

Statements delivered in 2021 on behalf of the G-77 and China under the Chairmanship of H.E. Mr. Alejandro Solano Ortiz, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION (UNIDO)



#### G-77 and China Statement during the UNIDO PBC 37<sup>th</sup> session, 26-28 May 2021, delivered by H.E. Ambassador Alejandro Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

Madam Chairperson, [H.E. Madam Faouzia Mebarki, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Algeria]

#### Agenda item 3: Annual Report of the Director General for 2020

Madam Chairperson,

1. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, allow me, to congratulate you, your Excellency Madam Faouzia Mebarki, on your election as the Chair of this very important Committee within the UNIDO functional system. Let me also congratulate the other Members of the Bureau. We are confident that under your able leadership, we will have fruitful deliberations during this session.

2. Rest assured of our full cooperation and active participation during the Session. We endeavour to make your work easier, by contribution meaningfully on matters pertinent to the Group.

3. The Group would like to pay tribute to H.E. Ambassador Antonio Marcondes, Permanent Representative of Brazil and members of his Bureau, during the 36<sup>th</sup> session of the Programme and Budget Committee, for the sterling work done at that Session, despite the challenges faced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

4. I would be remiss if I did not thank the Director General, LI Yong for his tireless efforts, dedication and demonstrated leadership to the service of the Organisation.

Madam Chairperson,

5. The Group takes note of the annual report of the Director General and commends him and the Secretariat for having been able to continue with industrial development programmes, despite the many challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. As can be deduced from the report, the Organisation has navigated its work in a professional way, and, despite those challenges.

6. The report highlighted very important key areas, which are all guided by the Lima Declaration of 2013, which called on UNIDO to assist Member States towards the goal of inclusive and sustainable industrial development, to expand and enhance domestic entrepreneurial and technological capabilities, the inclusion and adoption of Goal 9 of the SDG into the activities of UNIDO programmes in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Industrial Development in 2015 and the Abu Dhabi Declaration of 2019.

7. The Group notes that the COVID-19 pandemic has affected all countries of the world, in areas of financial stability, people losing their jobs, industries absorbed shocks as manufacturing took a big hit and the global value chains were disrupted as a result.

8. As correctly stated, the Abu Dhabi Declaration of 2019 have added impetus to the work of the organization to enable it to navigate its activities in order to achieve Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development.

9. The Group notes with satisfaction, UNIDO support and commitment to the policy of Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development, which is at the core of the aspiration of the developing countries.

10. The Group calls for increased support from international donors to assist the developing countries achieve their developmental objectives and request the Director General to continue to strengthen partnerships as well as South-South, North-South and triangular cooperation.

I thank you, Madam Chairperson.

# Agenda item 4: Report of the External Auditor

Madam Chairperson,

1. The Group of 77 and China recognizes and takes note of the Report of the External Auditor on the accounts of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization for the financial year starting from 1 January to 31 December 2020, as contained in Document IDB.49/3 PBC.37/3 and thank Mr. Alexei Kudrin and the Accounts Chamber of the Russian Federation for this report.

2. The Group welcomes the approach taken by the External Auditor to focus on three main areas of audit for UNIDO, namely, financial statements audit, performance audit and IT audit, with the last including IT general controls and cybersecurity assessment.

3. We appreciate that the External Auditor has taken into account the 73 recommendations of the previous External Auditor, which provides continuity to the audit process for UNIDO, and we note that the Organization managed to improve its rate of compliance from 29 percent in 2019 to 51 percent in 2020, while reducing ongoing recommendations from 59 percent to 30 percent and unimplemented recommendations from 13 percent to 12 percent, year on year. We encourage UNIDO to close these gaps further moving forward.

4. We take note of the 34 audit observations made for 2020 and, in this regard, also welcome the creation of a classification system for these observations, which categorize them as critical, high, medium, or low priority in terms of action to be undertaken. We view this system as a useful guide for UNIDO's planning and implementation methodology.

5. We also note that of these 34 audit observations, 12 are considered critical or high priority, representing 35 percent of the observations; 16, or 47 percent, are of medium priority; and 6, or 18 percent, are deemed low priority. While acknowledging that UNIDO had already resolved two of the high priority findings, we encourage the Organization to continue working on the partially resolved observations and to address the still-open issues in the report, regardless of their identified priority rankings.

6. We express concern over the findings of the External Auditor that there are weaknesses in the information security technical controls and processes of UNIDO that could make it vulnerable to cyber attacks, and that gaps are also present in the Organization's IT general controls that may affect the reliability and integrity of key applications used by UNIDO. We strongly urge the Organization to apply measures to strengthen its IT infrastructure and close the gaps in its systems to protect valuable information and data of all its stakeholders.

7. We are likewise concerned that the timely collection of Assessed Contributions, as well as other receivables, remains a challenge, and that this situation continues to have an adverse impact on the effective and efficient utilization of UNIDO's budget. Thus, it is crucial for Member States to fulfill their financial obligations in full and on time for the Organization to deliver its operations to its full capacity, according to the needs and priorities of Member States.

8. We continue to note that funding for After Service Health Insurance, or ASHI, remains an area of concern as one of the long-term liabilities for the Organization, and we look forward to continuing the discussion in the Informal Working Group of the PBC with the view to arriving at a viable solution to this issue.

9. The Group acknowledges that the difficulties brought about by the COVID-19 virus to both the Organization and its Member States since 2020 continue to follow us in 2021, and perhaps even into the near future. Towards this end, the Group strongly encourages the Organization to carry on with its initiatives that aim to streamline, rationalize, capacitate, and improve UNIDO's management and operation.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

# Agenda item 5: Financial situation of UNIDO, including unutilized balances of appropriations

Madam Chairperson,

1. The Group of 77 and China takes note of the report on the Financial Situation of UNIDO as contained in document IDB.49/4-PBC.37/4.

2. The Group expresses its concern over the financial situation of the Organization, which may have repercussions on the Secretariat's operations and major programme activities and ultimately on an effective and efficient execution of UNIDO's mandate.

3. The Group appreciates the improved collection rate of 2021 assessed contributions as compared to the 2020 and 2019. To this end, the Group commends those Member States, which paid their assessed contributions on time.

4. The Group continues to encourage Member States for timely payment of their contributions in full in order to maintain a healthy and stable financial outlook for the Organization even in face of the pandemic. A sufficient, assured and predictable funding is vital for UNIDO to effectively deliver its core mandate of SDGs 9 (Promotion of inclusive and sustainable industrial development).

5. The Group also appreciates slight improvement in the rate of collection of prior years' arrears. In this regard, the Group encourages the Members States in arrears to consider concluding multi-year payment plans to settle outstanding assessed contributions.

6. The Group notes with appreciation that the amount of  $\in 18,205$  in unspent balances of appropriations had been renounced to help finance the budgetary gap. The Group appreciates those Member States which renounced their share of unutilized balances to finance the budgetary gap and appeals to more Member States to follow suit.

7. The Group appreciates the efforts of the Director General to reach out to former Member States to settle their arrears including advances to the Working Capital Fund, and urges him to continue his efforts to improve the financial situation of the Organization.

8. The Group wishes to acknowledge the efforts of Donor Governments, the EU, the international financial institutions and other partners from the donor community for their immense contributions.

9. With these comments, the Group of 77 and China supports the adoption of the draft decision on agenda item 5 as recommended by the 37<sup>th</sup> session of the Programme and Budget Committee.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

#### Agenda item 6: Report of the informal working group on Programme and Budget Committee-related issues

Madam Chairperson,

1. The Group of 77 and China continues to appreciate the work undertaken by the Informal Working Group on Programme and Budget Committee and is particularly grateful for the dedication and leadership of the co-chairs from the Islamic Republic of Iran and Poland, whom we warmly welcome. We also take this opportunity to thank Switzerland for the exemplary work as previous co-chair of the IWG.

2. Indeed, the IWG serves as a good platform for both Secretariat and Member States to explore possible recommendations on important issues and the Group believes that the IWG is a valuable venue for dialogue on how to take UNIDO forward and support its work, and that it has the potential to be expanded to a platform within the Organization for future discussions on industrialization, including the fourth industrial revolution and circular economy.

3. The Group acknowledges the work and discussion in the IWG over the last several weeks, particularly on the UNIDO Programme and Budget for the biennium 2022-2023, as well as on the Working Capital Fund (WCF).

4. The Group notes that the prevailing situation brought about by COVID-19 has greatly affected the number of meetings of the IWG since 2020. Nonetheless, we look forward to future discussions in the IWG on matters of importance to Member States, including the After-Service Health Insurance, technical cooperation challenges, and improving the timely and full collection of assessed contributions, considering the circumstances that may hinder the ability of Member States to meet their financial obligations.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

#### Agenda item 7: Programme and budgets, 2022-2023

Madam Chairperson,

1. The Group takes note of the proposed Programme and Budgets 2022-2023 as presented in document PBC.37/5-IDB.47/5, which contains the proposals of the Director General for the biennium 2022-2023.

2. The Group takes note of the effort of UNIDO to comply with decision GC.18/Dec.14 of the 18th General Conference in 2019 to draft the 2022-2023 budget according to resultsbased budgeting principles and its response to calls from Member States to present a zerogrowth programme for the next biennium.

3. The Group recognizes the challenges working within limited resources, balancing savings and income with expenditures and obligations, and coping with shifting demands due to unforeseen circumstances, such as the prevailing COVID-19 pandemic, which has negatively impacted many Member States. We therefore strongly urge UNIDO to come up with a genuine zero-growth budget without sacrificing the quality of service delivered to stakeholders, particularly in the area of technical cooperation.

4. The Group encourages UNIDO to find a solution to ensure that the Organization is responsibly flexible in terms of moving resources between objects of expenditure to deal with future exigencies.

5. While the Group welcomes the continuation of UNIDO's initiatives towards improving the human resources management and gender mainstreaming, it also continues to convey its

request for the Director General to enhance the efforts to recruit and promote professionals from under-represented regions, especially in higher management positions.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

#### Agenda item 15: UNIDO's response to the COVID-19 pandemic

Madam Chairperson,

1. Having taken note of the report by Director General on UNIDO's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Group of 77 and China highly appreciates the great efforts of the Director General and the Secretariat of UNIDO to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic. We commend the substantial support of UNIDO to the affected developing countries by the pandemic.

2. The COVID-19 pandemic both devastates and disrupts economic activities, industries and global trade worldwide. It has pushed nearly 131 million additional people into poverty in 2020. The Group of 77 and China alert that the pandemic will cause a delay and jeopardise the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. With the different paces of economic recoveries in different countries, the North and the South will further widen their development gap in the near future. This pandemic raises many uncertainties to the world economy and brings instabilities to the noble idea, the applications and the implementation of sustainable development.

3. This pandemic and its socioeconomic consequences has underscored the necessity of strengthening the international cooperation and the multilateral institutions including UNIDO. In this situation, inclusive and sustainable industrial development will remain a key priority for the economic recovery from the pandemic. Towards UNIDO's "build back better" objective, the organization can play a key role within its mandate through its technical expertise in industrial development.

4. As the pandemic continues, challenges and risks in public health, economic developments and social stability remains strenuous to many developing countries. The Group of 77 and China, therefore, propose to the Secretariat to take the pandemic-responsive work as a key priority, and take the following actions:

- a) to continue collaborations with other International Organizations to provide necessary assistance in the production or procurement of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs), and access to ventilators to all developing countries in need;
- b) to collaborate with other International Organizations directly and effectively so as to provide to developing countries more opportunities to access the vaccines on equitable and fair conditions and assistance for the development and production of vaccines by pharmaceutical companies in developing countries;
- c) to expand its contacts with international donors at the bilateral, regional and global levels to mobilize more financial resources to support the developing countries in their effort to overcome the severe impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic;
- d) to enhance the technical cooperation programs in a way to facilitate the digital transformation in developing countries, and promote industrial development through digital technologies in the process of COVID-19 recovery.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

#### Agenda item 16: Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa (IDDA III)

Madam Chairperson,

1. The Group of 77 and China has taken note of the Report on the Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa (IDDA III) and it would like to thank the Director General of UNIDO and the Secretariat regarding their efforts in relation to this subject.

2. The Group noted also with appreciation the efforts exerted by UNIDO, during the period covered by the report, which aimed at expanding the Programme for Country Partnership (PCP) and Country Programs (CPs) of UNIDO in Africa, considering that their importance is increasingly significant during these challenging times, which are marked by the severe ramifications of the spread of the COVID-19 virus in Africa and elsewhere in the world.

3. The Group believes that UNIDO should continue to intensify and expand its cooperation efforts with more African countries to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on the inclusive and sustainable industrial development, and to work closely with the African Union and the regional and subregional organizations, as well as the International Financial Institutions, to achieve this goal in the short term and with an expedited pace.

Madam Chairperson,

4. It is the wish of the Group also to express its gratitude to the Secretariat of UNIDO for the expansion of its efforts in terms of the projects implemented in Africa, particularly the work aiming at providing support towards the development of national strategies for implementing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFT), which will identify opportunities for value addition and expansion of trade; and would create awareness of the current constraints and actions required to take full advantage of national, regional and global markets in the context of the AfCFTA. This is also beside other projects like those aiming at supporting the Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Capacities in Africa; provide more opportunities for the youth; and boosting the digitalization and technology transfer endeavors aiming at modernizing the industrial sectors of the African countries.

5. Finally, the Group continues to look forward to finalizing the structure of the IDDA III Secretariat, noting that it highly appreciates the steps that had been taken during the recent months to assign the staff of the Secretariat and wishes to see the quick initiation of the activities by the new Secretariat before the end of the summer.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.



#### G-77 and China Statement during the UNIDO IDB 49<sup>th</sup> session, 12-15 July 2021, delivered by H.E. Ambassador Alejandro Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

Madam President, [H.E. Madam Dominika Krois, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Poland]

1. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I would like to congratulate you on your election as the President of the IDB and other members for their election to the bureau of this session. The Group is confident that you will steer the IDB with great skills for its successful and fruitful conclusion.

2. The Group would also like to thank the former President of the 48<sup>th</sup> session, H.E. Mr. Darmansjah DJUMALA, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Indonesia, for his leadership during the previous session, and the members of his bureau for their outstanding work in continuing to move the process forward successfully.

3. The Group would like to express its deep appreciation for Mr. LI Yong, the Director General, for his outstanding work, dedication, commitment and contributions in achieving inclusive and sustainable industrial development in the developing countries. The Group would also like to thank the Secretariat for organizing this session.

Thank you, Madam President.

#### Agenda item 18: Recommendation of a candidate for the post of Director General

Madam President,

1. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I would like to express our most sincere congratulation on the election of Mr. Gerd Müller as the new Director General of UNIDO and to assure him of the Group's full cooperation during his mandate.

2. The Organization finds itself at a special juncture that requires optimism, pragmatism, and action. The still-ongoing global pandemic has seen the global development agenda evolve and the new and unique circumstances it has brought have greatly affected the priorities of both the traditional donors and recipients. This has also served to highlight that the services and expertise of UNIDO on its priority fields are still very much needed by all States of the Group of 77, while creating new challenges for a small but very specialized Organization.

3. The vast experience of Mr. Gerd Müller gives the Group hope and confidence for a better future of UNIDO, based on its relevance and contribution towards inclusive and sustainable industrial development. The Group is encouraged that under your guidance, UNIDO will be better positioned to not only meet all challenges, but to explore opportunities that will improve the delivery of cooperation, increase mobilization of resources, and excel in its management.

4. The Group would also like to take this opportunity to thank the other candidates for sharing their vision for the Organization, to acknowledge them for their commendable showing throughout the election process, and to encourage them to work hand-in-hand with the new Director General towards the common goal of promoting and improving UNIDO's core mandate.

5. Director General, you count on the support of the Group, including its openness for a permanent and continuous dialogue.

6. The Group of 77 and China wishes the newly elected Director General full success in this new endeavor.

Thank you, Madam President.

## Agenda item 3: Annual Report of the Director General for 2020

Madam President,

1. The Group takes note of the Annual Report of the Director General which provides an overview of UNIDO's activities, achievements, as well as improvements made and challenges faced by the Organization during the past year.

2. As the primary objective of UNIDO is the promotion and acceleration of industrial development in the developing countries as stipulated in its constitution, therefore, the Group considers that the developing countries are in best position to define their needs, priorities, challenges and obstacles, as well as to formulate solutions in the field of industrial development.

3. The Group commends the Director General and the Secretariat for continuation of industrial development programmes, despite the most difficult times of travel restrictions and lockdowns in 2020.

4. Despite multiple challenges of COVID-19, UNIDO's service delivery in terms of technical cooperation implementation in 2020 reached a figure of US\$177.7 million which is equivalent to 95 per cent of the average delivery in the preceding five-year period. This is really commendable in such an unprecedented year.

5. The Group agrees with the Director General that the challenges of 2020 renewed the global sense of solidarity and reminded us that international cooperation and the institutions of the United Nations system, such as UNIDO, are critical to addressing global crises.

6. The Group also agrees with the Director General that giant leap in digitalization that the world witnessed in 2020 offered new opportunities, but it also exposed new forms of inequalities, including the digital divide.

7. The Group believes that due to repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic on financial stability, industry, global value chains and jobs around the globe, the role of UNIDO has become even more important for inclusive and sustainable industrial development to build environmentally sustainable, carbon-neutral and resilient planet.

8. The Group emphasises that UNIDO should enhance its technical support to the developing countries for their Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development, which is the core mandate of the Organization.

9. The Group also calls for increased support from international donors to assist the developing countries in achieving their developmental objectives and requests the Director General to continue to strengthen partnerships as well as South-South, North-South and triangular cooperation.

Thank you, Madam President.

## Agenda Item 4: Report of the Programme and Budget Committee

Madam President,

1. The Group of 77 and China expresses its thanks to Her Excellency Ms. Faouzia Mebarki of Algeria in her capacity as Chair of the 37<sup>th</sup> session of the Programme and Budget Committee for this Report of the Programme and Budget Committee.

2. The Group wishes to recall the points it had raised at the 37th session of the PBC, and reiterates the following:

(a) On Agenda item 3: Annual Report of the Director General for 2020:

As the Group had delivered a separate statement on this item earlier, we would simply take this opportunity to express our deepest gratitude to outgoing Director General LI Yong for his outstanding service to the Organization since 2013. The Group unreservedly commends Mr. LI for his innovative work in UNIDO, particularly on the introduction of the Country Programme and Programme for Country Partnership initiatives, as well as the timely response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which have bolstered the relevance of the Organization. The Group sincerely wishes Mr. LI the very best in his future endeavours.

(b) On Agenda item 4: Report of the External Auditor:

The Group strongly urges UNIDO to address the findings of the External Auditor for 2020, regardless of the level of importance and priority assigned to them in the report, as well as to work on closing the remaining unresolved findings of the previous audit year, as we consider all these recommendations particularly pertinent in ensuring that the Organization will function as efficiently and effectively as possible.

(c) On Agenda item 5: Financial situation of UNIDO, including unutilized balances of appropriations:

The Group continues to encourage Member States for timely payment of their contributions in full in order to maintain a healthy and stable financial outlook for the Organization even in face of the pandemic. A sufficient, assured and predictable funding is vital for UNIDO to effectively deliver its core mandate of SDG 9.

(d) On Agenda item 6: Report of the informal working group on Programme and Budget Committee-related issues:

The Group also continues to appreciate the work of the Informal Working Group and we look forward to future discussions in the IWG on matters of importance to Member States, including the After-Service Health Insurance, technical cooperation challenges, and improving the timely and full collection of assessed contributions, considering the circumstances that may hinder the ability of Member States to meet their financial obligations.

(e) On Agenda item 7: Programme and budgets, 2022-2023:

The Group recognizes the challenges working within limited resources, balancing savings and income with expenditures and obligations, and coping with shifting demands due to unforeseen circumstances, and encourages UNIDO to find a solution to ensure that the Organization is responsibly flexible in terms of moving resources between objects of expenditure to deal with future exigencies.

(f) On Agenda item 15: UNIDO's response to the COVID-19 pandemic:

The Group remains very concerned with the negative impact that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic continues to have on many Member States, which cuts across all aspects of society and we believe UNIDO should also remain seized of this issue as we move forward. The Group has prepared a more comprehensive statement on this matter and this will be delivered when we take up the relevant agenda item. (g) On Agenda item 16: Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa (IDDA III):

As the Group has likewise prepared a full statement on this important matter, we simply wish to emphasize the need to continue to raise UNIDO's level of engagement with more African countries and the African Union, especially through the finalization of structure of the IDDA III Secretariat. We will elaborate on these matters during the appropriate agenda item.

3. With this statement, the Group of 77 and China takes notes of the Report of the Programme and Budget Committee.

Thank you, Madam President.

## Agenda item 7: UNIDO's response to the COVID-19 pandemic

Madam President,

1. Having taken note of the report by Director General on UNIDO's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Group of 77 and China highly appreciates the great efforts that the Director General and the Secretariat of UNIDO have been making to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic since February 2020. We commend the substantial support of UNIDO to the affected developing countries by the pandemic.

2. The COVID-19 pandemic both devastates and disrupts economic activities, industries and global trade worldwide. It has pushed nearly 131 million additional people into poverty in 2020. The Group alerts that the pandemic will cause a delay and jeopardize the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. With the different paces of economic recoveries in different countries, the North and the South will further widen their development gap in the near future. This pandemic raises many uncertainties to the world economy and brings instabilities to the noble idea, the applications and the implementation of sustainable development.

3. This pandemic and its socioeconomic consequences have underscored the necessity of strengthening the international cooperation and the multilateral institutions including UNIDO. In this situation, inclusive and sustainable industrial development will remain a key priority for the economic recovery from the pandemic. Towards UNIDO's "build back better" objective, the organization can play a key role within its mandate through its technical expertise in industrial development.

