



**Statement of the Group of 77 and China during the 58<sup>th</sup> Session of the Preparatory Commission, 27 – 28 June 2022, delivered by H.E. Ms. Belén Constanza SAPAG MUÑOZ DE LA PEÑA, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Chile**

Mr. Chair,

1. The Group is pleased to see you, Ambassador Darío Ernesto Chirú Ochoa, chairing the 58<sup>th</sup> Session of the Preparatory Commission (PrepCom). The Group takes this opportunity to renew to you, Ambassador, its full support and cooperation. Furthermore, the Group expresses its reassurances to the PrepCom in executing its tasks in the most efficient and effective manner.
2. The Group would also like to thank the Executive Secretary for his opening remarks, takes note of his reports and expresses its appreciation to the Provisional Technical Secretariat for preparing documents and making them available for this session in a timely manner.
3. The Group is deeply saddened by the loss of so many lives globally due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and expresses its solidarity with all countries as they battle with the effects of the pandemic. COVID-19 showed that new challenges have global effects which require universal coordinated response that necessitates cooperation in all domains among all States to contain, mitigate and defeat the pandemic, through a multilateral approach.

Mr. Chair,

4. The Group is pleased to note that, since our last Prepcom, two countries, Tuvalu and The Gambia, have ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and one country, Dominica, has signed the CTBT, bringing the number of State Signatories to 186 and of Ratifiers to 172. In view of the upcoming 10<sup>th</sup> NPT Review Conference, the Group reiterates its full support for the CTBT and stresses the need for an early Entry Into Force of the Treaty and its universalization, with the ultimate goal of eliminating nuclear weapons, and general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.
5. The Group continues to express its concern on any possible planning and preparation for nuclear test explosions. Any nuclear tests explosion would not only break the global moratorium, but severely undermine the Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime and international peace and security. The Group calls upon all States to observe nuclear test moratoria and to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to general, complete and irreversible nuclear disarmament under strict and effective international control.

Mr. Chair,

6. On Agenda item 3, the Group takes note of the report of Working Group A at the 61<sup>st</sup> session thanks the Ambassador Nguyen Trung Kien of Viet Nam for presenting the report.
7. The Group would like to reiterate some points expressed during the last Working Group A session. In this regard:

(a) The Group strongly underlines the importance of promoting a balanced approach and appropriate allocation of resources among the three dimensions of the verification regime namely the International Monitoring System, the International Data Centre and On-Site Inspection. The Group encourages the PTS to allocate sufficient resources to the OSI to ensure its readiness upon EIF of the Treaty and we note the OSI table top exercise conducted last 14 June.

(b) While appreciating the efforts made by the PTS, which are aimed at identifying and implementing measures to increase efficiency and savings to the extent possible, the Group reiterates the importance of ensuring that any savings do not jeopardize the effective strengthening of capacity building and training activities, nor affects the quality of these capacity building activities which aim at increasing the capabilities of States Signatories to participate in the verification regime.

(c) The Group takes note that some technical meetings, workshops, training courses and exercises towards capacity building activities, were postponed due to COVID-19. The Group however expresses its concern that the implementation rate of the Capacity Building Fund remains low. In this regard, the Group calls on the PTS to implement necessary measures to rectify this anomaly and bring capacity building activities to required levels.

(d) The Group notes the progress with regards to making a large proportion of the training modules available in all United Nations official languages. The Group reiterates the importance of the allocation of resources for a project-based action plan that includes regional and multilingual dimensions, as well as assessment mechanisms, as was previously requested by the Working Group (B) of the Preparatory Commission at its 52<sup>nd</sup> Session (CTBT/PC-52/WGB/1).

(e) The Group emphasizes the importance of promoting multilingualism in the PrepCom and its subsidiary bodies as well as in the PTS. The Group requests the PTS to report on progress made at its 60<sup>th</sup> session.

Mr Chair,

8. On agenda item 4, the Group also takes note of the report of the Working Group B at its 58<sup>th</sup> Session and thanks Dr. Erlan Batyrbekov for presenting the report.

9. 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.

10. The Group reiterates its support for the pilot project, which facilitates the participation of experts from developing countries in the WGB sessions and it presents an opportunity to advance the participation of professional women in the Organization. The Group is convinced that such participation greatly contributes to capacity-building in our countries and to achieving wider participation of all States Signatories in the decision-making process and ownership of the Commission.

11. The Group would like to reaffirm that any activities related to the funding, maintenance, and provisional operation of the IMS stations by the PTS, and any related action or decision by the Prepcom, should respect the decisions of the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies, as well as the territorial integrity of States. The Group highlights the importance to engage in

construction, maintenance and/or relocation of IMS facilities with full respect of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

12. On agenda item 5, the Group takes note of the report of the Advisory Group at its 58<sup>th</sup> session and appreciates the recommendations contained therein. The Group also reiterates its appreciation for the efforts and expertise of the Advisory Group in providing necessary observation, conclusion, and recommendations on issues related to the associated administrative, budgetary and financial matters.

13. The Group appreciates the efforts by Mr. Pedro Penha Brasil from Brazil Acting Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Advisory Group in ensuring a continued functioning of the Group. Furthermore, the Group looks forward to a consensual decision on the next Chairperson of the Advisory Group, as well as the decision on procedures for the appointment of the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairpersons of the Advisory Group.

Mr Chair,

14. The Group reaffirms its principles of equitable geographical distribution and gender balance and reiterates that these principles should be reflected in the PrepCom and its subsidiary bodies as well as in the PTS. In this regard, the Group is concerned that geographical, gender representation and women participation at the Professional and Higher levels remains low. The Group takes this opportunity to continue requesting the Executive Secretary to significantly improve geographical, gender representation, and women participation within the Organization and at all levels of responsibility, using new and existing tools bearing in mind the persistent underrepresentation of developing countries in the staff composition of the PTS, and the need to take appropriate measures to address this issue.

15. The Group looks forward to finalizing direct and clear guidance for noble gas background characterization, as a matter of priority at the next in person session of the PrepCom. In this connection, the Group appreciates the work carried out by the previous Co-facilitators Ambassador Molekane of South Africa and Ambassador Laggner of Switzerland. The Group expects the PTS to act in accordance with its mandate and stresses that the postponement of the deadline for this decision is directly linked to the temporary changes in the format and modality of meetings of the PrepCom in light of the COVID-19 crisis.

16. The Group welcomes the designation of Ambassador Carlos Sérgio Sobral Duarte, Permanent Representative of Brazil, as facilitator for developing guidelines for holding non-scheduled sessions of the Commission and takes note of the latter's proposal on the matter.

17. Finally, the Group of 77 and China looks forward to a constructive deliberation and timely conclusion of the work of this Session of the Preparatory Commission.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.