



VIENNA CHAPTER

STATEMENTS OF THE G-77 AND CHINA AT THE 8TH SESSION OF THE CTBTO PREPCOM VIENNA, 20-23 APRIL 1999 DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR M. S. AMIRKHIZI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN ON BEHALF OF H.E. AMBASSADOR YOGESH M. TIWARI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF INDIA

Agenda Items 2 and 3:

Mr Chairman,

I am taking the floor on behalf of a large number of State-signatories of the CTBT to introduce to the Prepcom the Group of 77 and China. Mr Chairman As this is the very first time that the State-signatories of the G77 and China are speaking as a Group at this forum, let me begin, above all, by stating our unequivocal support for the goal of a world free of nuclear testing. The Group has in fact been activated at this forum precisely because of our firm commitment to this cause, out of which naturally springs our desire to participate in and contribute to the unfolding efforts to prepare for the Entry into Force of the CTBT. Mr Chairman As you are aware the G77 and China is the largest developing country coalition in the UN system. The Group in fact consists of 133 countries, of which 95 are currently signatories of the CTBT. I will be taking the floor from time to time to articulate the position of the Group on certain important matters of collective interest to its Member-states, and to sensitize the Prepcom and the PTS to the special needs of its developing-country States-signatories. With this brief introduction, Mr Chairperson, let me extend the Group's congratulations to you, and assure you of its fullest cooperation throughout this session. Thank you .

Agenda Item 4: G77 and China Comments on the Report of the Executive Secretary

Mr Chairman,

I am taking the floor on behalf of the Group of 77 and China to comment on the Report of the Executive Secretary. Let me begin, however, by conveying the Group's appreciation to the Executive Secretary for his comprehensive report, and to the PTS staff for their accomplishments in 1998.

Mr Chairman,

The G77 and China notes with satisfaction that the first CTBTO Prepcom International Cooperation Workshop was held in November 1998. All of the experts who made presentations at the Workshop noted that the CTBT verification system would, in the process of monitoring treaty compliance, generate wide-ranging data that could serve many peaceful purposes. These include purposes that could further social and developmental objectives, like the monitoring of natural hazards, disaster relief, earthquake risk reduction and mineral exploration, to mention but a few. The Group of 77 and China also notes with great interest that many of the experts felt that the potential benefits arising from monitoring system are as yet unknown, and are in fact likely to be much greater than those which have already been identified, as some of the networks represent fundamentally new monitoring assets for the world.

Mr Chairman,

Developing countries are extremely interested in exploiting to the full all social and developmental applications that the high-cost verification system which we are setting up could yield. Many will, however, require some basic assistance in order to do so.

Mr Chairman,

The G77 and China feels that the CTBTO Prepcom and the PTS could play an important role in this area, in accordance with paragraphs 18 - 23 of Part 1 of the Protocol to the CTBT. Such assistance could include the

training of National Data Centre operators and the provision of documentation, expert services, appropriate equipment, and a suite of NDC software to state-signatories to facilitate the expanded analysis of IDC data.

Mr Chairman,

The G-77 and China notes with satisfaction that initial steps have already been taken in this respect, which include the holding of the first national data centre training courses at the end of 1999, as well as an second NDC workshop in Hannover, Germany. In view of the fact that the IDC will soon be installing the second release of applications software, which will for the first time endow it with the capability to distribute IMS data and IDC products to state-signatories, now would seem an appropriate time for the Prepcom and the PTS to begin focusing more seriously on the issue of supporting data access and IDC technical assistance.

Mr Chairman,

As this is an important issue for developing countries, the 077 and China would like to request the Chairman of WGB and the PTS, through you, to begin to consider in more detail the question of what forms of assistance might be given to State-signatories to enable them to make maximum use of the IMS data and IDC products, and to make provision for such assistance, where relevant, in the 2000 programme and budget. Mr Chairman Allow me, now, in a most constructive spirit, to make some suggestions regarding certain improvements that we feel that the PTS and the working groups should aspire to in their dealings with Signatory-states.

Mr Chairman

The Group feels that the various training courses and workshops that the PTS organises are a valuable form of technical cooperation for developing countries, through which advanced knowledge is transferred and human capacity is built up. The Group has therefore actively involved itself in these activities, both by making experts available, and by hosting such initiatives. To further maximise the objective that developing states-signatories benefit from such training activities, however, the Group would like to request that the PTS gives priority to applicants that are nominated through official channels.

Mr Chairman,

Another important area in which some simple improvements could have a major impact is the way in which decisions are presented to States-signatories, by both the PTS and Working Groups, for their consideration and adoption.