4. As the pandemic continues, challenges and risks in public health, economic developments and social stability remain strenuous to many developing countries. The Group, therefore, proposes to the Secretariat to take the pandemic-responsive work as a key priority, and take the following actions:

(a) to continue collaborations with other International Organizations to provide necessary assistance in the production or procurement of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs), and access to ventilators to all developing countries in need;

(b) to collaborate with other International Organizations directly and effectively so as to provide to developing countries more opportunities to access the vaccines on equitable and fair conditions and assistance for the development and production of vaccines by pharmaceutical companies in developing countries;

(c) to expand its contacts with international donors at the bilateral, regional and global levels to mobilize more financial resources to support the developing countries in their effort to overcome the severe impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic;

(d) to enhance the technical cooperation programs in a way to facilitate the digital transformation in developing countries, and promote industrial development through digital technologies in the process of COVID-19 recovery.

Thank you, Madam President.

## Agenda item 10: Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa (IDDA III)

Madam President,

1. The Group of 77 and China would like to express its appreciation for the Report on the Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa (IDDA III) and it would like also to reconfirm to the Director General of UNIDO and the Secretariat their full support for their efforts leading to the achievement of the inclusive and sustainable industrial development.

Madame President,

2. The Group believes that UNIDO, under the immense crisis the world is facing, should continue to intensify and expand its cooperation efforts with the African countries to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on the inclusive and sustainable industrial development, and to assist in providing the African countries that have the capabilities to produce the vaccines, to do so with sufficient quantities and low costs, in order to cover the local obligations and provide vaccines to their fellow African countries to fulfil their demand in the shortest time possible. This endeavor will enable the African countries to achieve the necessary scales of immunity and prevent the collapse of their economies.

3. Additionally, to achieve this goal, UNIDO needs to work closely with the countries that have developed the vaccines, as well as the African Union and the regional and subregional organizations, and with the International Financial Institutions, to overcome any hurdles against reaching this goal.

4. Furthermore, The Group believes that in parallel with the above efforts, it is necessary to keep working on expanding the Programme for Country Partnership (PCPs) and Country Programs (CPs) in Africa, as well as the development of the national African strategies for implementing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFT), which will expand the opportunities for achieving a wider scale of inclusive and sustainable industrial development, as well as higher levels of inter-regional trade and a deepened pan-African collaboration.

5. Finally, the Group would like to reiterate its appreciation for the Secretariat's efforts to finalize the structure of the IDDA III Secretariat, noting that it expects that the steps taken during the recent months to assign the staff of the Secretariat will be accomplished completely by the end of August 2021, so that it can achieve the targets assigned to it in the nearest time possible.

Thank you, Madam President.

## Agenda item 16: Personnel matters

Madam President,

1. The Group of 77 and China commends UNIDO for its continued efforts to improve personnel-related issues in the UNIDO and encourages it to observe the Organization's principles.

2. The Group reaffirms its firm position concerning the need to enhance the equitable geographical distribution in all positions of the Secretariat.

3. The Group takes note of all the initiatives taken by UNIDO, in line with the implementation of the UNIDO gender parity action plan (2018-2023), addressing sexual

harassment and protection against sexual exploitation and abuse within the Organization and Director General's zero-tolerance policy, in this regard.

4. The Group requests the Secretariat to brief Member States on the UNIDO Human Resources Strategy 2020-2022.

5. The Group welcomes 2020 UNIDO Merit Awards exercise based on the achievements and contributions of UNIDO personnel to its mandate as well as its strategic and management objectives and priorities, in particular those who actively engaged in the Organization's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

6. The Group requests the Director General to continue proactively addressing UNIDO staff welfare, including conditions of service applicable to the professionals and after-service health insurance (ASHI) issues.

Thank you, Madam President.



#### Statement of the Group of 77 and China during the 9<sup>th</sup> Least Developed Countries Ministerial Conference, 25-26 November 2021, delivered by H.E. Ambassador Alejandro Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

Honorable Chairperson, Honorable Ministers, Director General LI Yong, Excellencies, distinguished guests, Ladies and gentlemen,

1. The Group of 77 and China welcomes UNIDO's continuing initiative to focus attention on LDCs within the context of Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development, particularly through its hosting of this ninth Conference of the Least Developed Countries Ministerial Conference under the theme, "The Next Decade of Action: Accelerating ISID in LDCs."

2. The Group notes with appreciation the fact that this year's conference is the first one to be co-organized by the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States together with the United Nations Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, and that this partnership comes ahead of the entry into force of the Post-Cotonou Partnership Agreement, which will hopefully enhance existing areas of technical cooperation while opening up new avenues in this regard in support of LDCs.

3. As we stand on the cusp of the third decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Group recalls the Istanbul Programme of Action, or IPoA, for LDCs, which defined eight priority areas of action that have shaped UNIDO's operational strategy to support the graduation of LDCs from the period 2011-2020. We welcome the opportunity to look back and review the achievements made under the IPoA and to share learnings from the experiences, challenges, and best practices developed to address the needs of LDCs over the last decade during this ninth Conference.

4. Drawing from these lessons, the Group looks forward to the adoption of the Ministerial Declaration for LDCs aimed at pre-validating UNIDO's position paper containing its policy orientation, which will serve as a building block for the next UNIDO Operational Strategy and Implementation Plan for the LDCs 2022-2031.

5. The Group likewise looks forward to the upcoming 5<sup>th</sup> United Nations Conference on the LDCs scheduled to take place in Doha, Qatar from 23 to 27 January 2022, which will hopefully adopt the Doha Programme of Action 2022-2031, or DPoA, to mainstream its six priority areas in UNIDO's future work through the promotion of resource mobilization and cooperation strategies between donor countries and LDCs.

6. In the face of the ongoing COVID-19 global pandemic and its markedly devastating impact on nascent industries and emerging economies, particularly those of the LDCs, the Group emphasizes that the importance of UNIDO's work in providing technical support and assistance in their efforts at recovery cannot be overstated. We therefore call on all parties to not just continue supporting UNIDO's activities, but to enhance support for the Organization's initiatives towards accelerating the graduation process for LDCs and ensure that no one is truly left behind. 7. The Group also recognizes the key role of UNIDO in providing a platform to bring together the different development actors through the organization of various fora and meetings that promote exchange of policy best practices to surmount the many challenges faced by LDCs.

8. In conclusion, we encourage UNIDO to strengthen its efforts at partnership building through North-South, South-South, and triangular cooperation, and to broaden its resource mobilization to fulfill its mandate of ISID in the LDCs.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.



#### Statement of the Group of 77 and China during the 19<sup>th</sup> Session of the UNIDO General Conference, 29 November – 3 December 2021, delivered by H.E. Ambassador Alejandro Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

Mr. President, [H.E. Ambassador Mohamed Mezghani, Permanent Representative of Tunisia]

1. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I congratulate you on your election as the President of the 19<sup>th</sup> session of the General Conference. I also congratulate all the bureau members on their election. The Group assures you of its full support and expresses its confidence on the successful outcome of this session under your able guidance and leadership.

2. The Group likewise conveys its appreciation to the Secretariat for the organization of this General Conference, including making available the relevant documents in a timely manner.

3. The Group also takes this opportunity to thank the outgoing President of the 18<sup>th</sup> General Conference H.E. Eng. Suhail Al Mazrouei, Minister of Energy and Industry of the United Arab Emirates, as well as his bureau, for the achievements during their tenure.

Mr. President,

4. As the world continues to grapple with the COVID-19 global pandemic, which continues to take a heavy toll, particularly on the governments, peoples, and industries of developing countries, the Group reiterates the vital responsibility of UNIDO as the central coordinator of international industrial cooperation towards inclusive and sustainable industrial development in the United Nations system. This role has never been more crucial than at this time when many Member States will be relying on the expertise of the Organization to assist in the revival and strengthening of their industrial infrastructures in order to bounce back from the setback of the past two years.

5. The Group, therefore, reaffirms its support of UNIDO in its mandate of facilitating tangible contributions towards economic recovery, capacity building, job creation, poverty reduction, and the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly SDG 9.

Mr. President,

6. The Group wishes to take advantage of the unique opportunity this particular session of the General Conference presents, when a new Director General is set to take the helm of the Organization and steer it towards a new horizon, for us to convey the expectations and needs of our Member States moving forward, which the Group believes is starting off on the right foot.

7. Along these lines, the Group recalls the Abu Dhabi Declaration adopted by our Heads of State and Government, Ministers, and Representatives at the 18<sup>th</sup> General Conference in Abu Dhabi, UAE in 2019, which recognized that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, as an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, as well as combating climate change and environmental degradation and its impacts are among the greatest global challenges of our times, and that effective international cooperation, including South-South and triangular cooperation, through the exchange of knowledge, best practices and capacity building and the transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms, are needed to address these challenges.

#### Mr. President,

8. The Group echoes the call raised in the Abu Dhabi Declaration for collective action, multistakeholder partnerships, and strengthened international cooperation to harness the full potential of new technologies associated with the Fourth Industrial Revolution, while being mindful that such technologies have both transformative and disruptive capabilities that must be balanced in order to leverage their potential for advancing inclusive economic growth, reduction of inequalities, promotion of resilience, and safeguarding the environment while mitigating their negative effects, such as widening the levels of technology gap between countries, job losses, and threats to industrial safety and security.

9. The Group acknowledges the importance of UNIDO within the context of the United Nations development system, and while we recognize the significance of the synergies and interlinkages between the economic, social, and environmental dimensions towards the common response to the 2030 Agenda, the Group nevertheless wishes to stress that the Organization must first and foremost focus on delivering its mandate of ISID for its many developing Member States and to avoid duplication of functions within the UNDS.

10. The Group reiterates that the developing world is facing challenges in attaining adequate and predictable financing for Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development (ISID). Additionally, transfer of climate related clean and innovative technologies from the developed to the developing countries is indispensable for Inclusive and Sustainable Industrial Development (ISID) and achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Therefore, the Group requests the Director General to assist the Member States for arrangement of adequate and predictable financing and transfer of clean and innovative technologies to the developing countries for their inclusive and sustainable industrial development. In this regard, the Group requests the Director General to increase the number of Investment and Technology Promotion Offices (ITPO) in the developing countries and expand their services for promotion of investment and transfer of technology.

11. The Group urges UNIDO to further enhance its engagement with Least Developed Countries and developing Member States by becoming a bridge for them to access critical technology platforms, key players in the field of industrialization in the private sector and thought leaders in the area of manufacturing research-and-development, while continuing to concentrate on concrete and tangible field activities.

12. The Group encourages UNIDO to continue advancing inclusive and sustainable industrial development through the Country Programme (CP) and Programme for Country Partnership (PCP), which contributes to promoting the reactivation of the productive sector in an inclusive way, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

13. The Group likewise encourages UNIDO to continue developing the workplan for the Strategic Framework for Middle-Income Countries to help them avoid falling into or staying mired in the Middle-Income trap by fostering their competitiveness and sustainability in the global market.

14. The Group is encouraged by the efforts taken by UNIDO and all stakeholders in the implementation of the Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa which has firmly anchored Africa on a path towards inclusive and sustainable industrial development. We call upon UNIDO to develop strategies that align the deliverables of the IDDA III with those of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) that accelerate industrial transformation of Africa's economies to meet changing market dynamics and build resilience through a smart manufacturing ecosystem. The Group is hopeful that the recruitment process of the IDDA III Secretariat will be rapidly finalised to operationalise the IDDA III Joint Roadmap.

Mr. President,

15. The Group is cognizant of the financial strains that face UNIDO, which could hamper the fulfilment of its mandate of inclusive and sustainable industrial development. Towards this end, we strongly encourage UNIDO to remain on the path of result-based budgeting and management, maximize the use of the UN Resident Coordinator System, continue to come up with cost-savings and efficiencies, maintain fiscal responsibility, and find ways to enhance its financial resources to avoid any negative impact on technical cooperation, the operation of its field network, and the work of its staff in the Headquarters and field offices.

16. The Group expresses appreciation to governments and institutions who have given voluntary contributions that have facilitated further technical cooperation through UNIDO, while also urging all Member States to pay their assessed contributions in full and on time whenever possible.

17. To conclude, the Group of 77 and China is confident that this Conference will provide us with the opportunity for constructive discussions that address the main challenges of the Organization and its Member States towards achieving inclusive and sustainable industrial development.

Thank you, Mr. President.



#### Statement of the Group of 77 and China during the 19<sup>th</sup> Session of the UNIDO General Conference, 29 November – 3 December 2021, delivered by H.E. Ambassador Alejandro Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

#### Welcome message for Mr. Gerd Müller, incoming Director General of UNIDO

Mr. President,

1. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I wish to convey our heartfelt congratulations and warmest welcome to Dr. Gerd Müller on his appointment as the new Director General of UNIDO by the 19<sup>th</sup> General Conference.

2. The Group recognizes that Dr. Müller comes in at a time when the whole world is still reeling from the devastating effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on our respective populations, economies, and industries, and he will definitely have his hands full to address the many urgent and diverse needs of UNIDO's Member States.

3. Nonetheless, the Group is confident and optimistic that the experience, skill, and dedication that Dr. Müller will bring to the job will allow UNIDO to face this and other present and future challenges more than adequately, and that the Organization will continue to deliver its mandate of inclusive and sustainable development to its stakeholders, particularly to middle-income and least-developed countries.

4. The Group invites the Director General to engage with the countries of the G-77 and China to better recognize and understand the differentiated and most pressing needs of developing countries.

5. The Group wishes to reassure Dr. Müller of our strong support during his tenure as Director General and we commit to keep working closely with UNIDO in addressing the priorities of our Member States.

Thank you, Mr. President.



#### Statement of the Group of 77 and China during the 19<sup>th</sup> Session of the UNIDO General Conference, 29 November – 3 December 2021, delivered by H.E. Ambassador Alejandro Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

#### Tribute message for Mr. LI Yong, outgoing Director General of UNIDO

Mr. President,

1. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I wish to express our deepest gratitude to Mr. LI Yong for ably and effectively leading UNIDO as Director General over the last eight years. His exemplary guidance, particularly during the onset of the continuing COVID-19 global pandemic in early 2020, has proven to be a steadying influence for the Organization and its stakeholders.

2. The Group also wishes to commend Mr. LI for the responsive vision he has endowed the Organization, that despite the many challenges faced by UNIDO, it has remained relevant in advancing inclusive and sustainable industrial development. This vision is best exemplified by the Country Programme (CP) and Programme for Country Partnership (PCP) which were implemented during Mr. LI's tenure. The positive impact of the PCP on developing countries in particular is a truly notable achievement.

3. Other initiatives that shine a light on UNIDO's relevance on climate change, gender parity, green and circular economy, <u>as well as the introduction of results based budgeting as a way to streamline the organization</u>, among many others, are well-implemented and will undoubtedly be positive contributions to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and a worthy legacy of his stint as Director General.

4. As we bid Mr. LI Yong farewell and once again thank him for his outstanding work in UNIDO, the Group of 77 and China wishes him nothing but the best in all his future endeavours.

Thank you, Mr. President.

# INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY (IAEA)



# G-77 and China statement during the Informal Meeting of the Programme and Budget Committee, Friday, 5 February 2021 delivered by H.E. Alejando Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

Madam Chair,

1. The Group of 77 and China wishes to thank the Secretariat for issuing the Agency's Draft Programme and Budget 2022–2023 as contained in GOV/2021/1 and for the presentation provided today. The Group welcomes the timely release of the document, which will allow for the early start of discussions and hopefully, the timely completion of negotiations.

2. The Group would like to thank Director General Grossi for the new and updated format of the Draft Programme and Budget and appreciates that in making this budget proposal, due note was taken of the current and challenging global economic environment, which has had a disproportionate impact on developing countries. The Group is pleased to note that the document has also taken steps to address some of the concerns raised by the Group in previous budget cycles.

Madam Chair,

3. The Group has taken note of the Draft Programme and Budget and is studying it carefully. The Group will engage meaningfully and constructively in the discussions, both in the informal PBC format, as well as in the Working Group format and would like to extend its full support to the Ambassador of New Zealand, H.E. Ms Nicole Roberton, and the Ambassador of Pakistan, H.E. Mr Aftab Ahmad Khokher for their co-chairmanship of the Working Group on the Regular Budget and TCF targets for 2022-2023.

4. The Group notes that the Draft Programme and Budget for 2022 - 2023 represents a zero real growth rate with a 1.7% price adjustment. The Group maintains its principled position with regard to the Regular Budget, which calls for a balanced distribution of the budget so as to reflect the equal importance of the three pillars of the Agency, namely (a) the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear technology, including Technical Cooperation, (b) Safety and (c) Safeguards. The Group is of the view that there should be a balance between promotional and non-promotional activities.

5. In this regard and in relation to the Technical Cooperation Fund (TCF), the Group stresses that the TCF targets should take into account the changes made in the level of the operational regular budget, including price adjustments. In addition, the TCF targets should also take into account the increase in the number of Member States that draw on the TCF and other relevant factors.

6. The Group notes the Indicative Planning Figures (IPF) of  $\notin$ 89 558 000 for 2022 and  $\notin$ 89 558 000 for 2023 for the TCF as contained in the Draft Programme and Budget. The Group remains convinced that in view of the aforementioned factors, the TCF targets for 2022 - 2023 would require an upward adjustment.

7. The Group further notes the increase in the unfunded component of the proposed budget. The Group supports the Director General's commitment to enlarge the donor base, including by forging new partnerships with non-traditional donors. Further, the Group wishes to reiterate the need to ensure that fund raising for extra budgetary projects should not adversely impact the Technical Cooperation Programme, especially the financing of footnote/a projects. In this regard, the goal of achieving sufficient, assured and predictable resources for the Technical Cooperation Program remains a priority for the G77. Furthermore, the Group appreciates the allocation of  $\in$ 3 million from the Major Capital Investment Fund (MCIF) for ReNuAL2. The Group acknowledges the vital role that the Nuclear Applications Laboratories at Seibersdorf continue to play in providing support to Member States, particularly during the current pandemic.

Madam Chair,

8. The Group has taken note of the proposed cost saving and efficiency measures, including those of a cross-cutting nature, which will be implemented throughout the biennium. The Group has also noted the decision taken to limit staff costs to 75% of the operational regular budget. The Group believes that such measures should not negatively impact the promotional activities of the Agency. In addition, the Group requests further information on the implementation and possible impact of these measures.

9. With regard to possible options for the After-Service Health Insurance (ASHI) liability funding mechanism, the Group looks forward to receiving information from the Secretariat, as stated in the document. The Group trusts that the forthcoming information will be in line with the relevant processes and discussions in the United Nations General Assembly and good practices from United Nations system organizations and other international organizations.

10. The Group notes that the budget proposal is made at a time of not only a challenging economic environment but also one of rising demands on the Agency's services, in particular the TC programme, as well as efforts to achieve equitable geographical distribution and gender balance within the Secretariat.

11. Finally, the Group would like to reiterate its principled position that the Agency's Programme and Budget should represent a balance between promotional and non-promotional activities and further emphasizes the need for sufficient, assured and predictable resources for the TC programme in order to achieve the objectives of the Agency, as laid out in Article II of the Statute.

Thank you Madam Chair.



#### Statement of the Group of 77 and China during the First Meeting of the Working Group on the Regular Budget and TCF Targets for 2022 – 2023, delivered by H. E. Ambassador Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica, on 22 February 2021

Co-Chairs,

1. The Group of 77 and China wishes to thank the Co-Chairs for convening this meeting and congratulates them on the assumption of their duties as Chairpersons of this Working Group. We have full confidence in your wisdom and capability in guiding our work and look forward to engaging in a constructive manner and a spirit of openness in our deliberations in the coming months on the Regular Budget and the Technical Cooperation Fund Targets for 2022-2023.

2. The Group has listened carefully to the information provided today regarding the breakdown of regular budget expenditures including different components of staff costs, travel costs and other items of expenditure. The Group is still analysing the proposals in detail and will provide its comments in due course. The Group looks forward to further information and breakdown regarding human resources and the application of the staff cap across the Major Programmes.

3. The Group reiterates its long-held view that the Agency's budget should reflect the balance between the three pillars of the Agency's work, namely the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear technology including technical cooperation, safety and safeguards. While taking note of the Secretariat's proposal to ensure prioritization, efficiencies and synergies, including through what has been termed by the Secretariat on page 7 paragraph 34 as "flexibility for sharing resources and enhance coordination across major Programmes" in the proposed budget, and while awaiting further clarification on different approaches regarding efficiencies and effectiveness, it is of the firm opinion that such efforts should not negatively affect the desired balance between promotional and non-promotional activities. In addition, the Group notes that the funds available in the TCF are exclusively for the approved Technical Cooperation Programme.

4. We take note of the proposed cost saving and efficiency measures that reach the figure of 10.7 million. In this regard, the Group reiterates that those savings should not impact the objectives and mission of the Organization, and should not affect the support of the Agency to developing countries, neither the participation of all Member States in the same conditions in the activities, workshops or any other.

5. The Group further underscores that the promotional activities of the Agency, delivered through the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), are its main statutory function and would like to underline that the largely unfunded components of TC projects show that the TCF has not been Sufficient Assured and Predictable (SAP). Therefore, the Group is of the view that there remains a great need for sufficient, assured and predictable resources to fully implement approved TC projects including footnote a/ projects. For instance, in 2020, footnote a/ projects amounted to almost a third of the TCF targets. The Group underlines that the respective IPFs should be taken as the starting point for the biennium 2022-2023 and adjusted upwards accordingly. This will be consistent with the recommendations of the Working Group on Financing the Agency's Activities (WGFAA) as stated in GOV/2014/49.

6. The Group believes that the discussions in this Working Group should be guided by the previous relevant decisions of the Board establishing the synchronization of the TCP

cycle with the regular Programme and budget cycle. This was meant to provide a framework to consider increases to the resources for the TC Programme, including the TCF target by taking into account the changes in the level of the regular operational budget, the price adjustment in the corresponding years, and all other relevant factors including the increasing number of TCP recipients, as well as the level of maturity of their respective TC Programmes.

Co-chairs,

7. The Group notes that under the 2022-2023 TCP, 143 Member States, including 35 LDCs, will have a national TCP, representing an increase of 2 Member States compared to the 2020-2021 biennium. The Group believes that more effort should be made to provide sufficient resources, including staff, for the management of the TCP, if its priority areas are to be achieved, such as ensuring adequate support to the growing number of Member States participating in the TCP and to the extended demand of Member States for the peaceful uses of nuclear technology for their sustainable development, , as well as ensuring the capability to adequately respond to Member States' requests for support through the TCP.

