



G-77 and China statement during the Fifty Second Session of the Preparatory Commission, 17-19 June 2019, to be delivered by H.E. Ambassador Omar Amer Youssef, Permanent Representative of Egypt

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.
2. The Group of 77 and China thanks the Executive Secretary, Dr Lassina Zerbo, for his opening remarks and takes note of his reports on the verification and non-verification related activities. The Group appreciates the Provisional Technical Secretariat's (PTS) efforts in preparing documents and making them available for this session in a timely manner. The Group takes note of the Executive Secretary's opening statement in which he highlighted certain issues and provided updates on his written reports.

Mr. Chairman,

3. The Group welcomes the recent ratification of the CTBT by the Republic of Zimbabwe, which brings the total number of ratifications to 168. We believe that these developments represent significant steps towards the Universalization of the Treaty. The Group stresses the need of an early entry into force of the CTBT, with the ultimate goal to eliminate nuclear weapons and general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.
4. The Group wishes to express its full support for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and we look forward to contributing to all discussions and work in preparation for the 2020 NPT Review Conference, the upcoming eleventh Article XIV Conference, and the 2019 Science and Technology Conference.

Mr. Chairman,

5. The Group takes note of the report of Working Group A (WGA) at its Fifty-Fifth Session and its recommendations. We would like to thank the Chairperson of WGA, Ambassador Lotfi Bouchaara of Morocco, for leading the consultations that preceded the session, as well as Ambassador Mitsuru Kitano of Japan for his leadership during the session, which resulted in a draft decision on procedures for the appointment of members of the Advisory Group, for consideration by the Commission.

Mr. Chairman,

6. The Group takes note of the report of the Fifty-Second Session of Working Group B (WGB) and its two recommendations, regarding noble gas background measurement and additional changes to IMS station coordinates, names or codes and thanks Mr. Joachim Schulze for the introduction of the report.

7. The Group notes with appreciation progress made by the PTS in implementing 2018-2019 verification related programme. The Group strongly emphasizes the importance it attaches to capacity-building and training and to 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.

8. The Group takes note of the report of the Advisory Group at its Fifty-Second Session and its recommendations and thanks Sir Michael Weston for the introduction of the report. The Group reiterates its appreciation to the efforts and expertise of the Advisory Group in providing observations, conclusions and recommendations to Working Group A and the PTS on issues related to the associated administrative, budgetary and financial matters.

Mr. Chairman,

9. The Group takes note of the initial draft 2020-2021 Programme and Budget proposal. The Group has already expressed its initial comments during the last WGA session and looks forward to continuing consultation on that issue.

Mr. Chairman,

10. Please allow me to thank you, H.E. Ambassador Shin Dong-ik, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea for your dedicated work during your chairmanship. As you have announced to us your departure from Vienna, we wish you well and success in your future endeavours.

11. The Group welcomes the designation of Algeria and Germany as co-Presidents of the eleventh Article XIV Conference and assures the co-presidents our full measure of cooperation.

12. The Group welcomes the reappointment of Ms. Nurcan Özel, Director of IMS.

Mr. Chairman,

13. Regarding Agenda item 8, the Group requests the PTS to maintain the original dates of the sessions of the Prep.Com and its Subsidiary bodies in accordance with the decision annexed to the report of the Fifty-first session of the Prep.Com.

14. Under the Agenda item 10 "Developing guidelines for holding extraordinary session of the Preparatory Commission", the Group is looking forward to discussing these guidelines bearing in mind that according to the Rules of Procedure, it is upon the Commission to decide on the convening of sessions of the Commission. In this regard, the Group has taken note of

the proposal on guidelines for non-scheduled sessions of the Commission presented by Chile on behalf of a Group of Latin America and the Caribbean Countries.

Mr. Chairman,

15. On Human Resources Management, 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 takes note of the efforts made to improve the representation of the staff, including the achievement of gender balance at the director level of the PTS, and requests the PTS to make further efforts to achieve equitable geographical distribution and gender balance among the staff of the organization at all levels of responsibility.

16. The Group looks forward to the 2019 CTBT Science and Technology Conference to be held in Vienna this month which aims to identify opportunities and possible solutions to continuously improve nuclear test monitoring and verification, and to promote the wider civil and scientific applications of techniques and data used for test ban verification, among other goals. Our Group will be significantly active in this event, through the participation of scientists, experts, diplomats and authorities. We reiterate our full support for the Conference and look forward to its report in a timely manner.

Mr. Chairman,

17. Finally, the Group looks forward to a constructive deliberation and timely conclusion of the work of this Session of the Preparatory Commission.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.