



**G-77 AND CHINA STATEMENT DURING THE SIXTY SECOND SESSION OF  
WORKING GROUP A,  
19 – 21 OCTOBER 2022,**

**DELIVERED BY H.E. AZZEDDINE FARHANE, AMBASSADOR, PERMANENT  
REPRESENTATIVE OF MOROCCO**

Mr. Chair,

1. The Group of 77 and China is pleased to see you, Ambassador Nguyen Trung Kien, conducting our work in this 62<sup>nd</sup> Session of Working Group A and would like to thank you for chairing this meeting and assures you of its full support and cooperation.
2. 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.
3. The Group welcomes the gradual resumption of in-person activities, as well as the Organization's efforts to maintain business continuity, flow of data and data products despite restrictions caused by COVID-19 and expresses its gratitude to the PTS in this regard.
4. The Group would also like to thank the Executive Secretary Dr. Robert Floyd for his opening remarks. The Group takes note of the Executive Secretary's report on non-verification-related activities for the period April-August 2022 and extends its appreciation to the PTS for the timely issuance of documents for this session.

Mr. Chair,

5. The Group is pleased to note that since our last meeting, four countries, all from the G-77, namely, Dominica, Timor-Leste, Equatorial Guinea and São Tomé and Príncipe, have ratified the CTBT, bringing the number of State Signatories to 186 and of Ratifiers to 176. The Group stresses the need for an early Entry Into Force of the CTBT and underlines the importance of all possible efforts to be made to achieve the universalization of the Treaty, with the ultimate goal to eliminate nuclear weapons and general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.
6. The Group also takes note of the statement of the Executive Secretary at the 10<sup>th</sup> NPT Review Conference in New York. The Group would like to highlight the inextricable link between the CTBT and the NPT as mutually reinforcing legal instruments of the international nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

Mr. Chair,

7. Regarding agenda item 3, the Group takes note of the report of the Advisory Group at its 59<sup>th</sup> session and the recommendations contained therein. The Group appreciates the Advisory Group's efforts and expertise in providing necessary observations, conclusions and recommendations on issues related to the administrative, budgetary and financial matters.

8. The Group would like to present the following comments regarding the 2023 Budget update proposals, financial and budgetary decision:

(a) The Group takes note of the document 2023 Budget Update Proposals: Final Draft(CTBT/PTS/INF.1616/Rev.1) in which it is indicated that the total 2023 Budget at estimated 2023 prices is \$ 129 243 200 in notional US\$ equivalent value, with an overall weighted average price adjustment of 3.17%;

(b) The Group welcomes the efforts of the PTS in mitigating the impact of the high inflation rate through combination of the identified savings and efficiencies with the higher estimate of miscellaneous income leading to a reduction in the total amount of the 2023 contributions from State Signatories. In this regard, the Group requests the PTS to present the updated scale of assessments for 2023. Furthermore, the Group encourages the PTS to explore creative and reliable ways of absorbing the projected higher inflation rate on the 2024-2025 budget cycle;

(c) In light of the proposed renovation of the VIC, the Group requests the PTS for a breakdown of the fixed and variable costs in the 2023 budget;

(d) While appreciating the efforts of the PTS in 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. Therefore, the Group reiterates its position that capacity building activities should be funded in a sufficient manner through the Regular Budget. The Group requests the PTS to continue providing information, documents and organizing briefings on this subject during inter-sessional periods;

(e) 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 notes that most of the 2023 Budget is allocated to verification activities (81.2%). In this regard, the Group takes note that the share allocated to the OSI programme in the document 2023 Budget Update Proposals: Final Draft would have decreased from 8.6% to 8.5 percent compared to the 2022 Regular Budget, while the share allocated to the IMS programme would have increased from 31,8% to 32,3%;

(f) The Group requests the PTS to further develop the OSI e-Library, based on the lessons learned from exercises, in addition to providing access to the OSI e-library to the authorized experts from States Signatories;

(g) 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).

9. 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. Furthermore, the

Group is looking forward to the report of the quality assessment of training provided as well as measures that will be undertaken to support the participation of developing countries in virtual training programmes. The Group reiterates its request for the Secretariat to submit to the WGA and WGB a detailed report on planned and previously approved activities that were not carried out in the period 2020-2021, including any major changes, upgrades or the overlap of the two Programme and Budgets of 2020-2021 and 2022-2023 in the new draft program and budget document. The Group would also like to highlight that those activities, that are already budgeted should be rescheduled as soon as circumstances allow.

10. The Group welcomes the preparations for the Science Diplomacy Symposium, as well as Snt2023 and notes that these events are effective platforms for exchange of knowledge and ideas between the Preparatory Commission of the CTBTO and the broader scientific and diplomatic communities.

Mr. Chair,

11. The Group remains seriously concerned with the low level of representation of developing countries in the PTS and requests the PTS to make all necessary efforts to bring geographical representation to equitable levels. In this regard, the Group reaffirms its principles of equitable geographical distribution, gender balance and multilingualism and reiterates that these principles should be reflected in the PrepCom, its subsidiary bodies, particularly when it comes to the Staff of the Organization, especially, at the Professional and higher levels, as important considerations in the recruitment process.

12. 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. The Group however remains concerned that gender representation at Professional level and higher levels remains low (37%). The Group requests the PTS to make further efforts to achieve gender balance among the staff of the organization at all levels of responsibility. In this regard, we would like to propose the PTS to use new and existing tools to encourage the participation of young female professionals in the PTS.

13. The Group also recalls the guidelines contained within document CTBT/PTS-INF.1635 and encourages the PTS to coordinate with the other Secretariats of the Vienna based International Organizations (VBOs), to ensure that major meetings do not coincide, as well as to avoid an overlap, to the extent possible, with any major public holiday.

14. The Group looks forward to a constructive deliberation and timely conclusion of the work of this Working Group.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.