8. The Group also stresses the need for the Secretariat to place appropriate emphasis, upon request and in accordance to national priorities, on activities directly related to the implementation of the SDGs during the preparation of the Programme and budget proposal for 2022-2023, to help developing countries, including the Least Developed Countries to achieve their developmental Objectives.

9. The Group takes note of recent efforts of the Programme of action for cancer therapy (PACT) to assist Member States to build and expand their cancer care capacity; as well as the current focus on supporting Member States in building their capacity in relation to the early detection and control of zoonotic diseases. The Group reiterates that PACT, ZODIAC, nuclear power applications and other areas such as Food and Agriculture, Health and Nutrition, Industrial Applications/Radiation Technology and Water and Environment should continue to receive the same appropriate focus in accordance with the needs and priorities of Member States.

10. The Group highlights the need for continued support for the application of the Sterile Insect Technique (SIT) to mosquito control, in line with General Conference Resolutions on the development of the SIT for the control or eradication of malaria-, dengue-, zika and other disease-transmitting mosquitoes. The Group requests the Secretariat to continue to mobilize resources for the SIT in order to assure its adequate implementation. The Group further welcomes the outreach to promote the contribution of nuclear sciences and applications to socio-economic development.

11. The Group would appreciate receiving more information on the distribution of resources for the Major Capital Investment Plan (MCIP) for 2022-2031.

12. The Group supports the ReNuAL 2 project as a key priority that contributes to the statutory function of the Agency, in seeking to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world. Accordingly, the Group strongly believes that the ReNuAL 2 should receive an appropriate portion of the Capital Regular Budget for 2022and 2023.

13. As regards Nuclear Power, Fuel Cycle and Nuclear Science, the Group welcomes the Agency's intention to continue to support interested Member States to assess their future energy demands and to evaluate and understand the potential for nuclear power to be part of their energy mix and strategies, including in the context of achieving the SDGs and to continue its support for Member States considering embarking on, or extending, Nuclear Power Programmes.

14. With regards to Programme 3.5, while the Group reiterates that it is financed by extrabudgetary resources, the Group requests to be kept abreast of any regularization of staff and other costs in the division of Nuclear Security.

15. While the Group appreciates the importance of verification as a statutory function of the Agency, it notes that resources allocated to Nuclear Verification activities continue to represent by far the largest share of the Regular Budget.

16. The Group notes the cross-cutting savings and efficiencies identified in the infographics in the draft Budget and would like to underline that cost cutting should not negatively impact the Technical Cooperation Programme or the valuable participation of experts from developing countries in the Agency's activities. The Group would also like to request the Secretariat to provide additional detailed information on these savings and efficiencies, as agreed to during the negotiations for the 2020-2021 biennium, in 2019.

17. The Group further requests additional information on any savings related to travel and the implementation of activities, which were postponed due to COVID-19.

18. The Group notes with concern the liability related to the financing of health insurance of former officials of the Agency, also known as After Service Health Insurance (ASHI). The Group looks forward to the Secretariat providing additional information on how other UN agencies are dealing with this challenge and looks forward to further discussions.

19. The Group expresses its strong expectation that this Working Group will allow for a meaningful dialogue with substantive outcomes for Board action that will facilitate the Regular Budget and Technical Cooperation Fund discussion for 2022-2023.

Thank you, Co-chairs.



# G-77 and China statement during the IAEA Board of Governors, 1-5 March 2021 delivered by H. E. Ambassador Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

#### Agenda Item 3: The IAEA and the COVID-19 pandemic

Madam Chair,

1. At the outset, the Group of 77 and China wishes to express its solidarity with all Member States of the Agency who continue to be affected by the global COVID-19 pandemic. The Group appreciates the leadership provided by the Director General and the efforts of the Secretariat in ensuring that the activities of the Agency continue to be carried out as much as possible, in spite of the current difficult situation pertinent to the pandemic.

2. Madam Chair, the Group also appreciates the initiative of the Director General in providing timeous assistance to Member States in their efforts to tackle the effects of the pandemic, including through the delivery of nuclear derived techniques and related equipment. The Group further appreciates the extrabudgetary and in-kind support provided through the Interregional Technical Cooperation Project INT0098, which has raised over  $\in$ 26 million. These contributions have allowed for the timely provision and delivery of necessary diagnostic and protection equipment, training and informational webinars as well as one-on-one laboratory support and technical guidance to 127 countries.

3. The Group is also pleased to note that the Agency has undertaken a study on the impact of the support provided and welcomes the preliminary survey result that Member State laboratories have gained long-term value from the initial support provided. We encourage the Agency to continue supporting Member States in their efforts to combat COVID-19.

Madam Chair,

4. The Group welcomes the Agency's collaboration with relevant international organizations and encourages the Agency to continue working closely with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) so to provide efficient and coordinated responses to requests for assistance (from Member States), which are in alignment with the COVID-19 United Nations (UN) Management Team response. The Group reiterates the need to maintain strong international solidarity and multilateral cooperation in the fight against COVID-19 and other zoonotic diseases and assures the Agency of its support in this regard.

5. With regard to the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), the Group appreciates all the efforts taken by the Agency to ensure the successful implementation of the TCP under the current and challenging circumstances. The maintenance and delivery of regular technical cooperation activities throughout 2020 in close consultation with Member States has resulted in the high implementation rate of 80.4% for the TCP. In this regard, the Group requests the Agency to find alternative ways to implement the postponed or re-prioritized TC activities during this TC cycle.

6. With these remarks, the Group of 77 and China takes note of the progress update report on the IAEA's Support to Member State Efforts in Addressing the COVID-19 Pandemic as contained in document GOV/INF/2021/4.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

#### Agenda item 4: Nuclear and Radiation Safety: Nuclear Safety Review 2021

Madam Chair,

1. The Group expresses its gratitude to the Secretariat for preparing the Nuclear Safety Review 2021, as contained in document GOV/2021/3. The Group thanks the Director General for his introductory statement, as well as Deputy Director General Juan Carlos Lentijo for his remarks and for the technical briefing offered to Member States on 9 February 2021.

2. The Group expresses its appreciation the changes in the structure of this year's report, which compiled the activities developed by the Agency in 2020 in Annex A, allowing the visualization of all the IAEA activities in a structured and objective manner.

3. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China under this agenda item.

#### Madam Chair,

4. The Group is pleased to note the Agency's continued assistance to Member States resulted in some progress in the area of nuclear safety in 2020, despite the difficult conditions brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

5. While the Group reaffirms that the responsibility for nuclear safety within a State rests entirely with that Member State we reiterate our belief that the Agency has a central role in coordinating international efforts to strengthen Nuclear Safety globally, by providing assistance through expertise and advice to Member States, upon request and through promoting Nuclear Safety standards globally.

6. The Group recalls the adoption, in February 2015, of the "Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety", which aims to strengthen nuclear safety worldwide through agreed principles to guide the Contracting Parties, as appropriate, in the implementation of the objective of the Convention on Nuclear Safety (CNS) with the focus on preventing accidents with radiological consequences and by mitigating such consequences should they occur. We call on the Agency to continue to assist Member States, upon request, in the implementation of the principles of the Vienna Declaration.

7. The Group recognizes the Agency's important role in developing Safety Standards and welcomes the issuance of one General Safety Guide, nine Specific Safety Guides, the endorsement of nine draft Safety Guides and the approval of five Safety Guides document preparation profiles for Safety guides in 2020.

8. The Group reiterates the need for the Agency to uphold the principles of equitable geographical representation, workforce diversity and gender mainstreaming in all its activities. In this regard, the Group emphasizes the importance of the Agency continuing to support the participation of experts from developing countries, with a special focus on gender mainstreaming

especially in the Safety Standards Committees, the Nuclear Security Guidance Committee, as well as the Interface Group.

9. The Group takes note that the report covers trends and priorities for all the nuclear safety related topics. In this regard, the Group would like the Secretariat to clarify their methodology in identifying the trends and determining the priorities in future Nuclear Safety Reviews. The Group welcomes the Agency's flexibility in implementing its statutory mandate and priorities during the current pandemic and welcomes the priority given to ensuring the continued implementation of safety standards globally, despite the limitations brought on by the pandemic. In this regard, the Group notes the report issued on the results of the survey on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on regulatory activities for the safety of radiation sources. We have also taken note of the discussion by INSAG and CSS on the impact of the pandemic on nuclear safety and the GAP analysis made in this regard, and we look forward to receiving the outcome of the deeper analysis of nuclear safety standards currently underway.

10. The Group expresses its appreciation for the ongoing work on the development of guidance on the management of radionuclides in food and drinking water in non-emergency situations, requests the Secretariat to continue work to develop a technical document to set out radionuclide activity concentration values for non-food commodities, in consultation with Member States and relevant international organizations. We also welcome the growing awareness created through Agency webinars.

11. The Group recognizes the importance of and appreciates the assistance provided by the Agency to its Member States, upon request, in strengthening their national nuclear safety architecture, for both power and non-power application including regulatory infrastructure for nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety, and in the field of emergency preparedness and response.

12. Recognizing that around twenty-nine Member States, many of which are members of the Group, are at different stages of initiating new nuclear power programmes, we encourage the Agency to increase support to such embarking Member States and recognise the importance of strengthening and expanding nuclear safety standards in this regard.

13. The Group wishes to emphasize that capacity-building, including the development of human resources, expert training and the up-scaling of knowledge and capabilities are key to the establishment, safety and sustainability of any nuclear program. The Group has also noted that Member States continue to request support regarding their knowledge management programmes, as well as in the development and strengthening of national capacity-building programmes. Therefore, it is essential that the IAEA continue to provide such assistance, upon request, on regional and national levels, to developing countries in building their expertise in the relevant technical areas.

14. The Group highlights the importance it attaches to the development of a safety culture. In this regard, we note that an increasing number of Member States are requesting assistance in further developing their leadership and management programmes for safety and continuous improvement, including safety culture assessments and that the Agency will assist Member States in their efforts to develop, foster and sustain safety culture.

15. In view of the increasing interest of Member States in small and medium sized or modular reactors (SMRs), the Group notes that over 70 SMR designs are in various stages of development and requests the Agency to further interrogate the deployment of SMRs in the

efforts to mitigate climate change, as highlighted during the Scientific Forum held on the margins of the 64<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Conference. The Group urges the Agency to continue to work on and expand the studies in that area, to make publications and more information on this issue available and to engage with Member States, which are building or intend to use SMRs in their many forms and contexts.

16. In view of the increasing use of radiation and nuclear material and technologies, in Member States, the Group notes that there is a growing need for assistance in strengthening regulatory oversight, education and training programmes, guidance documents, peer reviews and advisory services from the Agency for the entire lifecycle management. The Group encourages the Agency to continue to provide the requisite assistance, upon request, to Member States in these important areas. We also welcome the fact that the Agency has been able to adapt its support during the pandemic by moving many of these events online and we encourage the Agency to continue with this practice as and where feasible.

17. The Group appreciates that in 2020 the Agency conducted 15 peer review and advisory services across all safety areas including safety of nuclear installations, research reactors, fuel cycle facilities as well as regulatory effectiveness, infrastructure development programmes, and ageing management, among others. The Group also encourages the Agency to enhance the participation of experts from the developing countries in conducting such peer reviews and advisory services. The Group also welcomes the regular organization by the Agency of national, regional, and international workshops, webinars and training courses for Member States on all relevant issues.

18. On the Radiation Protection of Patients, Workers and the Public, the Group welcomes the outcomes of the International Conference on Radiation Safety: Improving Radiation Protection in Practise that was held in November 2020 and further notes that the Agency will assist Member States in their efforts to apply the principles of justification and optimization in circumstances where actions are being considered to reduce radiation exposure, such as in medical exposure and protection of patients. The Group urges the Agency to continue to assist Member States in providing guidance, as well as in strengthening their processes for communicating of radiation risk to the public in planned and existing exposure situations and during an emergency.

#### Madam Chair,

19. The Group notes that Member States continue to show interest in the Global Nuclear Safety and Security Network and IAEA CONNECT platforms, which allow for the exchange of information and various materials and publications among Member States. The Group reiterates that knowledge networks should always remain a core component of the nuclear safety capacity-building initiatives with the support of the Agency. The Group appreciates the Agency's continued support to regional networks, which include the Arab Network of Nuclear Regulators, the Asian Nuclear Safety Network, the Forum of Nuclear Regulatory Bodies in Africa, and the Ibero-American Forum of Radiological and Nuclear Regulatory Agencies, as well as to thematic networks such as the Small Modular Reactor Regulator's Forum.

20. The Group is of the view that strengthening global nuclear safety depends on the full cooperation among and participation of Member States and relevant stakeholders. Vendors of nuclear technologies also have a responsibility to provide to users access to all information, know-how and tools necessary for safe operation.

21. The Group expresses its support for the Agency's work in continuing to build upon the 2011 Action Plan and Member States' experience in its implementation, as well as the IAEA Report on the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant accident, and the principles in the Vienna Declaration and take them into consideration for defining its programme of work in close consultations with Member States. The Group requests the Secretariat to report periodically to the Board of Governors, in accordance with section 1 of Resolution GC. (62)/RES/6.

22. The Group looks forward to the planned International Conference on a Decade of Progress after Fukushima-Daiichi: Building on the Lessons Learned to Further Strengthen Nuclear Safety scheduled to take place in November this year. We appreciate that the conference will look at the lessons learned from Fukushima, provide an opportunity to share experiences among Member States and evaluate the progress made in the implementation of the Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, with the aim of strengthening our collective efforts in strengthening nuclear safety globally.

23. The Group welcomes the updated websites of the Agency's Unified System for Information Exchange in Incidents and Emergencies (USIE) and the International Radiation Monitoring Information System (IRMIS) with enhanced user-friendly features, tools and functionalities, as well as their increased usage. The Group notes that the number of published Emergency Preparedness and Response Information Management System (EPRIMS) self-assessment modules increased in 2020 and that the regular analysis of the new information uploaded on EPRIMS allowed the Agency to review the progress made in technical cooperation projects. Despite the meaningful work done by the Agency in the field of emergency preparedness and response, the Group notes that more work needs to be done. It, therefore, encourages continued cooperation and coordination between the Secretariat and interested Member States, in this regard.

24. The Group welcomes the organization of a technical meeting on Managing Regulatory Experience for the Oversight of a First NPP and looks forward to an initial report on this issue.

25. The Group attaches high importance to transport safety, and appreciates the involvement of the Secretariat in international efforts to discuss issues related to the transport of radioactive material. The Group supports continued efforts by the Agency to address problems related to denials of and delays in the shipment of radioactive material, particularly shipment by air and urges Member States to facilitate the transport of radioactive material, and to identify, if they have not done so, a national focal point on denials on shipment of radioactive materials to achieve a satisfactory and timely resolution of this issue.

26. The Group welcomes the growth in the number of Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety and to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management (Joint Convention). In this regard, the Group encourages the Agency to prepare for the hosting in Vienna of the postponed 7<sup>th</sup> Review Meeting of the Joint Convention as well as the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Review Meeting of the Convention on Nuclear Safety, with the physical presence and active participation of Contracting Parties.

#### Madam Chair,

27. With these remarks, the Group takes note of the Nuclear Safety Review 2021, as contained in document GOV/2021/3.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

# Agenda item 5: Strengthening the Agency's activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications: Nuclear Technology Review 2021

Madam Chair,

1. The Group of 77 and China would like to express its appreciation to the Secretariat for preparing the Nuclear Technology Review 2021, contained in document GOV/2021/2 and appreciates changes effected on the structure and content of this report in line with previous requests. The Group also wishes to thank DDG Dr. Najat Mokhtar and DDG Dr. Mikhail Chudakov for introducing this agenda item and for the technical briefing provided to delegations on 9 February 2021.

2. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China under this agenda item. The full statement will be available online.

3. The Group attaches great importance to the significant contributions that nuclear technologies can make towards the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals and their role in food security and safety; nutrition and human health, including disease prevention and control; animal health and production; environmental protection; water resources management; as well as in other fields related to the use of radioisotopes and radiation. These, among others, are areas where nuclear, nuclear-derived and isotopic techniques are beneficial in supporting sustainable socio- economic development in many countries

4. The Group reaffirms that the Agency, in accordance with Article II of the Statute, has a leading role to play in the promotion of these techniques among interested Member States, and encourages it to continue to provide its valuable support, including further promoting active roles of developing countries in contributing towards the development of equipment and techniques that can meet the needs of many Member States, while taking into account equitable geographical distribution and gender balance.

5. The work done by the Agency in nuclear power and nuclear applications highlights the need to increase the transfer of nuclear technology and the sharing of nuclear knowledge, expertise and lessons learned to developing countries, including embarking and newcomer countries, to enhance their capabilities and thus contribute to maximize the benefit of peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

6. In terms of Nuclear Power Technology, the group takes note with appreciation of the evolving global trends in this field as highlighted in details in the report, including inter alia the development of Small and Medium Modular Reactors, advanced large Water Cooled Reactors, New Generations of Nuclear Power Plants, as well as various research reactors and the other aspects the nuclear fuel cycle. These developments are yet another important testament to the need to increase the transfer of nuclear technology and the sharing of nuclear knowledge, expertise and lessons learned to developing countries, including embarking and newcomer countries, to enhance their capabilities and thus contribute to maximize the benefit of peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The Group urges the Agency to continue to provide training and education, and to support national capacity-building efforts and to further support coordinated research activities, in this regard.

7. The Group acknowledges the positive contribution of nuclear power in climate change mitigation, energy security and its non-climatic environmental and socio-economic benefits. These are some of the important reasons why many countries, particularly developing countries, intend to introduce nuclear power in the coming decades, or to expand existing programmes The Group thus urges the Agency to continue to assist interested Member States to analyse energy options and to support their capabilities to introduce nuclear power, while maintaining its leading role in the promotion of the transfer and development of technology and knowledge related to peaceful nuclear applications, including nuclear power and the nuclear fuel cycle.

8. The Group commends the Agency for establishing the COVID-19 Nuclear Power Plant Operating Experience Network (COVID – 19 NPP OPEX) to facilitate the sharing of information on measures taken

to mitigate the pandemic and its impact on Nuclear Power Plants. The Group also notes that due to the limitations posed by the pandemic, one Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review (INIR) mission was hosted and four were posted to 2021. INIR and related missions provide a useful service in extending cooperation to Member States and the Group encourages the Agency to utilize experts from developing countries in these missions.

9. The Group reiterates its expression of interest in the work of various technical working groups under the auspices of the Agency in the development of nuclear technology and in the dissemination of knowledge to Member States, inter alia, through Coordinated Research Projects, Collaborating Centres and regional cooperative agreements and requests the Secretariat to continue its support.

10. With regard to the IAEA LEU Bank, the Group reiterates that any arrangement for assurance of supply shall be in full accordance with the IAEA Statute and take into account the respective legal obligations of Member States, as well as the principle of non-discrimination, whereby the inalienable right of Member States to nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, including national nuclear fuel cycles, is duly respected. In this regard, the Group notes the signing of a transport and equipment contract that will provide a second route of transportation of LEU to and from the Bank.

Madam Chair,

11. Accelerators and research reactors continue to play an important role in building strong basic capabilities in the nuclear field, and in supporting related education, training and research activities in Member States. The Group appreciates the support provided by the Secretariat in its coordination of projects supporting research, hands-on training and experimental work in the field of accelerators, and encourages it to continue to provide such support, especially by making use of built-in capacity in many developing countries.

12. The Group highlights the importance of research reactors to interested Member States and their utilization for research and various applications, including education, training, research and isotope production, and calls for enhanced international cooperation to maximize their efficient use while noting that the efforts in this direction continue to grow. The Group urges the Agency to assist interested Member States that are building or planning to build new research reactors as they have shown that they remain indispensable for providing radioisotopes for medicine and industry, services for cultural heritage and environmental studies all whilst making a strategic contribution to education and training.

13. The Group welcomes the continued international collaboration, supported by the IAEA, to promote and enhance the utilization of research reactors for nuclear capacity building, including education and training, among other areas. The Group encourages the Agency to continue its work of facilitation of regional networks and coalitions to help foster international cooperation and enable research reactors to expand their stakeholder and user communities.

#### Madam Chair,

14. The Group attaches great value to the role of the Agency's Nuclear Applications laboratories at Seibersdorf, which have assisted Member States in enhancing their access to the peaceful uses of nuclear technologies since 1962. The ability of the laboratories to provide timely assistance to Member States in the early-detection and diagnosis of COVID-19 is a testament to the invaluable work that these laboratories continue to do. The Group appreciates the support already given by Member States to the ReNuAL and ReNuAL Plus projects, and as the project enters its final phase, ReNuAL 2, the Group calls on all Member States, in a position to do so, to contribute.

#### Madam Chair,

15. The Group values the Agency's assistance to Member States, especially to developing countries, in the field of medical applications, including through the Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy

(PACT). The Group is appreciative of the Agency's contribution to improving the overall cancer management worldwide, including, the diagnosis, treatment and control of cancer through, inter alia, the development and application of nuclear techniques. The Group notes that these nuclear techniques play an important role in fighting the global cancer epidemic. The Group also takes note of advances in the application of machine learning based approaches in cancer staging and cancer treatment through radiotherapy, as well as the use of monoclonal antibodies in cancer diagnosis. The Group appreciates the convening of the International Conference on Advances in Radiation Oncology held from 16 to 19 February 2021.

16. The Group notes with interest, developments in the use of radiolabelling approaches to trace and measure chemical residues in food; microdosimetry and nanodosimetry; the use of radiopharmaceuticals in the detection, diagnosis and management of infectious diseases; and the use of radiolabelling techniques to determine carbon sequestration for climate studies and to study the impact of microplastic pollution on marine life.

17. The Group also welcomes the work of the Joint IAEA-FAO Programme in strengthening the capacity of Member States in the detection, characterization, surveillance and control of transboundary animal and zoonotic diseases such as African Swine Fever, Foot-and-Mouth Disease, Ebola, Zika, Avian Influenza, MERS, SARS and COVID-19, through the use of radioisotopes and radiation technology.

