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**The Statement of Dr Lassina Zerbo  
Executive Secretary, Preparatory Commission for the  
Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization**

**Handover Ceremony of the Chairmanship of the G-77 Vienna Chapter**

*15 January 2021*

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[Allocated time: around 3 minutes]

Mr Chairman,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me extend my most sincere congratulations to you, Ambassador Solano Ortiz on your new responsibilities, and warmly thank Ambassador Natividad for her kind invitation to participate in this year's handover ceremony of the Chairmanship of the G-77 Vienna Chapter.

The Group of 77 represents the majority of CTBTO stakeholders. A large portion of CTBTO staff members also hail from G-77 countries. But the strongest connection between the G-77 and the CTBTO lies without a doubt in our shared objectives and ideals: multilateralism and cooperation, peace and security.

The CTBT makes an immeasurable contribution to the very fabric that brought together the States that signed the *Joint Declaration of the Seventy-Seven Developing Countries* in 1964. It is a product of multilateralism and diplomacy at their best through the CD intense negotiations. The Treaty itself is also an example of egalitarianism and impartiality— two of the noblest offspring of multilateralism and diplomacy. The CTBT does not confer different rights or obligations to different States. Regardless of the size and power of its members, its purpose is one – and it applies to all and there is no discrimination in the commitments of its members.

Promotion of the G77 principles at CTBTO relies on effective value generation for our States Signatories and enhancing the ownership of the developing countries in the verification regime of the Treaty through a robust capacity development programme.

A large number of experts from developing countries, attend our educational programs, workshops and training courses and gain expertise in using the data and products of the verification system.

Business continuity solutions implemented in 2020 to overcome travel restrictions including innovative e-learning solutions have even boosted the opportunities offered and the level of participation.



We have also developed a new mechanism to help developing countries to take full ownership of the installation, operation and maintenance of their monitoring facilities by developing and relying on local expertise rather than constantly dispatching experts from the Secretariat or from the equipment manufacturers.

This not only ensures technological self-sufficiency but also help create a pool of experts in their region. In the same vein experts of National Data Centres are also trained to make best use of the technologies for civil and scientific purposes, which in turn is key to ensuring relevance, interest and long term sustainment of our activities.

National experts from developing countries are also encouraged to actively participate in the technical discussions related to the verification system of CTBTO. In that regard the project for the participation of technical experts from developing countries in our official technical meetings successfully continues and has already supported 49 experts from 38 States, of whom 10 were from least developed countries and 16 were female experts. I also appointed a special focal point for the G77 at the level my senior advisers in my office to facilitate the collaboration and cooperation with the G77 and NAM.

We should not forget that the idea of a ban on nuclear testing came from developing countries and NAM. Sticking to the principles of the G77 for preserving the independent nature of this international organization has been one of my top priorities.

It is imperative to continue to uphold the integrity of the Treaty and to promote its objective and purpose so that it becomes a real meaningful step toward nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects.

For more than twenty years now, the G-77 Vienna Chapter has conveyed the vision of a well-coordinated group of countries dedicated to promoting some principles. The principles of multilateralism, international cooperation, development, fairness, mutual respect and enhancing solidarity among the developing countries for contributing to a more prosperous and peaceful world, in which the interest of all states no mater big or small would be preserved. We are doing our best for this vision to resonate strongly within the CTBTO and make this organization an active and reliable partner of the G77.

Thank you.