Mr Chairman,

Developing country Missions are usually small, and sometimes do not have the resources to cover the working groups in their full depth. The last session of WGB, for example, considered more than a hundred documents during two simultaneous sessions. In addition, States-signatories have differing levels of experience with the subject at hand. Given these realities, it is important, if decision-making is to be broad-based, that the subject matter of decisions themselves are made as accessible to States-signatories as possible. The Group feels that this could be facilitated by a greater degree of editorial discipline. Documents containing or accompanying decisions should provide background information that places decisions to be taken in context, should provide lucid explanations of the decision, should include analyses of alternative options available to the Prepcom, and should have recommendations for action that are well justified, as is the standard practice followed by other organizations. While much of the documentation already meets these standards, the Group feels that an attempt should be made to ensure that all decisions are presented for consideration in this way, and in a timely fashion. Thank you.

Agenda Item 5: Recc 2:

G77 and China Statement on the CTBTO Prepcom Verification Budget For 2000

Mr Chairman,

The G77 and China thanks Working Group B and its Chair, Dr Ola Dahiman, for its report to this session.

Mr Chairman,

You will recall that the first substantive remark of our Group was to express our unwavering commitment to the CTBT. Allow us, at this stage, to also add that we would dearly like to see the Treaty enter into force as quickly as is possible, and the verification system fully-functional as soon as is practical.

Mr Chairman,

The G77 and China views the guidance that we are being asked to establish as a broad outline of verification-related work that could be on the agenda in 2000, and not as a deterministic set of instructions for the PTS to follow. The guidance lends itself to a spectrum of possible programme and budget alternatives, and the PTS is being tasked in recommendation 2 to find an appropriate outcome that takes into account the views of all state-signatories.

Mr Chairman,

Based on this understanding, the G77 and China would like to offer the following views to the PTS to assist it in translating the guidance into an acceptable 2000 programme and budget: Firstly, the 2000 budget should not be based upon political judgements by the PTS about when the verification system ought to be completed. Such judgements are solely for the Prepcom to make. Secondly, the 2000 budget should be financially reasonable and realistic. In interpreting and giving content to the guidance, the PTS should strive for a work programme and budget that is sensitive to the difficult economic conditions prevailing in developing countries. Thirdly, the 2000 budget should not be premised on a dramatic increase over the 1999 budget. While the G77 and China acknowledges the need for a rising budget during the capital investment phase of setting up the organisation, the reality is that our national Systems have difficulty coping with unpredictable and large increments, and this needs to be taken into account in working out the 2000 programme. In this regard, the PTS should keep in mind that the amount for which states-signatories were assessed in 1999 was 64 million US dollars. Fourthly, the 2000 programme should be commensurate with what has been shown to be achievable up to now, taking into account all experience of the technical, political, legal and financial difficulties associated with implementation that has been gained so far. In this respect, the fact that the PTS will for the first time be constructing the annual verification programme and budget is a welcome innovation, as it is they who are actually responsible for implementation that are best able to judge what is feasible.

Mr Chairman,

By way of conclusion, let me summarise by stating that the Group strongly urges the PTS to present a reasonable, balanced and affordable programme and budget to the next session of WGB, so that we are able this year to avoid the difficulties that plagued our budget discussions in the past. Thank you

Agenda Item 5: Recc 5: G77 and China Statement on IDC

Mr Chairman,

The Group of 77 and China has already expressed its view that there is a need to provide assistance to states to make effective use of IMS data and IDC products. Now that we are discussing more specifically IDC issues, let me add that the Group feels that, in order to enhance reliability and the timely transmission of data, especially in cases where IMS data is to be routed through NDCs, that appropriate software and hardware compatible with IDC software and hardware will be necessary, and that the PTS should take initiatives to provide such common software and hardware to States-signatories.

Agenda item 10: Report of WGA: Payments and CIF

Mr Chairman, The G-77 and China thanks Working Group A and its Chair, Ambassador Tibor Toth of Hungary, for its report to this session. A number of States-Signatories of the Group, although also politically committed to the Treaty and to the Prepcom, are not able to pay their contributions in a timely fashion due to constitutional, administrative, or financial problems. In this sense, the G-77 and China notes with satisfaction that WGA considered that States- signatories, with the PTS and with each other, should identify possible solutions to technical and other difficulties delaying payments. Thank you.

CIF Part of the Statement

In the view of the Group of 77 and China, the question of the treatment of interest earned on the CIF is very important. The group therefore looks forward to the options paper on this question that the PTS is drafting, and to its quick resolution at the next meeting of WGA. In the meantime, the Group requests the PTS not to commit any of the income that has so far been earned on CIF investments.

Thank you.