#### Madam Chair,

18. The Group also welcomes the work undertaken by the Agency in environmental protection, specifically with regards to blue carbon. The Group welcomes the on-going research on nuclear and nuclear-derived techniques in advancing the knowledge on Global Blue Carbon. The ocean is a vital resource and its role in regulating the global climate system is important. In this regard, the Group notes the IAEA's participation in the innovative project coordinated by Oceans 2050 and looks forward to receiving an outcomes report in future NTR reports. The Group encourages the IAEA to continue its work in this regard.

19. The Group recalls the successful International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology, co-chaired by Costa Rica and Japan, in November 2018 and its Ministerial Declaration. The Group looks forward to the commencement of consultations on the follow up International Ministerial Conference in 2023.

20. With these remarks, the Group of 77 and China takes note of the Nuclear Technology Review 2021, as contained in document GOV/2021/2.

Thank you, Madam Chair.



# Statement of the Group of 77 and China during the Second Meeting of the Working Group on the Regular Budget and TCF Targets for 2022-2023 on 9 March 2021, delivered by

#### H. E. Ambassador Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

Co-Chairs,

1. The Group of 77 and China wishes to thank the Co-Chairs for convening this meeting and the Secretariat for providing some of the information that was requested at the previous Working Group meeting.

2. The Group stands by its earlier statements as delivered at the informal PBC and the First meeting of the Working Group on the Regular Budget and TCF Targets and while being mindful of the Secretariat's presentation, the Group has the following remarks to make.

3. The Group notes that while the approved price adjustment for 2020 was 1.5%, the actual price adjustment was 2.2%, reflecting the weighted average of actual increases in Professional Staff costs (2.6%), General Staff costs (1.5%) and inflation in Austria (1.4%). Therefore, in 2020, the approved price adjustment was short 0.7% of the price adjustment applied in practice. In this regard, the Group would like further information on how this shortfall has been absorbed within existing resources and what it could represent should the situation be repeated in 2021.

4. The Group would also appreciate further clarification of the actual impact on the budget by the decision adopted at last week's Board of Governors meeting regarding Personnel Matters, as contained in documents GOV/2021/9 and GOV/INF/2021/14, especially bearing in mind the proposed 75% cap on staff costs.

Thank you, Co-chairs.



# Statement of the Group of 77 and China during the Third Meeting of the Working Group on the Regular Budget and TCF Targets for 2022-2023, delivered by H. E. Ambassador Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

# Vienna, 22 March 2021

Co-Chairs,

1. The Group of 77 and China wishes to thank the Co-Chairs for convening this meeting and the Secretariat for the provision of further information in response to requests made at the previous Working Group meetings.

2. While engaging in discussions in this Working Group, the positions of the G-77 and China will continue to reflect adherence to the Group's principles as well as considerations, which have been clearly enunciated in its previous statements. However, at this stage, the Group would like to focus on the following areas.

Co-Chairs,

3. While the COVID-19 pandemic has created financial difficulties globally, it has also had a detrimental effect on developing countries' efforts and capacities for the pursuit of the SDGs. Recognizing that the TCP plays an important role in reinforcing these efforts, ensuring sufficient, assured and predictable resources for the TCP has become more urgent. In this regard, the Group also recalls its previous statement at the TACC in November 2020, where it stressed that the resources of the TC programme shall not be negatively impacted by the current situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and that the goal of achieving sufficient, assured and predictable resources shall be always our priority during the preparation of the Program and Budget 2022-23.

4. The Group further underscores that the promotional activities of the Agency, delivered through the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), are its main statutory function and would like to underline that the largely unfunded components of TC projects show that the TCF has not been Sufficient Assured and Predictable (SAP). In this regard, the Group is of the view that a decision on the TCF Targets for 2022-2023 and IPFs for 2024-2025 should take into account the following elements:

- The IPFS should be taken as the starting point for the respective biennia;
- The increasing number of Member States with national TCPs, including 35 LDCs;
- The increasing number of Member States which will require full support under the 2022-2023 TCP;
- The evolution in the level of the Regular Budget in line with the Board's decision GOV/2014/49 and GC.58/Res.12;
- The need for the Agency to place the appropriate emphasis on its activities directly related to the attainment of the SDGs in Member States;

- The large unfunded components of TC projects in Member States, also termed as footnote <u>a</u>/ projects;
- The price adjustment, and
- Other relevant factors.

5. These will be consistent with the recommendations of the Working Group on Financing the Agency's Activities (WGFAA) as stated in GOV/2014/49.

6. In response to statements made during the informal PBC and the first Working Group Meeting concerning the resources of the TCF, the Group would like to stress that resources for the TCP should be Sufficient, Assured and Predictable to meet the needs of Member States. Moreover, the discussions in this Working Group should be guided by the previous relevant decisions of the Board establishing the synchronization of the TCP cycle with the regular Programme and budget cycle. This was meant to provide a framework to consider increases to the resources for the TC Programme, including the TCF target by taking into account the changes in the level of the regular operational budget, the price adjustment in the corresponding years, and all other aforementioned relevant factors.

7. In light of the above and with a view to more constructive discussions over the biannual budget, the Group requests the Secretariat to provide detailed information on the increasing number of Member States with national TCPs; the increasing number of Member States, which will require full support; and the prioritization of the TCPs by the Agency for the attainment of the SDGs in Member States, in the overall resources allocated for the TCPs in the last budget cycle.

8. Therefore, the Group strongly underlines that the respective IPFs should be taken as the starting point and adjusted upwards accordingly.

Co-Chairs,

9. The Group reiterates that the Secretariat's efforts aimed at cross-cutting savings, efficiencies and synergies, should not negatively affect the TCP and neither should it impair the desired balance between promotional and non-promotional activities. The Group thus requests the Secretariat to provide additional detailed information on these savings and efficiencies, including on how the increase of 1.9% in the base salary scale for P-staff members will be absorbed, in the form of an annex to the draft Programme and Budget, as was done for the current budget cycle.

10. While the Group notes the cost-cutting measures in relation to travel across all the Major Programmes, we request detailed information per Programme for further consideration. In addition, the Group would also like to request information on travel related cost-saving measures and its impacts on the implementation of the TCP.

11. In conclusion, the Group of 77 and China is of the view that technical meetings on virtual platforms cannot be a substitute for face-to-face meetings, which allow for a far more enriching interaction and productive outcomes, especially with regard to training and capacity-building programmes. We therefore, strongly urge that, as the pandemic conditions permit, efforts should be made to revert to the norm of organizing physical events.

Thank you, Co-chairs.



# Statement of the Group of 77 and China during the Fourth Meeting of the Working Group on the Regular Budget and TCF Targets for 2022-2023, delivered by H. E. Ambassador Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

Co-Chairs,

1. The Group of 77 and China wishes to thank the Co-Chairs for convening this meeting.

2. The Group has already expressed its views on different aspects of the proposed Regular Budget and TCF targets for the next biennium, and the Group wishes to thank the Secretariat for the information that has been provided thus far, including at today's meeting.

3. The Group continues to stand by the views and positions that it has expressed at the previous meetings of this Working Group, and reiterates its primary positions as follows:

- Firstly, there should be a balance between promotional and non-promotional activities.

- Secondly, a balanced distribution of the budget so as to reflect the equal importance of the three pillars of the Agency.

- Thirdly, the need for sufficient, assured and predictable resources for the Technical Cooperation Programme, which has seen an increase in number of Member States participating in the following biennium.

- Lastly, the IPFs, as agreed to in 2019, require substantial upwards adjustment considering the current factors, which influence the TCF targets.

4. The Group looks forward to the Co-Chair's WP and hopes that the WP would better address various concerns and priorities that the Group has articulated.

Thank you, Co-chairs.



# Statement of the Group of 77 and China during the Fifth Meeting of the Working Group on the Regular Budget and TCF Targets for 2022-2023, delivered by H. E. Ambassador Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

Vienna, 20 April 2021

Co-Chairs,

1. The Group wishes to thank the Co-Chairs for providing Member States with the informal Working Paper on the Regular Budget and TCF targets 2022-2023, as contained in 2021/Note 30. The Group further thanks the Co-Chairs for their continued efforts to build consensus on the Programme and Budget.

2. The Group notes the proposed zero real growth in the Regular Budget over 2021 as contained in GOV/2021/1. The Group would like to reiterate its principled view that the distribution of resources within the Regular Budget should reflect a balance between promotional and non-promotional activities.

3. The Group also notes that some of the views expressed by the Group have found reflection in the informal Working Paper as proposed by the Co-Chairs, including:

- The synchronization of the TC Programme cycle with the regular programme and budget cycle in accordance with previous Board decisions, so to allow for the appropriate increase of resources for the TC Programme, including the TCF Targets;
- The importance of ensuring that the quality and output of the Agency's performance is maintained with the implementation of cost-savings and efficiencies; and
- That future Draft Programme and Budget proposals should continue to include expanded information, including in the form of an annex, on cost-savings, efficiencies and productivity increases.

Co-Chairs,

4. In view of the continuing growth in demand from Member States for the TC Programme, the increase in the membership of the Agency, including of Member States drawing from the TCF, as confirmed by the presentation delivered by the DDG of Technical Cooperation, and other relevant factors as cited in previous statements - sustained efforts are required to render the resources for the TC Programme Sufficient, Assured and Predictable.

5. The Group acknowledges that the TCF targets for 2022 and 2023 are yet to be finalised as denoted in paragraph 20, similar to the IPFs for 2024 and 2025. When discussing the TCF targets, Member States should not only take into account the price adjustment of the regular budget, but also the number of unfunded projects and other relevant factors outlined above and in previous statements. With this in mind, the Group maintains its view that the IPFs from 2019 should be the starting point for negotiations of the TCF targets for 2022-2023 and should therefore increase accordingly with the needs of Member States participating in the TCP.

Thank you, Co-Chairs.



# Statement of the Group of 77 and China during the Informal Consultations regarding the IAEA Draft Nuclear Security Plan 2022-2025 delivered by H. E. Ambassador Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

Vienna, 23 April 2021

1. The Group of 77 and China wishes to congratulate DDG Evrard and Director Buglova on their appointment and thanks them and the Secretariat for preparing a revised draft of the Nuclear Security Plan 2022-2025, as attached to 2021/Note 27 and for organizing these informal consultations. The Group would like to offer the following comments.

2. The Group recalls the General Conference Resolution on Nuclear Security adopted in 2020 (GC(64)/RES/10), which called upon the Agency to develop the Nuclear Security Plan 2022-2025 in a close consultation process between the Secretariat and Member States. In this regard, the Group underscores the need for as many consultations as required until consensus is reached.

3. From the outset, the Group emphasizes that the responsibility for nuclear security within a State rests entirely with that State. The IAEA provides support to Member States in strengthening their internal Nuclear Security capacity, upon the request of States.

4. Moreover, the Group underscores the central role of the Agency in strengthening the nuclear security framework globally and in coordinating international activities in the field of nuclear security. The Group emphasizes that the scope of its activities in this field must be determined by Member States based on their needs and priorities and must be guided by the General Conference Resolutions on Nuclear Security.

Madam,

5. The Group reiterates its principled position that nuclear security considerations should not hamper international cooperation in the field of peaceful nuclear activities, the production, transfer and use of nuclear and other radioactive material, the exchange of nuclear material for peaceful purposes and the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and should not undermine the established priorities of the Agency's technical cooperation programme.

6. This important principle has been stated in the resolutions on nuclear security adopted by the General Conference and reflected in three ICONS Ministerial Declarations adopted in 2013, 2016 and 2020.

7. Bearing in mind that the responsibility for nuclear security within a state rests entirely with that state, the Group recalls that the Nuclear Security Plan aims to be a framework to provide assistance to Member States, upon request, to build their respective national capacities in nuclear security. In this regard, the Group highlights the need to reflect this principle consistently throughout the draft Plan.

8. The Group notes that there are some elements in the draft of the Plan, which may not be consistent with GC Resolutions on Nuclear Security. Therefore, the Group requests the Secretariat to cross- reference the draft Plan with the GC Resolutions, and also to consider the ICONS Ministerial Declarations as appropriate. This will be consistent with the process followed for the 2018-2021 Nuclear Security Plan.

9. The Group also notes that the Agency's first comprehensive plan of action was approved in March 2002 by the Board of Governors, together with the creation of a voluntary funding mechanism, the Nuclear Security Fund, in order to implement the Plan. The Group highlights the need to ensure an appropriate balance between activities in the promotional and non-promotional areas. In this regard, the Group urges the Secretariat, going forward, to avoid the introduction of any elements in the Plan that do not enjoy consensus in this regard.

10. The Group stresses that the language in all sections of the Nuclear Security Plan must reflect the consensus achieved in the course of discussions on the GC Resolutions and the Ministerial Declarations on Nuclear Security.

11. In conclusion, the Group is still studying the document and will provide additional comments in future consultations.

12. With these comments, the Group of 77 and China looks forward to further consultations on the draft Nuclear Security Plan with a view to its finalization in due course.

Thank you, Madam.



Statement of the Group of 77 and China during the Sixth Meeting of the Working Group on the Regular Budget and TCF Targets for 2022-2023, delivered by H.E. Ambassador Alejandro Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

Vienna, 28 April 2021

Co-Chairs,

1. The Group wishes to thank you Ambassador Roberton and Ambassador Khokher, for your efforts to build consensus on the Programme and Budget and the determination of TCF Targets for 2022-2023.

2. The Group once again notes that some of the views expressed and concerns raised during the deliberations of this Working Group have found reflection in the working paper. Moreover, the Group notes that future Agency Draft Programme and Budget proposals will include budgetary information by items of expenditure, as well as the level of Full Time Equivalents by staff category and an annex on cost-savings, efficiencies and productivity increases.

Co-Chairs,

3. The Group observes that the balance in the allocation of resources to promotional and non-promotional activities remains unachieved to the desired extent and should remain the goal in the years to come.

4. The Group takes note that the Co-Chairs have proposed the TCF targets for 2022 and 2023 as  $\in$ 91 075 000 and  $\in$  92 600 000 respectively. The Group is willing, reluctantly and in the spirit of compromise, to accept these figures. We want to reiterate that these figures do not constitute a precedent as they have been agreed during the present extraordinary times and the current difficult global financial situation.

5. The Group will continue its sustained efforts to ensure that resources for the TCP are sufficient, assured and predictable in order to enable the Agency to effectively deliver on its main statutory function.

Thank you, Co-Chairs.



# Statement of the Group of 77 and China during the Programme and Budget Committee, 4-6 May 2021, delivered by H. E. Ambassador Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

# Agenda Item 2: Agency's Financial Statements for 2020, including the Report of the External Auditor

Madam Chair,

1. The Group of 77 and China thanks the Acting-Deputy Director General for his introductory statement and the Secretariat for the presentations delivered during the informal Workshop on Financial and Administrative matters on 15 April 2021.

2. With regard to the Financial Statements of the Agency for 2020, including the External Auditor's report. The Group would like to make the following comments:

3. The Group would like to express its appreciation to the Audit Board of the Republic of Indonesia for the professionalism in conducting the audit on the Agency's activities for the fifth consecutive year and whose independent auditing work will assist the efforts of the Agency towards efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery.

4. The Group is pleased to note that "an unqualified opinion" has once again been placed on the Agency's financial statements. The External Auditor has made several observations and recommendations for the improvement of the Agency's financial practices. The Group supports the implementation of relevant recommendations aimed at improving management and enhancing efficiency.

5. On the Financial aspect, the Group notes that the Regular Budget Fund experienced an increase in revenue from assessed contributions, voluntary contributions to the Extrabudgetary Programme Fund and the Technical Cooperation Extrabudgetary Fund, as well as to the Low Enriched Uranium Bank.

6. The Group would like to highlight its appreciation of the extrabudgetary contributions made by Member States and the private sector towards to the Agency's COVID-19 related assistance.

7. While appreciating the extrabudgetary contributions that were made by those in a position to do so, the Group would like to caution against the over reliance on extrabudgetary funds, as this could negatively impact the effectiveness and independence, as well as long term sustainability of the Agency's activities.

8. The Group therefore calls on all Member States to pay their contributions to the Regular Budget and the Technical Cooperation Fund, on time and in full.

9. The Group also takes this opportunity to underscore the fact that TC activities continue to lack sufficient, assured and predictable resources and requests the Secretariat to address this issue.

10. The Group notes that the net assets of the TCF and the TC Extrabudgetary Fund increased by  $\notin$  33.3 million and  $\notin$  10.8 million, respectively. While this reflects the overall

health of the funds, the Group maintains its view that it should not be interpreted to mean that TCF resources exceed what can be implemented. The Group would like to clarify that this is also due to the nature of TCF activities that are implemented over a longer time horizon than one financial year. The Group requests the Secretariat to continue to explain this fact in all future financial statements of the Agency.

11. The Group notes with concern the overall increase in the Agency's liabilities and in particular the  $\in$ 39.9 million increase concerning After Service Health Insurance. The Group encourages the Secretariat to continue addressing the significant growing liabilities, and to consult regularly with and report to Member States about the relevant measures to be taken in that regard. The Group reiterates its request that budget information regarding staff costs, as well as regarding all the relevant expenditure items, should be presented in such a way as to permit meaningful comparison of the budget proposals on a year-on-year basis.

Finally, Madam Chair,

12. The Group encourages the Secretariat to implement the External Auditor's recommendations in a transparent manner and where feasible, to consult with Member States.

13. With these comments, the Group of 77 and China takes note of the Agency's Financial Statements for 2020, as contained in document GOV/2021/5, and documents GOV/INF/2021/16 and GOV/INF/2021/18.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

## Agenda Item 3: The 2020 Internal Audit, Management Services and Investigations Report and the 2020 Programme Evaluation Report

Madam Chair,

1. The Group of 77 and China thanks the Secretariat and the Director of Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) for the 2020 Internal Audit, Management Services and Investigations Report and the 2020 Programme Evaluation Report.

2. The Group expresses its appreciation for the work conducted by the OIOS to ensure management efficiency and programme effectiveness and to enhance accountability. The Group recognizes that the organizational independence of the OIOS is fundamental to fulfill the responsibilities of the internal audit activities and the OIOS must confirm it to the Board of Governors at least annually.

3. The Group is of the view that the audit and evaluation activities carried out by the OIOS should cover all Major Programmes equally.

4. On the summary of results of the 2020 Audit Plan, contained in section C of the Report, the Group recognizes that the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a revised plan, with new audit activities being added to the plan.

5. Of interest to the Group is the audit of the Agency's response to the pandemic through technical cooperation (TC) project INT0098. The Group welcomes the OIOS rating of the level of governance, risk management and internal controls as effective and looks forward to the report on the evaluation of the project's results.

6. With regard to the audit of the Renovation of the Nuclear Applications Laboratories (ReNuAL) Projects, which identified a number of issues, resulting in a rating of "some improvement needed". The Group encourages the Secretariat to implement the recommendations issued expeditiously, as the Group values the contribution that the modernized Nuclear Applications Laboratories make to the development goals of Member States.

7. On the Country-Level Evaluations and Audits (CLEAs), the Group recalls that CLEAs were carried out in Benin, Burkina Faso and Uganda, and reported on during the Technical Assistance and Cooperation Committee (TACC) in November 2020. The Group notes the findings, recommendations and cross-cutting conclusions that aim to facilitate long-term capacity-building and sustainability planning.

Madam Chair,

8. The Group has taken note with satisfaction that all recommendations were accepted by the Secretariat. While, the Group is cognizant of the recommendations already implemented, the Group also requests the Secretariat to implement the earlier outstanding recommendations.

9. Turning to the 2020 Programme Evaluation Report, the Group would like to make the following comments:

9.1. Regarding the evaluation of the Agency's work related to Research Reactors, the Group notes that the evaluation found that efficient, effective and relevant assistance was provided to Member States that operated research reactors. Research reactors are important in the research and development of nuclear techniques in support of our socioeconomic and development goals. The Group requests the Secretariat to consider to strategically re-align its support to Member States, in order to continue delivering high-quality support.

9.2. Regarding the evaluation of the Agency's contribution to the use of Nuclear Science and Technology to enhance water security, the Group attaches importance to the work of the Agency in using isotope hydrology, for water resources assessment and management. The Agency is well placed to coordinate and link its work with relevant international organizations and the Group encourages the Agency to forge partnerships, as recommended and where appropriate. The Group considers that the support of Technical Cooperation projects following the Water Availability Enhancement (IWAVE) methodology are better positioned to address key water challenges in countries and result in more solid results with greater impact and sustainability.

9.3. Regarding the evaluation of the International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles (INPRO), the Group acknowledges the valuable support INPRO has provided to its members on developing their long-term planning and collaboration on innovations in reactors, fuel cycles and institutional approaches in order to promote the sustainable development of nuclear energy. INPRO further brings together nuclear technology holders, users and suppliers and the Group notes that it continues to inspire collaborative projects in a relevant and efficient manner. The Group acknowledges the recommendations issued and urges the Secretariat to implement them while maintaining the high-quality of assistance provided to Member States in the attainment of their development goals related to affordable and clean

energy, including through and as recommended, national capacity building activities through INPRO Schools and outreach activities.

10. With these comments, the Group of 77 and China takes note of the 2020 Internal Audit Activity Report, as contained in document GOV/2021/12, and the 2020 Programme Evaluation Report, contained in document GOV/2021/13.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

## Agenda item 5: The Agency's Draft Programme and Budget 2022-2023

Madam Chair,

1. The Group would like to thank the Secretariat and the Co-Chairs of the Working Group on the Regular Budget and TCF Targets for issuing the proposal of the Agency's Draft Programme and Budget 2022-2023, and the Working Paper as contained in GOV/2021/25.

2. The Group would like to seize this opportunity to reiterate its principled position with regard to the Regular Budget, which calls for a balanced distribution of the budget so as to reflect the equal importance of the three pillars of the Agency, namely (a) the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear technology, including technical cooperation, (b) safety and (c) safeguards.

