr Chairman,

1. The Group of 77 and China is pleased to see you, Dr Joachim Schulze, chair the Forty-Sixth Session of Working Group B (WGB) and would like to seize this opportunity to thank you for all your efforts as Chair of this Working Group. 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 2015, as well as for his opening remarks. The Group would also like to thank the Provisional Technical Secretariat (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 and time, 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 Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (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) 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.

(b) 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.

(c) On the status of and options for the Equipment Storage and Maintenance Facility (ESMF), the Group looks forward to the presentation expected to be delivered by the PTS and 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.

(d) The Group takes note of the proposed on-site inspection action plan for 2016-2019, and looks forward for the discussions expected on this matter. The Group would kindly request the PTS to present more

detailed information on the projects specified in the proposed action plan.

(e) The Group would like to reiterate its position concerning the need to achieve equitable geographical distribution and gender balance in choosing new candidates for potential surrogate inspectors during the coming OSI training cycle.

5. The Group notes the radioxenon emission pledges signed by industries producing radioisotopes for medical applications, and further notes their voluntary nature. The Group would appreciate being kept apprised by the PTS of any actions it takes on this issue, keeping in mind the mandate given by the Preparatory Commission, according to the report of the Forty-Fifth Session of WGB.

6. The Group would like to thank Dr Joachim Schulze for briefing the Group about his ideas concerning the structure of WGB, and, while stressing that any attempt to redefine the structure of WGB tasks should be based on the mandate adopted by the Preparatory Commission, would like to add the following remarks:

(a) We should adhere to the mandate of the Preparatory Commission, which, as mentioned in the Resolution Establishing the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, is tasked, inter alia, to supervise and coordinate the technical testing and, pending their formal commissioning, provisional operation, as necessary, of the IDC and the IMS.

(b) We have to pay due attention to the actual prospect of the entry into force of the Treaty in any strategic planning and the work of the Commission.

(c) We have to adopt a realistic and a cost-effective budget for the build-up of the verification regime of the Treaty, taking into account the two previously mentioned principles.

7. 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.