



STATEMENT OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA AT THE OCCASION OF THE 51st SESSION OF WORKING GROUP B, DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR CARLOS JÁTIVA, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ECUADOR, 27 AUGUST – 7 SEPTEMBER 2018

Mr. Chairman,

1. The Group of 77 and China is pleased to see you, Dr. Joachim Schulze, conducting our work in this 51st Session of Working Group B together with the Vice-Chairs and Task Leaders, and would like to assure you of its full cooperation and support.
2. We also like to thank Dr. Lassina Zerbo, the Executive Secretary, for his opening remarks and his report on verification related activities for the period from January to June 2018. The Group appreciates the Provisional Technical Secretariat's (PTS) efforts in preparing documents and making them available for this session in a timely manner.

Mr. Chairman,

3. The Group reiterates its principle 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, to ensure that the CTBT verification regime is balanced, coherent, as well as robust while efficient.
4. On specific verification related activities conducted by the PTS, as contained in the Executive Secretary's report, the Group would like to make the following remarks:
  - (a) The G-77 welcomes that, as a result of the joint efforts of the States hosting International Monitoring Stations facilities, local operators and the PTS, the data availability of certified IMS stations remained high and the timeliness requirements for reviewed products met more than 99%.
  - (b) Regarding the International Data Center, we take note of the activities undertaken by the PTS during the reporting period, in particular the progress achieved regarding the installation and certification of remaining stations in developing countries, namely Ethiopia, which brings the total number of certified stations to 282 (87.9%) and confirms the strong political commitment and the deployment of human and material resources by developing countries.
  - (c) On the management of life-cycle costs, including post-certification activity (PCA) contracts for certified IMS stations, the Group takes note of the continuous efforts by the PTS to standardize 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 related to PCA.
  - (d) Regarding the International Data Center Progressive Commissioning, we take note of the technical report on Experiment 2, which contains all the results from the various tests as compiled by the control team and looks forward to continue receiving regular updates on the conduct of Experiment 3, planned from 23rd September to 6th October 2018. The G-77 would also like to emphasize the importance of continued involvement of experts from the State Signatories in performing and evaluating the envisaged experiments.

(e) We reiterate the importance of capacity-building and training and of the various activities carried out by the PTS in this field as a means of improving the ability of States Signatories, in particular developing countries, to fully participate in the Treaty's verification regime. The Group also reiterates its position that capacity-building activities should be funded in a sufficient manner through the Regular Budget.

(f) In this context, we commend the involvement of developing countries in hosting capacity-building activities or events, namely, the African Regional Infrasound Workshop and Integrated Training for NDCs held in Tunis from 12th to 16th February 2018, aiming to promote the importance of infrasound technology and the exchange of experience among the NDCs in the Africa region, and the 2018 NDC Workshop held in Algiers from 6th to 10th May 2018, which was attended by over 80 experts from 38 States Signatories and the PTS, and provided a forum for NDC experts to share experiences in fulfilling their verification responsibilities and to provide NDC feedback to the PTS on all aspects of data, products, services and support NDCs in their work. The Group is looking forward to the NDC Workshop report to be provided for this current session. The Group welcomes the East Asia Regional NDC Development Workshop to be held from 17th to 21st of September 2018 in Ulaanbaatar in Mongolia.

(g) The Group takes note with appreciation of the progress made under the OSI action plan for 2016-2019. It also notes that 35 out of 43 projects were under implementation and 8 had already been completed. The Group would like to reiterate its request to the PTS to provide Working Group B with technical reports of the implementation of the completed projects. The G-77 welcomes, in particular, the progress achieved in the 3rd training cycle for surrogate inspectors and the involvement of developing countries in hosting OSI exercises during 2018, namely, Argentina which held the OSI RIC 23 from 8th to 15th April 2018 and South Africa which will hold the advanced course from 7th to 20th October 2018 followed by the ground and airborne visual observation (VOB) course from 22nd to 26th October 2018.

(h) The Group valued the contribution of the three previous Integrated Field Exercises (IFE) and is open to the possibility of a new IFE after 2023 when the build-up exercises are completed.

(i) The G-77 notes with satisfaction the progress achieved in the establishment of a permanent Equipment Storage and Maintenance Facility (ESMF) and the assurance of the PTS that the project continues to be carried out on schedule and within budget.

(j) The Group looks forward to continuing to receive updates on the implementation of the project by the PTS, and on measures to mitigate potential risks, which may have implications on the schedule and cost of this project.

Mr. Chairman,

5. The Group reaffirms its principles of equitable geographical distribution and gender balance among the staff of the Organization, particularly, at the Professional and higher levels, as important considerations in the recruitment process. The Group reiterates that these principles should be reflected in the PrepCom and its subsidiary bodies. In this regard, we encourage Working Group B to contribute to improving such representation among its officers in accordance with the above-mentioned principles.

6. Finally, the Group looks forward to continue working constructively with you, the Vice-Chairs and the Task Leaders in order to achieve a fruitful outcome of this session.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.