3. The Group would like to reiterate its call for the need to balance the Agency's promotional and non-promotional activities.

4. To achieve this balance and in order to respond to the growing needs of developing countries, the increased number of Member States making use of nuclear applications and embarking on nuclear energy, the Group continues to hold the view that sufficient funding from the Regular Budget must be secured for Major Programmes 1, 2 and 6.

5. The Group would also like to stress that narratives contained in budget documents should be aligned with the language of General Conference resolutions and decisions of the PMOs.

6. The Group also notes that the Agency's Draft Programme and Budget, reflects the elements agreed upon in the Proposal to the Board of Governors by the Co-Chairs of the Working Group on the Regular Budget and the Technical Cooperation Fund Targets for 2022-2023.

7. The Group recalls that the Secretariat should include in the Agency's Draft Programme and Budget 2024–2025, budgetary information by items of expenditure, as well as the level of Full Time Equivalents by staff category.

8. The Group has also taken note that for future budget cycles, an annex will be provided outlining the cost savings and efficiencies, including those of a cross-cutting nature, as well as a list of cost saving measures to absorb the impact of the high Agency's staff costs. The Group requests that such measures should not negatively impact the delivery of the TCP.

9. In light of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of the implementation of the Programme and Budget, including the TCP, in 2022 and 2023, the Group requests that any changes required in implementation be addressed in close coordination with affected Member States and informed accordingly.

10. Regarding the After-Service Health Insurance (ASHI) and its impact on the financial health of the Regular Budget in the future, the Group has expressed its concern with respect to the liability related to the financing of health insurance of officials of the Agency. Given the long-term implications of any decision on this issue for the future budgets of the Agency

and the assessed contribution of Member States, the Group requests the Secretariat to continue to provide information on the discussions and recommendations by the United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group on ASHI, before deciding on the way forward. The Group further encourages the Agency to consider cost containment measures that would help mitigate ASHI liabilities.

11. Regarding the Technical Cooperation Fund (TCF) targets, the Group reiterates its consistent view that in determining the TCF targets and Indicative Planning Figures the following factors should be taken into account:

- The increasing number of Member States which will require full support under the Technical Cooperation Programme;
- The evolution in the level of the Regular Budget in line with the Board's decision GOV/2014/49 and GC.58/Res.12;
- The need for the Agency to place the appropriate emphasis on its activities directly related to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in Member States, based on their national needs and priorities;
- The large unfunded components of Technical Cooperation projects in Member States, also termed as footnote <u>a</u>/ projects;
- The price adjustments; and
- Other relevant factors.

12. In this regard, the Group takes note that the target, for voluntary contributions to the TCF amounts to  $\notin$ 91 075 000 for 2022 and  $\notin$  92 600 000 for 2023, the Group reluctantly and in the spirit of compromise will accept the figures proposed by the Co-Chairs, despite the fact that these figures do not fully satisfy the Group's criteria as stated above. We want to reiterate that these figures do not constitute a precedent as they have been agreed during the present extraordinary times and the current difficult global financial situation.

13. Going forward, sustained efforts are required to render the resources for the TCP sufficient, assured and predictable, in order to enable the Agency to effectively deliver on its main statutory function.

14. With these comments, the Group of 77 and China joins consensus on the draft proposal by the Co-Chairs, as contained in GOV/2021/25, represents a delicate compromise, which should not be considered a precedent, and takes note of the Agency's Programme and Budget 2022-2023, as contained in document GOV/2021/1.

Thank you, Madam Chair.



# G-77 and China Statement during the IAEA June Board of Governors, 7-11 June 2021, delivered by H.E. Ambassador Alejandro Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

#### Agenda item 2: The Annual Report for 2020

Madam Chair,

1. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I would like to thank the Director General for his introductory statement and the Secretariat for preparing the draft of the Annual Report for 2020 as contained in document GOV/2021/11 and for the informal briefing provided on 20 May 2021.

#### **Nuclear Technology**

2. The Group notes that nuclear power remains an important option not only for countries with existing nuclear programs, but also for developing countries with growing energy needs and that five new nuclear reactors were connected to the grid in 2020. The Group encourages the Agency to continue providing the necessary support to Member States interested in launching and expanding their nuclear power programmes.

3. The Group takes note of the IAEA Scientific Forum, Nuclear Power and the Clean Energy Transition held in September 2020.

4. The Group attaches high importance to the International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles (INPRO), as a relevant forum gathering technology holders and users with the aim of achieving innovations in nuclear reactors and fuel cycles, while reiterating its call for continued support for INPRO from the Regular Budget. The Group notes the launch of the updated Energy Scenarios Simulation Tool (ESST), as well as the upgrading of INPRO's Nuclear Energy System Assessment Economics Support Tool (NEST). The Group also values the support provided to Member States upon their request through the Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review (INIR) missions and National Nuclear Energy System Assessments (NESAs).

Madam Chair,

5. The Group welcomes the work of the Agency in the application of nuclear technologies and, specifically, the assistance provided to Member States in this regard. Nuclear technologies and applications make an important contribution to sustainable development and, therefore, the Group welcomes the Agency's continued assistance to Member States, based on their national priorities, despite the challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

6. The Group reiterates that there is a fundamental need to enhance the transfer of nuclear technology to and sharing of nuclear knowledge with developing countries and welcomes that Nuclear knowledge development remained an area of focus in 2020. As preservation of nuclear knowledge continues to be a high priority for many Member States, the Group requests the Secretariat to continue providing assistance to interested Member States in capacity building and nuclear knowledge management, including through the Knowledge Management Assist Visits and Regional Nuclear Education Networks in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

7. The Group attaches great value to Small and Medium Sized or Modular Reactors (SMRs), their potential benefit as a source of power generation, especially for Member States with limited electrical grids, their successful use in energy planning and seawater desalination, taking into account their demonstrated overall cost-effectiveness. The Group requests the Secretariat to continue its support to Member States in this regard.

Madam Chair,

8. The Group welcomes the various activities of the Agency in the field of nuclear data, research reactors and accelerator technologies. The Group reiterates its full support for the activities of the Agency in nuclear science, and urges the Secretariat to enhance its assistance on developing nuclear science application capabilities of Member States as a tool for their technological and economic development.

9. The Group highlights the important role of the various applications of nuclear and isotopic techniques in the field of food and agriculture, human health, management of water resources, environment, industry as well as radioisotope and radiation technology. The Group requests the Secretariat to enhance its efforts to strengthen national capabilities of Member States, particularly developing countries, in these areas.

10. The Group attaches great value to the role of the Agency's Nuclear Applications Laboratories at Seibersdorf, which have assisted Member States in enhancing their access to the peaceful uses of nuclear technologies for six decades. The Group appreciates the extrabudgetary contributions made by Member States for the construction and renovation of the laboratories, through the Renovation of the Nuclear Application Laboratories (ReNuAL and ReNuAL+) Projects to date. As we enter the final phase of this important Project, ReNuAL 2, it is important to emphasize that ReNuAL has enabled the Agency to upgrade the laboratories and equipment to enhance its scientific and research capabilities and support it can provide in response to existing and emerging challenges of Member States. The Group encourages Member States in a position to do so, to support ReNuAL2.

11. The Group continues to support the work of the Agency in the field of Food and Agriculture, specifically in combating multiple outbreaks of transboundary zoonotic and animal diseases, the development of the Sterile Insect Technique, addressing soil erosion and enhancing water resources management. The Group supports the establishment of the Zoonotic Diseases Integrated Action (ZODIAC) which will assist Member States in identifying; monitoring; tracing and detection of zoonotic disease pathogens with a view to strengthen the ability of the IAEA and its Member States to respond to these kinds of disease outbreaks in the future.

12. In the field of human health, the Group welcomes the various activities of the Agency in the field nutrition, biodosimetry and advanced radiotherapy technologies. The Group also commends the work of the Agency, especially in the prevention, control and fight against cancer. The Group notes the activities undertaken in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO) and looks forward to the results of the Coordinated Research Project on the implementation of image-guided brachytherapy.

13. The Group takes note of the International Conference on Molecular Imaging and PET–CT in the Era of Theranostics (IPET-2020) held virtually in November 2020 and is pleased to note that the conference contributed to the medical educational credits of participants.

14. The Group recognizes the unique role that the Agency plays in enhancing the capabilities of Member States in managing water resources through assessing the impact of mining activities on water resources using nuclear techniques, as well as the use of isotope hydrology in climate change prediction models.

15. The Group also wishes to highlight the important role of the Agency in radioisotope production and the development of radiation technologies.

#### Nuclear Safety and Security

Madam Chair,

16. The Group reiterates its appreciation for the IAEA's continuing efforts to promote nuclear safety worldwide and welcomes the diverse activities undertaken in 2020. The Group reaffirms that the responsibility for nuclear safety within a State rests entirely with that Member State and that the IAEA can provide upon request assistance through expertise and advice to Member States. We reiterate our support for the Agency's central role, in coordinating international efforts to strengthen Nuclear Safety globally, , and in promoting Nuclear Safety standards in line with Article III of its Statute. The Group remains of the view that nuclear safety should not hamper the promotion, transfer and utilization of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

17. The Group appreciates the Agency's efforts in conducting capacity building activities across its programme of work for nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety, and emergency preparedness and response, as well as in strengthening global, regional and national safety networks and forums. The Group also recognizes the Agency's important role in developing Safety Standards and welcomes the issuance of 10 publications in the Safety Guides series in 2020.

18. The Group attaches great value to the IAEA's assistance to developing countries embarking on nuclear power programmes and encourages the Agency to continue its support to Member States, upon request, in developing and strengthening their nuclear safety infrastructure. In this context, the Group values the Agency's support, provided to Member States, upon their request, through the peer review and advisory services conducted in 2020 across all safety areas. The Group also encourages the Agency to enhance the participation of experts from the developing countries in conducting such peer reviews and advisory services.

19. The Group takes note of the outcomes of the International Conference on Radiation Safety: Improving Radiation Protection in Practice, held virtually in November 2020 as presented in the report and requests that its follow-up be done in close consultations with Member States whenever necessary.

20. The Group notes the Agency's continued efforts in 2020 to contribute to global efforts to achieve effective nuclear security. The Group reiterates its view that the responsibility for nuclear security within a State rests entirely with that State, and that nuclear security should not be a condition or pre-requisite for technical cooperation projects. The Group reiterates its principled position that nuclear security considerations should not hamper international cooperation in the field of peaceful nuclear activities, the production, transfer and use of nuclear and other radioactive material, the exchange of nuclear material for peaceful purposes and the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and should not undermine the established priorities of the Agency's technical cooperation programme.

21. The Group takes note of the International Conference on Nuclear Security: Sustaining and Strengthening Efforts (ICONS) held in February 2020 and its Ministerial Declaration.

#### **Technical Cooperation**

Madam Chair,

22. The Group believes that the promotion and transfer of nuclear technology for sustainable socioeconomic progress in developing countries is the main statutory function of the Agency and that the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) is the main delivery vehicle for this statutory function.

23. Therefore, the Group reiterates its call for strengthening the promotional activities of the IAEA, including Technical Cooperation and Coordinated Research Projects (CRPs), through the provision of sufficient, assured and predictable resources, so as to properly respond to the increasing number of Member States and their growing needs, as well as to enhance the use of nuclear technology for sustainable development.

24. The Group further notes the activities undertaken in relation to the Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT) and appreciates the targeted outreach to traditional and nontraditional donors in mobilizing direct and indirect resources for unfunded cancer-related activities in Member States. The Group is likewise pleased to note that the conduct of Integrated Missions of PACT Review missions continued despite the COVID-19 pandemic, albeit in hybrid format. Broad access to nuclear medicine, radiation medicine techniques and radiotherapy remains a challenge and the Group urges the IAEA to collaborate with relevant international organizations, in order to continue building capacities in developing countries.

25. Cooperation and collaboration with relevant organizations within the UN system remains important in allowing for increased access to nuclear science and technology for Member States, in support of their national and development priorities. In this regard, the Group notes with appreciation the existing, extended and new Partnership Agreements and Practical Arrangements related to technical cooperation.

26. In conclusion, the Group recalls the successful International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology, co-chaired by Costa Rica and Japan, in November 2018 and its Ministerial Declaration. The Group reaffirms the importance Member States attach to the Agency's work in promoting nuclear science and technology and its applications and their delivery through technical cooperation programme. In this regard, the Group looks forward to the commencement of consultations on the follow up International Ministerial Conference in 2023.

27. With these comments, the Group takes note of the Agency's Annual Report for 2020 contained in document GOV/2021/11.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

#### Agenda item 3: IAEA Technical Cooperation Report 2020

Madam Chair,

1. The Group of 77 and China wishes to thank the Deputy Director General for Technical Cooperation, Mr. Liu, for his introductory remarks and for preparing the Technical Cooperation Report as well as the informal technical briefing provided on 20 May 2021.

2. The Group of 77 and China believes that the promotion and transfer of nuclear technology for sustainable socioeconomic progress in developing countries is the main statutory function of the Agency and that the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) is the main delivery vehicle for this statutory function.

3. The Group welcomes the continued success of the Technical Cooperation activities in the different regions, despite the difficulties brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, and commends the Secretariat for its support and assistance to Member States.

4. The Group reiterates that the TC Programme is a shared responsibility and that its success depends on the combined efforts of the Department of Technical Cooperation, other relevant departments of the Agency and Member States. These efforts are crucial for the planning and successful implementation of the Programme, which should be tailored to respond to the evolving needs and priorities of individual Member States, in particular the developing countries. Such an approach would also be in accordance with Section 2, Operative Paragraph 4 of resolution GC (64)/RES/11, dealing with assistance to developing and least developed countries. The Group calls on the Secretariat to continue making every effort in addressing the challenges facing LDCs in the peaceful application of nuclear energy through the Technical Cooperation Programme, as set out in GOV/INF/2016/12.

Madam Chair,

5. The Group notes that the IAEA regional programmes are an essential tool to promote Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC), foster the exchange of best practices, and promote networks amongst member states. The Group appreciates the Secretariat's support in this regard, and requests that the Secretariat continues its efforts to enhance the effective and efficient management of regional programmes. The Group also supports the Secretariat's efforts to enhance the effectiveness of TC programme delivery to new Member States, including Small Island Developing States (SIDS) through the development of focused capacity building support that are tailored towards individual member states development needs.

6. The Group takes note of the continued efforts undertaken by the Secretariat in 2020 with the purpose of enhancing efficiency in the delivery of TC projects, including through linking the content of the Country Programme Frameworks (CPFs) to national development plans and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGS), in accordance with priorities and needs identified by member states.

7. The Group would also like to recall the established process of the medium-term national planning mechanisms, such as CPFs regional profiles and strategic frameworks through which the needs of Member States are identified and defined. Any changes to the established TC programmatic approach by the Secretariat should be considered in close consultation with Member States.

8. The Group takes note of the continued efforts undertaken by the Secretariat to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the TC Programme. In this context, the Group reiterates that the present guidelines and criteria as contained in INFCIRC/267 for the screening of TC project proposals, programme implementation and subsequent evaluation are sufficient and effective.

Madam Chair,

9. The Group notes that the rate of attainment on payments to the TC Fund (TCF) for 2020, as of 31 December 2020, was 91.1%. The Group emphasizes the importance of the TCF in the successful implementation of the TC Programme and reiterates its call on all Member States to pay their contributions in accordance with the indicative scale of assessment in full and on time. The Group also requests the Secretariat to work closely with Member States to improve the rate of attainment on pledges and payments to the TCF.

10. The Group notes with concern that despite the increasing number of developing countries receiving technical cooperation from the Agency, the resources for the TC Programme, both financial and human, have not increased in tandem. This situation becomes all the more striking when comparing the TCF to the funds available for the non-promotional activities. The Group reiterates its request to the Secretariat to include in future reports the details of the increasing number of participants in the TC Programme and increasing demands over the past several years.

11. The Group remains concerned that the resources available to the TC Programme are still not sufficient, assured and predictable (SAP) to meet the objectives mandated in Article II of the Statute, as called for by the General Conference repeatedly in its resolutions on Technical Cooperation. The Group also reiterates its call for sufficient human resources and adequate funding to be assigned to Major Programme 6, in order to facilitate the successful delivery of the TC Programme in light of the growing demand.

12. In this regard, the Group thanks the Secretariat for its commitment in ensuring the continued delivery of the TC Programme during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the assistance provided through inter-regional project INT0098. The Group appreciates all the contributions made to the Agency's COVID-19 related assistance including the provision of testing and other relevant equipment for the detection of COVID-19. The Group also appreciates the efforts of the Director General and the Secretariat to adapt and ensure the effective delivery of the TC Programme as much as possible and in consultation with Member States, in spite of the current difficult situation.

13. The Group further appreciates the extrabudgetary contributions by Member States, the private sector and other non-traditional donors to the TC Programme. In addition, the Group notes the decision of some countries to participate in the government cost-sharing mechanism. While appreciating the extrabudgetary contributions that were made by those in a position to do so, the Group notes that extrabudgetary funding in 2020 represented 52% of the TC funding. However, the Group remains concerned about the increased reliance on extrabudgetary contributions for the delivery of the TC Programme and its potential impact on the funding being sufficient, assured and predictable. Extrabudgetary contributions therefore should not and cannot replace the TC Fund, which is the primary funding mechanism essential to a stable and strategic TC Programme.

Madam Chair,

14. The Group takes note of the important contribution the Agency's TC Programme could make to the achievement of the Agenda 2030 and its SDGs as well as to the Paris Climate Change Agreement. The Group welcomes the Secretariat's efforts to help Member States to benefit from the synergies between the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 and the TC Programme, while recognizing their specificities. The Group maintains that alignment with the SDGs should not constitute a limitation or condition for TC projects, nor a tool for their reprioritization. The Group also holds the view that the SDGs places a greater demand for additional resources to address the increasing socio-economic challenges and to meet the developmental needs of developing countries.

15. In this regard, the Group also reiterates its strong position that TC should not be subject to any form of conditionality, which is inconsistent with the statute of the IAEA and the guiding principles and operating rules as contained in INFCIRC/267 and requests the Secretariat to continue to adhere to them.

Madam Chair,

16. The Group appreciates the continued efforts of the Secretariat to enhance the quality of the TC Programme by providing support to the Member States to ensure that the projects for the next TC cycle are relevant, effective, sustainable, have measurable and attainable objectives, and offer greater opportunities for social and economic benefits and long-term national development impact. While acknowledging the limitations posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Group remains of the view that technical meetings on virtual platforms cannot be a substitute for face-to-face meetings, which allow for a far more enriching interaction and productive outcomes, especially with regard to training and capacity-building programmes. We therefore, strongly urge that, as the pandemic conditions permit, efforts should be made to revert to the norm of organizing physical events.

17. The Group reiterates its call on the Agency to address long-standing obstacles such as delays and denials of equipment, as well as travel and visa restrictions arbitrarily imposed by a number of Member States, which negatively impact programme delivery and the rate of implementation.

Madam Chair,

18. The Group reiterates that alignment with United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDFs) should not be made a requirement for TC projects. However, the Group takes note of the Agency's increasing visibility within the UN system which may allow the Agency to identify linkages between the goals and objectives of the CPFs and, where appropriate, those of the UNSDF in order to facilitate close coordination with UN agencies to address national priorities in sustainable development.

19. In this context, the Group stresses the vital role of the National Liaison Officers (NLOs) in TC project design and implementation. The continued strengthening of the NLOs' management capabilities, together with the strengthening of the role of the Programme Management Officer (PMO) and the coordination with the Permanent Missions in Vienna, would be essential to enhance country programme delivery. In this regard, the Group expresses its appreciation for the Agency's support in strengthening the role of the NLO, in particular through the bilateral and virtual NLO meetings. The Group welcomes the inclusion of gender as a consideration in TC project design. Moreover, the Group supports the Agency's efforts to expand female participation in the TC programme, including through encouraging Member States to nominate female NLOs, meeting and workshop participants, fellows and scientific visitors, and counterparts.

20. The Group underlines the importance of cancer control in developing countries and urges the IAEA to continue building capacities in developing countries, including those that still have no access to nuclear medicine, radiation medicine techniques and radiotherapy. The Group encourages the Agency to continue addressing Member States' requirements for comprehensive cancer control capacity and needs through the Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT), and to foster more regional PACT programmes. The Group highly commends the continued efforts to strengthen collaboration of the Agency with leading cancer organizations and other partners such as the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), including in the conduct of imPACT reviews, as well as signing new Practical Arrangements with the Global Access to Cancer Care Foundation (GACCF) and a Memorandum of Understanding with the United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS). The Group further welcomes the strengthening of existing partnerships with governments, the private sector and international financing institutions.

21. With these remarks, the Group of 77 and China takes note of the Technical Cooperation Report for 2020 contained in document GOV/2021/17.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

#### Agenda Item 4: Report of the Programme and Budget Committee

Madam Chair,

1. The Group of 77 and China takes note of the Report of the Programme and Budget Committee (PBC) and would like to thank Acting-Deputy Director General Bauswein, the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) and the External Auditor for reports prepared and presented at the PBC.

2. The Group also thanks the Co-Chairs of the Working Group on the Regular Budget and Technical Cooperation Fund (TCF) Targets for 2022-2023, Ambassadors Roberton and Khokher for their extensive work in facilitating an agreement among Member States.

Madam Chair,

3. The Group reiterates its long-held view that the Agency's budget should reflect the balance between the three pillars of the Agency's work, namely; the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear technology including Technical Cooperation; Safety; and Safeguards. To achieve this balance and in order to respond to the growing needs of developing countries, the increased number of Member States making use of nuclear applications and embarking on nuclear energy, the Group has long been of the opinion that sufficient funding from the Regular Budget must be secured for Major Programmes 1, 2 and 6.

4. In this regard, the Group notes that in the 2022-2023 biennium, 143 Member States, including 35 LDCs, will have a national TC Programme, representing an increase of 2 Member States compared to the current biennium.

5. Therefore, the Group believes that more effort should be made to provide sufficient resources, including staff, for the management of the TCP, if its priority areas are to be achieved, such as ensuring adequate support to the growing number of Member States participating in the TC Programme and to the extended demand of Member States for the peaceful uses of nuclear technology.

6. This underscores the necessity of Sufficient, Assured and Predictable resources for the TC Programme in order to enable it to adequately respond to Member States' growing demands, and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in accordance with priorities and needs as identified by Member States.

7. In light of the current COVID-19 pandemic in terms of the implementation of the Programme and Budget, including the TCP in 2022 and 2023, the Group requests that Member States be informed accordingly of any changes required in implementation, and these should be addressed in close coordination with affected Member States.

8. The Group has also taken note that for future budget cycles, budgetary information by items of expenditure, the level of Full Time Equivalents by staff category, and an annex outlining the cost savings and efficiencies, including those of a cross-cutting nature will be provided. Regarding staff issues, the Group would like to acknowledge the limit to staff cost of 75% in 2022-2023, and would like to emphasize the need to maintain a balance across MPs in both numbers and level of staff.

9. The Group emphasizes that recruitment of staff should be in line with the Secretariat's efforts to increase the representation of women and under-represented Member States and regions from the Group, especially at the professional and managerial levels.

10. While taking note of the Secretariat's efforts to ensure prioritization, efficiencies and synergies, the Group reiterates its firm opinion that such efforts should not negatively impact the Agency's ability to deliver on its statutory mandate or affect the desired balance between promotional and non-promotional activities.

#### Madam Chair,

11. Turning to the TCF targets, the Group recalls that the synchronization of the TC Programme cycle with the regular Programme and Budget cycle was meant to provide a framework to consider increases to the resources for the TC Programme (TCP), in order to enable the IAEA to effectively deliver on its main statutory function.

12. The Group reiterates its consistent and principled view that in determining the TCF targets and Indicative Planning Figures various factors as articulated by the Group during the PBC should be taken into account.

13. In this regard, the Group reiterates that the targets for voluntary contributions for 2022-23 were agreed upon during extraordinary circumstances and do not set a precedent for future targets. The Group would like to re-emphasize that having a TCP with "Sufficient, Assured and Predictable" resources is essential for the IAEA to fulfil its central role in the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

14. With these comments, Madam Chair, the Group of 77 and China takes note of the Report of the Programme and Budget Committee as contained in document GOV/2021/26.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

#### Agenda Item 11: Any Other Business - Nuclear Security Plan

Madam Chair,

1. The Group of 77 and China wishes to raise a few points regarding the current process related to the Nuclear Security Plan for 2022-2025.

2. The Group recalls the General Conference Resolution on Nuclear Security adopted in 2020 (GC(64)/RES/10), which called upon the Secretariat to develop the Nuclear Security Plan 2022-2025 in close consultation with Member States. In this regard, the Group underscores the need for as many consultations as required until consensus is reached.

3. From the outset, the Group has emphasised and reiterated a core principle, namely that the responsibility for nuclear security within a State rests entirely with that State – a position consistently reiterated in General Conference Resolutions as well as in the outcome of ICONS 2020.

4. The role of the IAEA is to provide support to Member States, upon request, in strengthening national Nuclear Security capacity in individual Member States.

5. Moreover, the Group underscores the central role of the IAEA in strengthening the nuclear security framework globally and in coordinating international activities in the field of nuclear security. The Group emphasizes that the scope of the IAEA's activities in this field must be determined by Member States based on their needs and priorities and must be guided by the General Conference Resolutions on Nuclear Security.

Madam Chair,

6. The Group reiterates its principled position that nuclear security considerations should not hamper international cooperation in the field of peaceful nuclear activities, the production, transfer and use of nuclear and other radioactive material, the exchange of nuclear material for peaceful purposes and the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and should not undermine the established priorities of the Agency's technical cooperation programme.

7. This important principle has been stated in the resolutions on nuclear security adopted by the General Conference and reflected in three ICONS Ministerial Declarations adopted in 2013, 2016 and 2020.

8. Bearing in mind that the responsibility for nuclear security within a state rests entirely with that state, the Group recalls that the purpose of the Nuclear Security Plan (NSP) to provide a framework within which assistance to Member States is provided by the IAEA as requested and with the purpose of strengthening national capacities in the area of nuclear security.

9. Because the development of the Nuclear Security Plan is such a high priority activity for Member States, the Group supported the proposed work plan discussed with Member States in the first two informal consultations. However, the Group is deeply concerned that the process appears to have come to a standstill. According to the Programme of Work presented to Member States on 12 March 2021 and again at the consultations in April, the second draft of the proposed NSP should have been received towards the end of April and the next round of informal consultations were due to take place towards the end of May - neither of which happened.

10. The Group is deeply concerned that Member States may not have enough time to hold in-depth and robust consultations on the proposals contained in the NSP that will set the tone for the next three years in this important area of the IAEA's work, work that will also directly impact the nuclear security of each one of us.

11. We therefore kindly request that a revised draft NSP be released as soon as possible as well as a revised work plan. Time is running out as Member States will soon start preparations for the General Conference, including the finalisation of the Nuclear Security Resolution and further delays can no longer be accommodated.

12. As a reminder when preparing the revised NSP the Group wants to reiterate a few key points, namely:

- a) The Secretariat is requested to follow the practice of submitting the revised draft NSP with track changes, as well as indicating the origin of proposed changes to make it clear to Member States what changes have been effected;
- b) There are some elements in the draft of the Plan, which may not be consistent with GC Resolutions on Nuclear Security. Therefore, the Group requests the Secretariat to cross- reference the draft Plan with the GC Resolutions, and also to consider the ICONS Ministerial Declarations as appropriate; and

c) The Group stresses that the language in all sections of the Nuclear Security Plan must reflect the consensus achieved in the course of discussions on the GC Resolutions and the Ministerial Declarations on Nuclear Security.

13. With these comments, the Group of 77 and China looks forward to further consultations on the draft Nuclear Security Plan with a view to its finalization by the September Board of Governors meeting.

Thank you, Madam Chair.



#### Statement of the Group of 77 and China at the Informal Consultation Meeting on the Draft Nuclear Security Plan 2022-2025 on 29 June 2021, delivered by Mr. Gustavo Sancho Víquez, Permanent Mission of Costa Rica

#### Madam Chairperson,

1. The Group of 77 and China wishes to raise a few points regarding the current process related to the Nuclear Security Plan (NSP) for 2022-2025. The Group reaffirms its statement delivered under the "Any Other Business" agenda item during the June Board meeting, as well as its principled positions stated therein, and wishes to only emphasize in this statement a few procedural points.

2. The Group recalls the General Conference Resolution on Nuclear Security adopted in 2020 (GC(64)/RES/10), which called upon the Secretariat to develop the Nuclear Security Plan 2022-2025 in close consultation with Member States. In this regard, the Group underscores the need for as many consultations as required until consensus is reached.

3. The Group appreciates the efforts made by the Secretariat in preparing the draft with track changes and for convening informal consultations with a view to reaching consensus among Member States, while recognizing the difficult situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the constraints imposed on us and the process.

4. The Group is concerned that Member States may not have enough time to hold in-depth and robust consultations on the proposals that will set the tone for the next four years in this important area of the IAEA's work, as contained in the draft NSP.

5. According to the Programme of Work presented to Member States on 12 March 2021 and again at the consultations in April, the second draft of the proposed NSP should have been received towards the end of April and the next round of informal consultations were due to take place towards the end of May. It is, however, unfortunate that this plan has not materialized as initially planned.

6. Bearing in mind that the responsibility for nuclear security within a State rests entirely with that State, and that the purpose of the NSP is to provide a framework within which assistance to Member States is provided by the IAEA, as requested. It is of paramount importance that the main focus in the consultation process should be on establishing a final consensual understanding in relations with the substance of the NSP amongst Member States.

7. The Group reaffirms its previous position that the language in all sections of the NSP must reflect the consensus among the Member States contained in the GC Nuclear Security Resolutions and as appropriate the 2020 ICONS Ministerial Declaration on Nuclear Security.

8. Therefore, the Group firmly believes that procedural issues including artificial tight-scheduling and/or restrictions on having a proper and exhaustive consultation process should not create unnecessary impediments for satisfying such an important objective, as stated by various Member States during the most recent consultations held on 25 June 2021. In this regard, the Group underscores the need for as many consultations as required until consensus is reached.

9. It is pertinent here to underscore that while the general rule calls for the IAEA reports to be issued within enough time before the Board's meetings, certain exceptions can be accepted if the need arises especially from negotiated documents that require Member States' approval.

10. Accordingly, the Group believes that there is an urgent need to agree on a revised program of work for consultations on the draft NSP, and to abide by it. The Group requests that in this revised work plan no procedural issue should prevent us from achieving consensus on the NSP by the September Board of Governors meeting.

I thank you, Madam Buglova.



#### G-77 and China Statements during the IAEA Board of Governors, 13-17 September 2021, delivered by H.E. Ambassador Alejandro Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

#### Agenda Item 2: Nuclear and Radiation Safety

Madam Chairperson,

1. The Group of 77 and China wishes to thank Deputy Director General Lydie Evrard for her remarks under this agenda item, and commends the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security for the preparation of document GOV/2021/32-GC(65)/7, as well as for the work carried out between 1 July 2020 and 30 June 2021, pursuant to the General Conference resolution GC (64) RES/10.

Madam Chairperson,

2. The Group attaches great importance to nuclear safety, a key element in any nuclear programme. While recognizing that the primary responsibility for nuclear safety rests with the States, the Group believes that the Agency plays an essential role in this field, as provided for in Article III of the Statute. The Group reiterates its emphasis that the Agency must retain a central role in nuclear safety, owing to its mandatory functions, its broad membership and its longstanding expertise.

3. The Group also stresses its principled position that nuclear safety and nuclear security considerations must not hamper the utilization of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

4. The Group highlights the importance of maintaining, improving and promoting nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety, and emergency preparedness and response worldwide, including during the challenges and restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Group appreciates the Agency's continuous efforts aimed at supporting Member States in sharing knowledge, expertise, technology and information on all aspects of nuclear safety. The Group also welcomes the Agency's activities aimed at supporting nuclear safety infrastructure development in Member States, upon their request. The Group requests the Agency to adapt itself to this new situation and to continue these activities, in spite of the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

5. The Group emphasizes the importance of building and strengthening capacities in all Member States, especially the developing countries. In this regard, the Group appreciates, in particular, the assistance provided by the Agency, upon request, to developing countries operating, expanding or embarking on nuclear power and radiation technology programmes in establishing or enhancing their national safety infrastructure. We value the activities related to building competence in the regulatory functions, improving leadership and management for safety and promoting safety culture. The Group requests the Secretariat to continue its efforts in assisting interested Member States in the development of capacities and technical skills in nuclear safety, as well as in strengthening the regulatory system and infrastructure needed for the development of nuclear energy.

6. The Group notes the importance of incorporation, where appropriate, of lessons learned from the 2011 Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, the experience of States in implementing the Action Plan, as well as the observations and lessons contained in the IAEA Fukushima Report and the principles of the Vienna Declaration, into the Agency's programme of work. In this

regard, the Group supports the continuation of the Secretariat's cross-departmental activities concerning strengthening nuclear safety.

Madam Chairperson,

7. The Group welcomes the continued assistance provided by the Agency to the activities of regional forums and related networks, including the Global Nuclear Safety and Security Network (GNSSN) and events focused on strengthening collaboration among national authorities, specialists, international organizations, forums and working groups. The Group requests the Secretariat to further pursue activities aimed at strengthening regional safety forums and related networks, as mandated by the General Conference.

8. The Group commends the Agency for the activities carried out in the field of radiation safety and environmental protection, including, inter alia, the organization of regional workshops, and appreciates, in particular, the Agency's continued activities aimed at strengthening radiation protection in medicine.

9. The Group attaches high importance to transport safety, and appreciates the involvement of the Secretariat in international efforts to discuss issues related to the transport of radioactive material. The Group supports continued efforts by the Agency to address problems related to denials of and delays in the shipment of radioactive material, particularly shipment by air and urges Member States to facilitate the transport of radioactive material, and to identify, if they have not done so, a national focal point on denials on shipment of radioactive materials to achieve a satisfactory and timely resolution of this issue.

10. The Group notes that the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic have exacerbated the challenges related to delays and denials of shipment of radioactive sources including medical isotopes, the Group calls on all Member States to facilitate to the highest extent possible, the shipment of these materials through their sea ports and airports and to minimize delays and denials even during this difficult period.

11. The Group takes note of the virtual Technical Meeting the Agency held on the Denials of Shipment – Issues and Solutions in March 2021, which provided a forum to discuss the options for addressing this denials of, and delays in, the shipment of radioactive material, as well as the virtual meeting held in May 2021 to define the Terms of Reference of a working group on this topic.

12. The Group notes the activities developed by the Agency in the area of decommissioning and environmental remediation, such as in support to Member States' decommissioning programmes by providing guidance and training material on safe decommissioning and the development of TECDOCs.

13. The Group commends the Agency for conducting advisory missions on the regulatory infrastructure for radiation safety, as well as for addressing radiation safety infrastructure in Member States that have expressed an interest in establishing or enhancing their cancer control capacity through integrated missions of the Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (imPACT) review missions.

Madam Chairperson,

14. The efforts of the Agency in the area of education and training, and knowledge management in nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety are of foremost importance to the Group. We reiterate our support for the Agency's efforts to acquire, preserve and transfer knowledge and organizational memory in nuclear safety to Member States.

15. The Group appreciates the Agency's activities in the area of Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) and encourages the Agency to continue them. The Group highlights the

importance of supporting the work of regional forums and networks through the conduct of regional EPR workshops in Asia and the Pacific, Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean.

16. The Group takes note of the Formalized Process for the Sharing of the Information as States' Implementation of the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and its Supplementary Guidance (2019 edition) as well as the virtual technical briefing held in February 2021 to facilitate consultation on the formalized process. The Group underlines the voluntary nature of the Code of Conduct. The Group requests the Secretariat to brief Member States regarding its implementation.

17. The Group highlights the important role the Commission on Safety Standards (CSS) plays in providing guidance on the approach and strategy for establishing the Agency's safety standards and in endorsing for publication standards on nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety, in addition to emergency preparedness and response. The Group takes note of the virtual meetings the Commission and the affiliated Committees held during the reporting period, and looks forward to a return to physical format for future meetings, as soon as appropriate.

18. With these remarks, the Group of 77 and China takes note of document GOV/2021/32-GC(65)/7.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson

## Agenda Item 3(a): Nuclear Security Report

Madam Chairperson,

1. The Group of 77 and China wishes to thank the Secretariat for preparing the Nuclear Security Report 2021, which covers the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021, as contained in document GOV/2021/35-GC(65)/10. The Group also expresses its thanks to Deputy Director General Lydie Evrard for her introductory remarks under this agenda item, as well as to the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security for the technical briefing provided to delegations on 6 September 2021.

2. The Group reiterates its view that the responsibility for nuclear security within a State rests entirely with that State. The Group urges the Secretariat to always reflect this important principle in full in accordance with the Nuclear Security Resolutions.

3. The Group remains of the view that nuclear security considerations should not hamper the utilization of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, and international cooperation in that regard, including through the Technical Cooperation Programme.

4. The Group recognizes the importance of coordination among the Agency's departments in development and implementation of its activities, and calls any effort in this regard to be done in full respect of all the positions presented by the Group in particular regarding the allocation of resources for the Technical Cooperation Programme.

5. The Group concurs with the notion that the role of the Agency in enhancing nuclear security and the scope of its activities must be determined by Member States, as reflected in the Board decisions and General Conference resolutions, with due account of the need to ensure an appropriate balance between activities in the promotional and non-promotional areas. The Group notes that successive General Conference resolutions have affirmed the Agency's central role in assisting Member States for strengthening the nuclear security globally and in coordinating international activities in the field of nuclear security. The Agency has responded to these GC resolutions by organizing or participating in a number of major meetings and coordination efforts. The Group appreciates the Agency's efforts in this regard and requests

the Secretariat to provide more information in this respect in its future Nuclear Security Reports.

6. The Group appreciates the Agency's continued efforts to assist Member States, upon their request, to build and develop their nuclear security capacity which include facilitating adherence to and implementation of relevant international legal instruments, developing nuclear security guidance and supporting States in the voluntary implementation of the guidance, and helping States in the establishment of effective, sustainable and comprehensive national nuclear security infrastructure.

7. The Group welcomes the voluntary reporting of Member States to the Agency's Incident and Trafficking Database (ITDB). The Group notes that the Agency does not have the mandate or capability to verify such reporting. The Group also notes the information provided by the Secretariat on external users of the ITDB and their access level and on the occasions where the Agency shared the information from the ITDB to States.

8. The Group requests the Secretariat to continue to provide further reassurance that the information, including on the ITDB, is handled with care, especially those with sensitivity and confidentiality.

9. With regard to public communication, while the Group welcomes the ongoing efforts by the Secretariat to improve communication with the public and Member States about its Nuclear Security activities, the Group stresses the importance of preserving and protecting the confidential information relevant to such activities.

10. The Group appreciates the continued efforts of the Agency to develop and implement Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plans (INSSPs) to assist Member States, upon request, in applying a structured and holistic approach to nuclear security improvements including through capacity building and increased coordination, while also stressing that such information should be handled with care, especially those with sensitivity and confidentiality.

11. The Group welcomes the continued improvement of the Nuclear Security Information Portal (NUSEC). The Group also notes improvements made to NUSEC including the continued enhancements of the IPPAS Good Practice Database, the International Network for Nuclear Security Training and Support Centres (NSSC Network) database, and the common calendar to provide information on all training courses and other events hosted by NSSC Network members.

12. The Group further notes the continued maintenance and update of the Nuclear Security Information Management System (NUSIMS), a web-based platform for States to perform nuclear security self-assessment on a voluntary basis.

13. Recognizing the growing requests of Member States for the Agency's support in information and computer security, the Group appreciates the Agency's efforts in responding to those requests through developing additional nuclear security guidance and providing a number of training courses.

14. The Group also reiterates its appreciation to the Nuclear Security Guidance Committee, the Interface Group, the Advisory Group on Nuclear Security, the International Nuclear Safety Group and the Secretariat for their work on and contributions toward the Agency's Nuclear Security Series publications. The Group notes the Secretariat's efforts to facilitate the participation of Member States in the process of development and review of the Agency's Nuclear Security Series publications. The Group reiterates its call on the Secretariat to facilitate a broader participation of representatives from developing countries in its meetings to ensure greater transparency and consensus in the development and review of such publications.

15. Concerning the Agency's advisory services, the Group notes that the Agency's International Physical Protection Advisory Service (IPPAS) mission was conducted, upon request, in Member States and that the Agency began implementing the new guidelines for International Nuclear Security Advisory Service (INSServ) mission.

16. Regarding human resource development, the Group appreciates the Agency's continued support of comprehensive human resource development activities to ensure the sustainability of national nuclear security regimes, including the International Nuclear Security Education Network (INSEN) and International Network for Nuclear Security Training and Support Centres (NSSCs).

17. The Group notes that, during this reporting period, many training and capacity building activities were converted to virtual format, not just to offset COVID-19 related travel restrictions, but also with an aim to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of these activities via the use of webinars and other virtual tools, which are expected to continue when normal levels of international travel resume. The Group also notes that the Agency has provided instructor-led training to over 5400 participants from 114 States and e-learning modules to 1200 users from 126 States. The Group further encourages the Secretariat to enhance its activities oriented at capacity-building in Member States, particularly developing countries, thus helping to ensure their adequate human resources.

18. The Group takes note of the Agency's activities, undertaken at the request of Member States, in the area of risk reduction and security improvement. The Group calls on the Secretariat to continue its efforts aimed at strengthening the capabilities of Member States in this regard, including in the areas of threat characterization and assessment, the promotion of nuclear security culture, nuclear material accountancy and control, transport security, and nuclear forensics, among others.

19. The Group takes note of the Agency's continued efforts to prepare for the establishment of a training and demonstration centre in Seibersdorf, which will be used for the demonstration of equipment and technologies related to nuclear security, as well as the organization of training activities on the implementation of nuclear security systems and measures. The Group underscores the need to maximize the potential benefits of this centre, while avoiding duplication and overlap with the activities of Nuclear Security Support Centres (NSSCs) in Member States. The Group requests to be kept abreast of the planning of extra budgetary resources needed for the long-term sustainability of the centre.

20. The Group is of the view that the Secretariat should avoid ambiguous language in its reports that can be interpreted in different ways and requests the Secretariat to use a language that reflects the broader views of the Agency's Member States.

21. The Group notes the Agency's main goals and priorities concerning nuclear security for 2021-2022, which include preparations for the next International Conference on the Safe and Secure Transport of Nuclear and Radioactive Materials to be held in December 2021, and the continued preparations for the Review Conference of the CPPNM and its 2005 Amendment to take place in March 2022.

22. With these remarks, the Group takes note of the Nuclear Security Report 2021.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

## Agenda Item 3(b): Nuclear Security Plan

Madam Chairperson,

1. The Group of 77 and China underscores the great importance it attaches to nuclear security as well as the Nuclear Security Plan 2022-2025, as it will set the tone for the IAEA's engagement on Nuclear Security for the next four years. We look forward to its adoption during the current session of the Board.

2. The Group wishes to express its appreciation to you Madam Chairperson, and to your team, for the efforts exerted in response to the Group's letter dated 13 August 2021, and the concerns outlined therein. We appreciate the effort to achieve the desired consensus on the Nuclear Security Plan (NSP), by convening an additional round of consultations to ensure that the document before us reflects the views of Member States and enjoys consensus. The Group wishes also to thank the Secretariat for its efforts in implementing the current NSP 2018-2021, and for the work done in drafting the initial NSP 2022-2025.

3. The Group commends the constructive and open approach that Member States have taken, in particular in the run-up to and during the final round of consultations, which was a perfect display of an overwhelming desire to uphold the Vienna Spirit of Consensus, and to reach an agreement on the NSP 2022-2025 ahead of adopting it today.

4. The Group underscores the significance and value of the NSP, which is why it is important that the document reflect consensus agreed by Member States, given that ultimately the IAEA is a member state-driven organisation. We therefore hold the deep conviction that the NSP must be the result of a thorough consultation process. Unfortunately, this has not always been the case and therefore the Group is of the view that the process of developing the NSP requires further adjustment and improvement, in order to bring it more in line with all the other policy development processes of this organisation. While the Group acknowledges the pivotal role the Secretariat plays in preparing the NSP drafts, it is of the strong view that future consultations must be led by Member States – similar to how the programme and budget is developed every year. The Group will therefore present a proposal to this end in the Nuclear Security Resolution next year.

5. With these remarks, the Group Approves the Nuclear Security Plan 2022–2025, and the continuation of voluntary funding for the activities included therein, as well as its transmission to the 65<sup>th</sup> General Conference.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

# Agenda Item 4: Strengthening the Agency's activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications

Madam Chairperson,

1. The Group of 77 and China thanks the Secretariat for the report on Agency activities in the area of nuclear science, technology and applications, as contained in document GOV/2021/27-GC(65)/3, in response to General Conference resolutions GC(64)/RES/12 and GC(63)/RES/10. (Not to be read).

2. The work done by the Agency in nuclear power and non-power applications highlights the need to continue increasing the transfer of nuclear technology and the sharing of nuclear knowledge to developing countries so as to enhance their capabilities and thus contribute to maximizing the benefits of peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The Group urges the Agency to continue to provide training and education, to support national and regional laboratories and institutions and to further enhance the coordinated research activities. The Group also welcomes the contributions made by Member States to various Agency projects, and encourages all Member States, in a position to do so, to continue providing such support through the Agency. 3. On Annex 1, related to the 'General' part of the non-power nuclear applications, the Group recalls the successful outcomes of the Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology, co-chaired by Costa Rica and Japan in November 2018 and its Ministerial Declaration. The Group reiterates its position that the Agency should organize a follow-up International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science, Technology and Applications and the Technical Cooperation Programme in 2023. In this regard, the Group looks forward to participating in consultations due to start as early as possible, with a view to holding the conference as scheduled.

4. The Group welcomes the assistance provided by the Secretariat during the COVID-19 pandemic, in response to requests from more than 300 medical and veterinary laboratories in 128 countries and territories, through providing them with relevant kits and equipment, as well as conducting webinars and virtual training events. The Group also welcomes the ongoing cooperation with the World Health Organisation in this regard.

5. The Group notes with appreciation the progress made in the area of human health and medical radioisotopes and radiopharmaceuticals production, as well as the strengthening of Agency's relationship with WHO. The Group also appreciates the Agency's continued efforts to work with Member States' Collaborating Centres, to implement its programmatic activities and promote the practical use of nuclear techniques, requests the Secretariat to increase the number of Collaborating Centres from developing countries. The Group further appreciates the Agency's support in facilitating effective research through Coordinated Research Projects (CRPs) to allow research institutes in both developing and developed Member States to collaborate. Recognizing the positive impact of CRPs in the Technical Cooperation Programme, and their resulting publications, the Group urges the Secretariat to further ensure benefits from possible synergies and avoiding duplication in this regard.

6. On Annex 2, related to the "Support to the African Union's Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomosis Eradication Campaign (AU-PATTEC)", the Group appreciates the Agency's continuous efforts to support the AU-PATTEC Plan of Action through TC projects providing training, expert services and equipment to countries in the African region affected by this problem. The Group takes note of the assessment that tsetse flies and the trypanosomosis problem constitute one of the greatest constraints on the African continent's socio- economic development, affecting the health of humans and livestock, limiting sustainable rural development and thus causing increased poverty and food insecurity. The Group encourages the continuation of the Agency's support toward the AU PATTEC initiative to eradicate tsetse and Trypanosomosis from the African continent through the creation of sustainable tsetse and trypanosomosis free areas. The Group encourages Member States to contribute additional funds in order to ensure the sustainability of the programme.

7. On Annex 3, in relation to the "Renovation of the Agency's Nuclear Applications Laboratories at Seibersdorf", the Group commends the efforts of the Secretariat, Friends of the ReNuAL and Member States of the Agency, in mobilizing resources from traditional and nontraditional donors, including through an initiative to seek further private sector partners utilizing the UN Global Marketplace portal. The Group takes positive note of the conclusion of the Concept design planning for the main elements of ReNuAL 2, including the FML-2 building, greenhouses, and Dosimetry Laboratory refurbishment, and looks forward to launching the construction of FML-2 building in early 2022. The Group also welcomes the operationalization of the new Yukiya Amano Laboratories (YAL) at the IAEA laboratories in Seibersdorf. The Group is further pleased to note that the YAL building, which houses the Animal Production and Health Laboratory has continued to provide invaluable support to Member States in fighting transboundary and zoonotic diseases such as COVID-19. The Group encourages Member States in a position to do so, to contribute to ReNuAL 2.

8. On Annex 4 related to the "Development of the Sterile Insect Technique Package for the Management of Disease Transmitting Mosquitoes", the Group appreciates the Agency's continued efforts, in particular the Joint FAO/IAEA and the IPCL in Seibersdorf, to develop, validate, and optimize the sterile insect technique (SIT) package as a complementary tool for the management of mosquito populations. The Group notes that mosquito-borne diseases remains among the most severe threats to the health of millions of people worldwide. In this regard, the Group encourages the Agency to continue to pursue its efforts to develop SIT package for mosquitos to effectively combat disease-transmitting mosquitos. The Group encourages Member States to contribute additional funds in order to ensure the sustainability of the programme.

9. On Annex 5, "Strengthening the support to Member States in food and agriculture", the Group commends the Agency for the work carried out in response to a demand of technical assistance from Member States that remains high in the area of nuclear applications in food and agriculture delivered including through CRPs and technical cooperation projects. The Group appreciates the efforts done in development and enhancement of laboratory networks including the VETLAB, RALACA, AFoSaN, FSA and MBN networks. The Group further welcomes the Agency's securing of extrabudgetary funds for this important area.

10. The Group commends the signing of the Revised Arrangement for the FAO–Agency partnership in February 2021, which upgraded the Joint FAO/IAEA Division to a Centre and expanded the horizons of their cooperative work, including the improvement of monitoring and controlling of transboundary animal, zoonotic and plant diseases" as a key area of the partnership between the two organisations that will contribute the IAEA's ZODIAC project. The Group encourages the new Joint Centre to continue its efforts to increase the contribution of nuclear science and technology to raising agricultural productivity and sustainability, and also to respond major global trends framing agriculture development, including the adaptation to and mitigation of the effects of climate change.

11. On Annex 6, the Group appreciates Agencies activities related to the "Use of Isotope Hydrology for Water Resources Management". The Group notes the Agency's efforts to strengthen isotope hydrology activities, with a focus on research, training, protocol development and analytical services to expand the use of groundwater age dating with isotopes to map water resources. These efforts include the upgrading of isotope hydrology laboratories (IHL), expanding activities related to the IAEA Water Availably Enhancement (IWAVE) Project, and strengthening activities which contribute to the understanding of climate and its impact on the water cycle. The Group commends the Agency for its activities aimed at expanding access to isotope techniques and capacity building.

On Annex 7 related to the "Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action (ZODIAC) Project", 12. The Group reiterates its support for this project as approved by the 64th General Conference in its resolution GC/64/RES 3, and underscores its deep belief that it shall be Member States driven, in line with their needs and priorities. The Group welcomes the Secretariat's decision to devote the General Conference Scientific Forum this year to the topic of enhancing the role of nuclear science in preparing for zoonotic outbreaks. The Group stresses the need to focus on inclusivity through the involvement of Member States in the development and implementation of the Project. In this regard, the Group takes note of the Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action updated document issued on 1 September as well as the informal technical briefing held on 9 September 2021 on the progress in the implementation of the project, and underlines the importance of continuing the dialogue and engagement with Member States on the important topic. Moreover, it is essential that the Resolution of the General Conference is fully implemented, including the call for regular technical briefings and engagement with the Board of Governors, as well as a separate and detailed, Progress Report on the development and implementation of project.

13. The Group is fully convinced of ZODIAC's positive implications, however, it would like to comment on the possible impact of its implementation on other Technical Cooperation Projects, including unfunded projects in footnote a/. In this regard, we call on the Agency to focus on strengthening its efforts at mobilization of additional resources.

14. On Annex 8, "Plan for Producing Potable Water Economically Using Small and Medium Sized or Modular Reactors", the Group supports the various activities undertaken by the Agency to assist Member States in developing sea water desalination using nuclear energy and to collaborate with international organization in this area. The Group appreciates the comprehensive compilation of activities in this regard in various Member States of the Agency. The Group encourages the Secretariat to continue to support Member States in the conduct of innovative projects involving non-electric applications of nuclear power.

15. The Group takes note of the Secretariat's NUTEC Plastics initiative, which aims at assisting Member States in integrating nuclear and isotopic techniques to address challenges related to plastic pollution, through providing them with science-based evidence to characterize and assess marine microplastic pollution and demonstrating the use of ionizing radiation in plastic recycling to transform plastic waste into reusable resources. The Group also notes the ongoing TC projects and CRPs related to this initiative and welcomes the virtual events and roundtables that the Secretariat has held with Member States, in order to provide them with an important platform to discuss the IAEA ongoing efforts in this field.

Madam Chairperson,

16. The Group believes that nuclear energy will make an increasing contribution to the sustainable development of human kind throughout the 21st century and beyond. The Group further notes the role played by nuclear power in reducing greenhouse gas emissions while ensuring a reliable source of energy, and its contribution to addressing climate change issues and to United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The Group also welcomes the Agency's growing contributions to support interested Member States in mitigating the challenges of climate change through Nuclear Power and Nuclear Techniques, and takes note of the IAEA preparation to participate in the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26).

17. The Group notes with appreciation the efforts exerted by the Secretariat in supporting interested Member States in the field of nuclear power application, and its continuous engagement with stakeholders in charge of Nuclear Power Program, in particular during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Group also highlights the work done by the Secretariat in providing guidance and capacity building to interested Member States in managing the nuclear fuel cycle, and radioactive waste, as well as enhancing the different aspect of the research reactor life cycle, and strengthening excellence for the safe, secure, efficient, and sustainable operation of nuclear power plants and their life management, including decommissioning.

18. The Group values the support provided to Member States embarking on or expanding a nuclear power programme, upon their request, in particular through a variety of advisory and peer review missions, including the Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review (INIR) missions. The Group takes note of the rescheduling of some of the advisory and peer review missions due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

19. The Group notes the postponement of the next International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Power in the 21st Century, is scheduled to take place in the United States of America in October 2022. The Group looks forward to a successful conference with a view to advancing the role of nuclear power in meeting future energy demands, contributing to sustainable development and mitigating climate change. The Group attaches importance to regular convening of this Conference and looks forward to interested Member States from the G-77

hosting the Conference in the future, given the growing number of embarking States on Nuclear Power Programmes within the Group.

20. The Group acknowledge with appreciation the organization of the 28th IAEA Fusion Energy Conference (FEC2020), in cooperation with the CEA and the ITER Organization, which gathered over 4200 participants from around the World. The Group notice that, after years of intensive research and development, significant steps have been made towards making fusion a future source of energy and encourage the Secretariat to further strengthen its activities in this area of fusion technology development.

21. On Annex 14 "Agency Activities in the Development of Innovative Nuclear Technology", the Group reiterates the highest importance it attaches to the International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles (INPRO), as a relevant forum gathering technology holders and users with the aim of achieving innovations in nuclear reactors and fuel cycles. The Group welcomes the growing number of the INPRO Member States from the group, and notes with appreciation the developing of multiple Collaborative projects and CRPs in the framework of INPRO, while reiterating its call for continued support for INPRO from the Regular Budget.

22. On Annex 16, "Small and Medium-sized or Modular Reactors – Development and Deployment", the Group underscores the important role these reactors as an option for enhancing energy availability in both expanding and embarking countries, as they are better suited to the small electrical grids of some developing countries. This is in addition to the great potential of the use of SMR technology for non-electric applications. The Group take notes the different activities undertaken by the Agency, such as the approval of new coordinated research projects, the organization of technical and consultancy meetings, and the development of related publications and training material.

23. The Group reiterates its support for the initiative launched by the Director General, titled "Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship Programme (MSCFP)" through which the IAEA could accord a 2-year scholarship for up to 100 female graduate, pursuing master degree in nuclear science and technology or non-proliferation, with a view to promoting gender equality and diversity in the context of nuclear knowledge management. The Group reaffirms its commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women and hopes that this new initiative will help advance this cause. The Group was also satisfied to see that, as stated in the concept paper of the initiative, geographical balance will be a part of the selection criteria for the fellowship.

Madame Chairperson,

24. The Group welcomes the Director General report on the International Status and Prospects for Nuclear Power 2021, as well as the briefing made by DDG Michael Chudakov in this regard. The Group highlights the importance of this report as an important document to enhance the international visibility of nuclear energy, and reflect the growing global recognition of nuclear energy in achieving net zero emissions and enabling Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

25. The Group takes note of the variety of data and information presented in the report that showcase the status of nuclear power today, its high prospects in the future, the technology advancements that took place over the last four years, as well as the different factors and challenges that impact the future deployment pf nuclear power plants and reactors, including the availability of funding, fuel sustainability, human resources development and the regulatory frameworks. The Group looks forward to further discussing how to address these challenges during the upcoming International Nuclear Power Conference scheduled in October 2022. The Group also welcomes the efforts of the IAEA in promoting the role of nuclear power including

through organising the first international Conference on Climate Change and the Role of Nuclear Power.

Madam Chairperson,

26. The Group would like to highlight that as a result of the difficulties and restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic this year, parts of the General Conference resolution on "Strengthening the Agency's activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications" (annexes 4, 5 and 6) that were scheduled to be presented and adopted at the 64th General Conference have been postponed to the 65th General Conference and requests that they be maintained as its agenda items. In this regard, in the part of the resolution on "non-power nuclear applications" drafted by the G-77 and China, the annexes on "Development of the sterile insect technique for the control or eradication of malaria-, dengue-, and other diseases transmitting mosquitoes"; "Strengthening the support to Member States in food and agriculture"; Use of isotope hydrology for water resources management; and "Plan for producing potable water economically using small and medium-sized nuclear reactors" will be postponed. The Group underscores its keenness to introduce substantive updates to these parts, and enter into through and comprehensive negotiations thereon, in preparation for the 66th General Conference.

27. With these comments, the Group takes note of document under this agenda item (GOV/2021/27-GC(65)/3).

Thank you, Madam Chairperson

# Agenda Item 7: Other matters arising from the Sixty-third (2019) and the sixty-fourth (2020) regular sessions of the General Conference: (b) Personnel matters: (i) Staffing of the Agency's Secretariat and ii) Women in the Secretariat

Madam Chairperson,

1. The Group 77 and China would like to thank the Director General for his reports contained in GOV/2021/37-GC(65)/18 and GOV/2021/38-GC(65)/19, on Staffing of the Agency's Secretariat and Women in the Secretariat, respectively.

2. The Group notes the Secretariat's continuing efforts to improve, pursuant to General Conference resolutions, its recruitment practices with regard to staff members from developing countries, particularly of women, and from other G-77 Member States, which are unrepresented or underrepresented in the Secretariat.

3. The Group notes that during the period 1 June 2019 to 1 June 2021, 31.6% of all 209 appointments came from developing Member States, and that 29.4% of the senior staff came from developing countries. Both figures represent a decrease with respect to the previous biennium. Therefore, the Group remains concerned that this percentage is still inadequate, and encourages the Secretariat to exert more effort to increase the number of staff, including senior staff, from developing countries.

4. The Group notes the Secretariat's projection indicating that, as a result of staff retirements and the application of the rotation policy, the Secretariat can anticipate 317 vacancy notices over the next 7 years. In this regard, the Group urges the Secretariat to take advantage of this opportunity and work with Member States in order to fully implement General Conference resolutions on recruitment and staffing. The Group welcomes the information that 45.2% of the applications received by the Agency through its new web-based application system for advertised agencies come from developing countries. In addition to proactive measures mentioned in the Director General's report, the Group requests the Director General to ensure transparency in the Secretariat's selection process.

5. The Group welcomes the information that the Regular Budget consultant expenditure has decreased by 5.4 % compared to the first year of 2018-2019 biennium as a response to the Group's request that the Agency rationalize the policy of hiring consultants. However, the Group continues to note with concern the relatively low percentage of consultants from developing countries holding Special Service Agreements. In this regard, the Group requests the Agency to continue its efforts to rationalize the policy of hiring consultants, exercise transparency in their selection and, when necessary, to hire them, apply the policy of equitable geographical distribution, and to continue to identify the nationalities of consultants holding Special Service Agreements.

6. Finally, on the recruitment of women, the Group welcomes the information that the percentage of professional women in the Agency's Regular Staff is now at its highest level in the Agency's history at 35%. The Group welcomes also the significant progress on gender representation at the senior grade levels in DDG, D1 and P5, whereby the percentage of women has increased, now reaching 40% at the DDG level, 36.6% at the D1 level and 23.7% at the P5 level. However, we note with concern that the D2 level has experienced a decrease in the representation of women by one position during the reporting period.

7. The Group appreciates the important steps taken to enhance the representation of Women at the Agency over the reporting period, including the Director General's announcement to establish a goal of achieving gender parity in the Professional and higher categories by 2025, as well the launch of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship Programme (MSCFP), with the aim of helping increase the number of women in the nuclear field, supporting an inclusive workforce within the Agency. The Group welcomes the progress made in implementing this initiative.

8. The Group also takes note of the Secretariat's work with Member States to encourage applications by well qualified female candidates to Professional posts The Group, however, wishes to emphasize that implementation of the General Conference resolution on Women in the Secretariat should not prejudice the implementation of the General Conference resolution on Staffing of the Agency's Secretariat.

9. With these comments, the Group notes the documents GOV/2021/37-GC(65)/18 and GOV/2021/38-GC(65)/19.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

#### Agenda Item 8: Any other Business

Madam Chairperson,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China to thank you Madam Chairperson for your successful Chairmanship of the Board of Governors between the 64th and 65th sessions of the General Conference. The Group of 77 commends you and your team for your dedication and hard work over the past year. We wish you all the very best in your future endeavors.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson



# STATEMENT OF THE G-77 AND CHINA DURING THE IAEA BOARD OF GOVERNORS MEETING, 27 SEPTEMBER 2021

# DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR ALEJANDRO SOLANO ORTIZ, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF COSTA RICA

Agenda item 5: Any other business

Mr. Chairman, [H.E. Ambassador Mr. Chae-hyun SHIN, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea]

1. I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China to reiterate my appreciation and thanks to the outgoing Chair, Her Excellency Ambassador Heidi ALBERTA HULAN, Permanent Representative of Canada, and her team for the successful stewardship of the Board of Governors between the 64<sup>th</sup> and 65<sup>th</sup> sessions of the General Conference.

2. The Group would also like to take this opportunity to express its appreciation to the President of the General Conference, His Excellency Ambassador Sadiq M. MARAFI, Permanent Representative of Kuwait, for his excellent work and for his able leadership of the 65<sup>th</sup> session of the General Conference.

3. The Group also commends Mr. Alexandre BILODEAU, Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Canada for his outstanding Chairmanship of the Committee of the Whole.

Mr. Chairman,

4. On behalf of the Group, I wish to congratulate you Mr. Chairman for assuming the chairmanship of the Board of Governors for the coming year. Our congratulations go also to your Vice-Chairpersons.

5. The G-77 and China is confident that the Board will remain in good and steady hands as we move forward with the work of the Agency. Rest assured that you have the full support of our Group.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.



### G-77 and China Statement during the Technical Assistance and Cooperation Committee, 22 November 2021, delivered by H.E. Ambassador Alejandro Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

#### Agenda Item 2: Technical Cooperation, The Agency's Proposed Programme for 2022-2023

**[Not to read]** The Group would like to thank the Secretariat for preparing the Agency's Proposed Technical Cooperation Program for 2022-2023, as contained in documents GOV/2021/45, Add 1, Add 2 and Mod. 1as well as Mr. Hua Liu, Deputy Director General, and the staff of the Department of Technical Cooperation for the briefing provided to Member States on November 4<sup>th</sup>. We also thank DDG for his introductory remarks under this agenda item.

Mr. Chair,

1. Firstly, the Group would like to express its appreciation for the active participation of the IAEA and DG Grossi in the recent United Nations 2021 Climate Change Conference (COP26) held in Glasgow from 31 October to 12 November 2021. The Group welcomes the efforts of the Agency during the Conference in promoting peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy and other nuclear applications and techniques as a means to help mitigate and adapt to Climate Change and achieve zero carbon emissions.

2. The Group reiterates the paramount importance of the Agency's Technical Cooperation Program (TCP) as the main vehicle for the Agency's statutory function of encouraging and assisting research on, and development and practical application of, atomic energy for peaceful uses throughout the world. The Technical Cooperation Program plays an important role for the sustainable socioeconomic progress in developing countries and contributes towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Group commends in this regard the important role the Technical Cooperation Department plays in carrying out the TCP as mandated by the IAEA Statute.

3. The Group also reiterates that the Technical Cooperation Program is a shared responsibility and that, as such, it has to be the result of the combined efforts mainly of the Department of Technical Cooperation, of the technical Departments and of Member States themselves. These efforts are crucial for the planning and successful implementation of the Technical Cooperation Program, which is based on the needs and evolving priorities of those Member States in which TC projects are implemented. In this regard, the Group reiterates that "the nature, extent and scope of technical assistance to be provided to the requesting State or group of States shall be defined by the Government or Governments concerned", as is the established practice and is reflected in paragraph (f) of the Revised Guiding Principles and General Operating Rules to Govern the Provision of Technical Assistance by the Agency (INFCIRC/267), and in preambular paragraph (l) of Resolution GC(65)/RES/10. The Group is of the view that this important principle should continue to guide the provision of Technical Cooperation by the Agency and requests the Secretariat to reflect it explicitly in future proposed Programmes, in particular in the section on the programming process.

Mr. Chair,

4. The Group notes that Technical Cooperation Fund (TCF) target for 2022 is  $\notin$  91.075 million, as decided by the General Conference in September 2021, and that for 2023 it is  $\notin$ 92.6 million as per the recommendation submitted to the Board of Governors (GOV/2021/25). The Group also notes that a rate of attainment of 94% has been used as a basis for calculating the resources that are expected to be available and that this Committee is consequently expected to recommend the sum of up to  $\notin$ 85,610,500 to the Board for approval. The Group emphasises the importance of the TCF in the implementation of the TCP and while appreciating the continued commitment of Member States over the years, reiterates its call on all Member States to pay their contributions in accordance with the indicative scale of assessment in full and on time. The Group also requests the secretariat to work closely with Member States to achieve high-level rates of attainment on payments to the TCF.

5. The Group reiterates its view that the resources available for the TC Programme should be sufficient, assured and predictable to meet the objectives mandated in Article II of the Statute, and should be increased taking into account the Indicative Planning Figures (IPFs), the increasing number of Member States with a national TCP, the evolution in the level of the regular budget, the Board's decision of June 2016 to place the appropriate emphasis on the Agency's activities directly related to the implementation of the SDGs in Member States, the large unfunded components of TC projects in Member States, also termed as footnote a/ projects, the price increases and other relevant factors.

6. The Group notes that the total Footnote-a/Activities amount to almost  $\in$ 53.3 million in 2022 and to over  $\in$ 44.2 million in 2023. This is in addition to Footnote-a/Activities related to the recent proposed Interregional TC project on 'Strengthening Member State Capacities to Combat Banana Fusarium Wilt (TR4) which amounts to almost  $\in$ 5 million, as well as Footnote-a/Activities for the TC project on Supporting National and Regional Capacity in Integrated Action for Control of Zoonotic Diseases", which amounts to over  $\in$ 16.1 million in 2022 and almost  $\in$ 16.7 million in 2023. All these figures show that the current level of resources available falls short of the resources needed. The Group further stresses the importance of maintaining an adequate balance between the Agency's promotional and non-promotional activities.

7. The Group welcomes the efforts exerted by the Secretariat to adapt to challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, including through the increase of procurement activities u, as per the requirements of Member States with national TCP, to ensure a high implementation rate. The Group also requests the extension of the implementation of the outstanding projects of the TCP cycle 2020-2021 beyond their lifetime, with a view to ensure that the planned outcomes and objectives of these projects are achieved.

8. The Group stresses that the implementation rate of the current TC cycle, which is impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, should not affect future budget considerations and that the goal of achieving sufficient, assured and predictable resources shall be always a priority.

9. The Group also welcomes the decision taken by the  $65^{\text{th}}$  Session of the General Conference, as mandated in GC(65)/RES/10 on convening a follow-up to the 2018 Ministerial Conference on nuclear science, technology and applications and the Technical Cooperation Programme in 2023 with a view to convening it every four years thereafter, and requests the Secretariat to commence consultations with Member States in preparation for the Conference as soon as possible.

10. The Group appreciates the important steps taken to enhance representation of women in the Secretariat, reaffirms its principle of equitable geographical distribution and gender balance,

and reiterates that this principle should be reflected in all the Technical Cooperation activities of the IAEA. The Group takes this opportunity to continue requesting the Secretariat to significantly improve equitable geographical distribution and gender balance within the Agency at all levels of responsibility.

Mr. Chair,

11. With these remarks, the Group joins the consensus in having the Committee recommend to the Board the actions listed in the Agency's proposed Technical Cooperation program as contained in document GOV/2021/45, as well as Add 1, Add 2 and Mod. 1, and requests that its views and comments be duly reflected in the official records of the TACC meeting.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

# Agenda item 3: Evaluation of technical cooperation activities in 2021

Mr. Chair,

1. The Group of 77 and China wishes to thank the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) for presenting its evaluation of the Agency's technical cooperation activities in 2021, as contained in document GOV/2021/46. The Group also thanks the OIOS for the technical briefing held on November 2<sup>nd</sup>.

2. The Group continues to attach great importance to the work of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) to strengthen the Agency's ability to ensure management efficiency and programme effectiveness, and to enhance accountability.

3. The Group of 77 and China takes note of the evaluation results of the four CLEAs undertaken in 2021, with the intention of helping to strengthen the management of TC activities through systematic solutions. In this regard, the Group takes note of the increase of number of countries covered by CLEAs from three in 2020 to four in 2021 given that they were partly undertaken in a virtual format, and due to the difficult circumstances brought by COVID-19, and underlines the need to further increase the country coverage from four to six as previously agreed. The Group would also like to reiterate the importance in receiving information on the criteria used by OIOS to select countries and thematic areas for evaluation.

4. The Group welcomed the continued decrease of the overall cost of OIOS's TC-related evaluation activities in 2021 ( $\notin$ 517 475 in relation to  $\notin$ 569 371 in 2020). The Group stresses that the OIOS should, in the course of their regular work and within resources allocated to these offices from the Regular Budget, evaluate projects, in a balanced manner across all major programmes.

5. In this regard, the Group encourages the OIOS to perform evaluations of the activities of the other departments in the Agency, so that evaluation activities are applied in a balanced manner across all major programmes. The Group stresses the importance of a balanced allocation of resources for evaluation purposes between TC-related activities and other activities of the Agency, which require similarly intensive evaluation, since these activities account for a larger portion of the Agency's budget. Given the increasing demands on the Agency's budgetary, human and other resources, the Group encourages the OIOS to carry out its audit and evaluation functions in an effective and judicious manner, utilizing opportunities for synergies presented by other existing audit, evaluation and assessment mechanisms in the Agency and in the Member States.

6. The Group further notes that the Report on the evaluation of technical cooperation activities in 2021 has made 17 recommendations, which were all accepted by the Secretariat. The Group would like to draw attention, on the matter that specific efforts are needed to be taken to incorporate a gender equality perspective within outcomes and indicators and requests the Secretariat to continue its efforts to improve this situation. The Group takes note that the Secretariat is already working on the implementation of the 17 recommendations made.

7. The Group takes positive note that only 2 Programme Evaluation Recommendations are overdue this year in comparison to 9 overdue recommendations last year. We note that 44 Internal Audit Recommendations were also overdue this year. It is pertinent to note that the overdue recommendations for both the Programme Evaluation and Internal Audit are not related to TC activities and that they are Agency wide activities. Such a fact underlines the importance of striking a balanced approach in evaluating all the activities of the Agency. The Group requests the Secretariat to continue working towards the implementation of these recommendations, as appropriate.

Mr. Chair,

8. The Group takes note of the key cross-cutting findings and recommendations highlighted in the synthesis report on the TC projects design phase, which outlines, inter alia, that the majority of the funding support for Member States was used for the procurement of equipment. The Group underscores the importance of ensuring the sustainability of the TC procurement process, with a view of avoiding a negative impact on the delivery of the TCP. The Group underlines that such support under the TCP is Member States driven and shall be based on their needs and priorities. Furthermore, the Group requests the Secretariat to start activities aimed at migrating iVetNet to a Secretariat-managed infrastructure.

9. The Group notes that the CLEAs conducted in 2021 highlight the need for enhanced strategic coordination and cooperation between the Agency and other relevant UN organizations. The Group welcomes the partnership agreements signed with relevant organizations with a view to address this issue.

10. The Group appreciates the important steps taken to enhance representation of women in the Secretariat, reaffirms its principle of equitable geographical distribution and gender balance, and reiterates that this principle should be reflected in all the Technical Cooperation activities of the IAEA. The Group takes this opportunity to continue requesting the Secretariat to significantly improve equitable geographical distribution and gender balance within the Agency at all levels of responsibility.

11. With these comments, the Group of 77 and China takes note of the Evaluation of Technical Cooperation Activities in 2021, as contained in document GOV/2021/46, and requests that its views and comments be duly reflected in the official records of the TACC meeting.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.



#### G-77 and China Statement during the Board of Governors, 24-26 November 2021, delivered by H.E. Ambassador Alejandro Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

# Agenda Item 6 - Any other business: Report on the Implementation of Strategic Guidelines on Partnerships and Resource Mobilization

Mr. Chairperson,

1. The Group of 77 and China thanks the Director General for the preparation of the report on the Implementation of Strategic Guidelines on Partnerships and Resource Mobilization, as contained in document GOV/INF/2021/41.

2. The Group takes positive note of the steps and efforts taken by the Secretariat in implementing these Strategic Guidelines as agreed by the Board in June 2015, including through (a) strengthening of internal information sharing and coordination mechanisms, (b) development of internal tools and processes, (c) capacity-building of staff members, (d) enhanced communication and outreach.

3. The Group appreciates the efforts undertaken by the Secretariat to support Member States in building partnerships and in mobilizing resources, such as actions related to partnerships with Member State institutions to promote technology transfer, and partnerships with international financial institutions, development cooperation agencies, regional organizations, private sector and foundations, universities and academic institutions, national and international professional and research organizations, UN and other International Organizations (IOs).

4. The Group also welcomes the establishment of the Partnerships and Resource Mobilization Coordination Committee (PRMCC), supplemented by two sub-committees, with an aim to provide guidance to the Agency's different departments on vetting non-traditional partners, and to ensure that additional complexities and potential risks of entering into partnerships with these donors are adequately addressed in advance.

5. The Group appreciates that such efforts have proven useful in increasing the amount of extra-budgetary resources to over  $\notin$ 123 million and  $\notin$ 171 million in 2019 and 2020 respectively, which are the highest amounts since the approval of these Strategic Guidelines in 2015. The Group notes that part of this increase was due to the exceptional support provided to the Agency's response to the COVID-19 pandemic through the largest technical cooperation project in the history of the IAEA, which received total financial and in-kind contribution of more than  $\notin$ 29.5 million.

6. The Group also welcomes the approach taken by the Secretariat during the planning of the 2022-2023 Programme and Budget to align resource mobilization with identified unfunded programmatic activities with a view to secure the needed financial support for such activities and their full implementation. Such an approach gains significant importance given the increasing number of commendable initiatives launched by the Director General over the last two years, including inter alia the Marie Sklodowska Curie Fellowship Programme, ZODIAC, ReNuAL2, NUTEC Plastic and COMPASS.

7. The Group welcomes the Secretariat's renewed focus on bringing new partners and expresses appreciation for support provided by traditional and non-traditional donors, including from developing countries, which has supplemented the limited resources of the Agency.

8. The Group takes note of the new Country Programme Framework (CPF) guidance and template introduced in 2019, together with its partnership and results matrices, as well as the revision and completion of the partnership matrices of 32 CPFs, based on comprehensive donor and partners analyses.

Mr. Chairperson,

9. The Group would like to reiterate its opinion that the Strategic Guidelines on Partnerships and Resource Mobilization have the potential to strengthen the Agency's capacity to tap into new and additional resources through resource mobilization and public-private partnerships, and that, in the case of Technical Cooperation, these resources would complement the sources of funding to the TC Programme.

10. The Group stresses its principled position that additional sources of funding, such as public-private partnerships and extra-budgetary funding, cannot replace the Technical Cooperation Fund, which is essential for a sustainable and strategic TC Programme. The Group also stresses the importance of ensuring that the resources of the TC Programme are sufficient, assured and predictable.

11. On that note, the Group calls upon the Secretariat to exert additional resource mobilization efforts in order to commensurate with the unprecedented increase in the total amount of unfunded operational and capital activities planned in 2022-2023 Programme and Budget, which amount to over  $\in$ 303 million, in addition to footnote A activities. The Group reiterates its precautionary call against the overreliance of extrabudgetary activities in the future programme and budget planning.

12. The Group requests the Secretariat to organise a briefing session at the earliest convenience to highlight the main elements and technical aspects of the report, and respond to Member States inquiries in this regard, given the significance of this report and its strategic impact on the work of the IAEA. The Group also looks forward to receiving periodic updates on the activities undertaken on the implementation of the Strategic Guidelines every two years.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

# UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME (UNODC)



#### Statement of the Group of 77 and China During the 64<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, delivered by H.E. Ambassador Alejandro Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica Vienna, 12-16 April 2021

Madame Chair, [H.E. Ambassador Dominika Krois, Permanent Representative of Poland]

1 The Group of 77 and China felicitates H.E. Ambassador Dominika Krois on her election as the Chair of the 64<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission, as well as to the other elected members of the Bureau. The Group pledges to the Chair its full cooperation to make the present session a success.

2. The Group expresses once again its full support to H.E. Madam Ghada Waly, the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and Director General of the United Nations Office in Vienna, and looks forward to continue working with you to achieve more progress toward better policies and programs to effectively address and counter the world drug problem.

3. The Group of 77 and China would like to express its appreciation for the commendable efforts of the Chairperson and the Secretariat for carrying out the preparatory work and for finding a way to hold the Session under these difficult times as the World is still affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Madame Chair,

4. The Group reiterates that addressing and countering the world drug problem is a common and shared responsibility that should be undertaken in a multilateral setting through effective, concrete and increased regional, sub regional and international cooperation, based on an integrated, multidisciplinary, mutually reinforcing, balanced, scientific evidence-based and comprehensive approach with a view to promoting and protecting the health, safety and well-being of all humanity.

5. The Group stresses the importance of international cooperation, enhanced capacitybuilding initiatives, programs and activities, provision of equipment and technology and technical assistance, particularly for developing countries, especially in these difficult times, in order for states to have sufficient resources to address and counter the world drug problem.

6. The Group remains strongly convinced that upholding multilateralism, including supporting an effective United Nations development system and avoid promulgating and imposing any measures and actions on developing countries not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations, is essential to improve solidarity, international cooperation framework and reinforce States' capabilities to address and counter the world drug problem.

7. The Group recognizes the efforts undertaken by our authorities from the law enforcement, criminal justice, health, education and other relevant authorities, in addressing and countering the world drug problem.

8. The Group reiterates that the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, as amended by the 1972 Protocol, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988, and other relevant international instruments constitute the cornerstone of the international drug control system.

9. The Group reaffirms its unwavering commitment to ensuring that all aspects of demand reduction and related measures, supply reduction and related measures, and international cooperation are addressed in full conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, with full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, the principle of non-intervention in internal affairs of States, all human rights, fundamental freedoms, the inherent dignity of all individuals and the principles of equal rights and mutual respect among States.

# Madame Chair,

10. The Group reaffirms our commitments to prevent, significantly and measurably reduce or eliminate illicit cultivation, production, manufacturing, trafficking, of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances as well as the diversion of and illicit trafficking in precursors and money-laundering and illicit financial flows related to illicit drugs; as well as the illicit demand and abuse of drugs by promoting effective and comprehensive scientific evidence-based initiatives as well as initiatives and measures aimed at minimizing the adverse public health and social consequences of drug abuse.

11. The Group reiterates the need for strengthening international cooperation, in this regard, and also reaffirms the need to address drug-related socio-economic issues related to the illicit cultivation, manufacture and production of, and trafficking in drugs through the implementation of long-term comprehensive and sustainable developments oriented and balanced drug control policies and programs.

12. Transit States and other Member States continue to face multifaceted challenges, and the Group reaffirms the continuing need for cooperation and support, including the provision of technical assistance to, inter alia, enhance their capacities to effectively address and counter the world drug problem, in conformity with the 1988 Convention, and, as appropriate, the other Drug Control Conventions.

13. The Group remains fully committed to implementing the 2009 Political Declaration and its Plan of Action, to addressing the general challenges and priorities for action identified in the Joint Ministerial Statement adopted at the High Level Review in March 2014, as well as implementing the UNGASS 2016 outcome document and the 2019 Ministerial Declaration.

14. The Group emphasizes the need for sustainable and sufficient resources for the UNODC to enhance its capacity-building initiatives, programs and activities particularly for developing countries upon their request, including for the provision of the equipment, technology and technical assistance.

15. The Group emphasizes the need for continuous support from UNODC to member states upon their request to enhance their national efforts to establish a balanced, integrated, comprehensive, multidisciplinary and scientific evidence-based approach to address and counter the world drug problem, especially on the implementation of the three international drug control conventions, and of all our international drug policy commitments.

16. The Group recognizes that there are persistent, new and evolving challenges that should be addressed in conformity with the three international drug control conventions, which allow for sufficient flexibility for States parties to design and implement national drug policies

according to their priorities and needs, consistent with the principle of common and shared responsibility and applicable international law.

Madame Chair,

17. The Group reaffirms its determination to address and counter the world drug problem and to actively promote a society free of drug abuse in order to help to ensure that all people can live in health, dignity and peace, with security and prosperity, and reaffirm our determination to address public health, safety and social problems resulting from drug abuse.

18. In this regard, the Group recognizes the importance of appropriately mainstreaming a gender and age perspective into drug-related policies and programmes and that appropriate emphasis should be placed on individuals, families, communities and society as a whole, with a particular focus on women, children and youth, with a view to promoting and protecting health, including access to treatment, safety and the well-being of all humanity.

19. The Group of 77 and China emphasizes the need for the international community, in particular developed countries by providing means of implementation, to accelerate the ongoing efforts to address and counter the world drug problem.

Thank you for your attention.



### STATEMENT OF THE G-77 AND CHINA AT THE THIRTIETH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE, 17-21 MAY 2021 DELIVERED BY H.E. ALEJANDRO SOLANO ORTIZ, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF COSTA RICA

Vienna, 17 MAY 2021

Mr. Chair,

1. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, allow me to congratulate you on your election as Chair of the  $30^{\circ}$  Session of the CCPCJ, as well as to the other elected members of the Bureau. You can count on the full support of the Group for the successful conclusion of this meeting.

2. We also extend our thanks to the Secretariat for the excellent work done in preparation of this session.

3. We wish to thank the State and Government of Japan for their excellent organization of the 14<sup>th</sup> UN Crime Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. The Kyoto Declaration adopted in the Congress is a strong statement of our commitment to advancing the binomial of the rule of law and sustainable development, a goal that can only be achieved if access to capacity-building, support and adequate, long-term, sustainable, effective and demand-driven technical assistance is ensured. In that regard, we also wish to express support for the draft resolution on the follow-up to the 14<sup>th</sup> Congress, which was submitted by Japan to the Commission, as it reiterates the importance of making the goals and aspirations of the Kyoto Declaration a concrete reality.

4. We reaffirm our commitment towards the objectives set forth by the Kyoto Declaration. In this endeavor, capacity-building, support and the provision of adequate, long-term, sustainable, effective and demand driven technical assistance are of high importance.

Mr. Chair,

5. We reaffirm the need to enhance bilateral, regional, and international cooperation in criminal matters aimed at preventing and combating transnational organized crime, corruption and terrorism, including issues related to extradition and mutual legal assistance, and call upon Member States to adopt practical approaches that would facilitate such cooperation.

6. We express our serious concern over any form of ranking of Member States for the purposes of international cooperation in criminal matters. We remain strongly convinced that upholding multilateralism, including supporting an effective United Nations development system and avoid promulgating and imposing any measures and actions on developing countries not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United

Nations, is essential to improve solidarity, international cooperation framework and reinforce States' capabilities on crime prevention and criminal justice matters.

Mr. Chair,

7. Regarding the UNCAC, we welcome the progress made by States in implementing the Convention, including, inter alia, through the mechanism for the review of implementation of the UNCAC. We look forward to the upcoming United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Corruption.

8. We reiterate the necessity to take urgent measures to prevent, prosecute and deter all forms of corruption, as well as the transfer abroad and laundering of assets derived from corruption, and to deny safe havens to any legal or natural person who has committed or is liable for an act of corruption, and the proceeds of the crime.

9. We insist on the need to strengthen international cooperation to effectively prevent and counter money-laundering and illicit financial flows and enhance measures for the identification, tracing, freezing, seizure, and recovery of the proceeds of crime or corruption, to deny them safe havens through their eventual confiscation, as well as to speed up their recovery and return without restrictions and in accordance with Chapter V of the UNCAC.

10. We take note of the report of the High Level Panel on International Financial Accountability, Transparency and Integrity for Achieving the 2030 Agenda (FACTI).

11. We deeply regret that despite the very explicit articles of the UNCAC, there appears to be an increase in the barriers and challenges in the asset recovery process and their return to countries of origin, and in cases that make use of settlements, and in this regard, remind that States Parties shall afford one another the widest measures of international cooperation, and furthermore emphasize that the management, administration and utilization of returned assets is the responsibility of the requesting State and that recovered assets, shall be returned without conditionalities and in full respect of the sovereign rights of the States of origin. We further invite State Parties to address gaps within the international anticorruption framework particularly on asset recovery, and to consider the need of an additional protocol on asset recovery and the return as part of UNCAC.

Mr. Chair,

12. We strongly call the attention regarding the necessity to a full and effective implementation of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. We attach great importance to combating Trafficking in Persons. Any strategy to combat this crime should give due importance to addressing root causes, the prevention aspect, promoting effective law enforcement, the demand aspect of this problem and providing assistance to victims, and groups in vulnerable situations, especially women and children.

13. We express concern over the constant violation of the rights of migrants and urges the international community to ensure that the human rights of smuggled migrants, particularly the unaccompanied children, are respected and that the safety and security of smuggled migrants are granted utmost priority regardless of their immigration status, nationality, gender, ethnicity, age or religion. 14. Regarding trafficking on firearms we reaffirm its concerns about the continuing problem of illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts, components and ammunition as another manifestation of transnational organized crime.

15. We acknowledge any existing, increasing or potential links, in some cases, between transnational organized crime and other illicit activities, in particular drug trafficking and money laundering, illicit financial flows and terrorism and its financing, and reaffirm the need for enhancing bilateral, regional and international cooperation in the area of exchange of information, extradition and mutual legal assistance, in accordance with domestic legislation and with the aim to contributing to countering the threat posed by transnational organized crime.

Mr. Chair,

16. We call upon all Member States to integrate children's perspective into crime prevention policies and the overall rule of law efforts, and to develop and implement a comprehensive crime prevention and justice system policy, with a view to preventing the involvement of children in criminal activities.

17. We deplore the rise of hate crimes around the world and in this regard underline the importance of respect for religious, ethnic and cultural diversity, and call for all States to promote a culture of tolerance and respect among individuals, societies and nations.

18. We wish to express our particular concern for the illicit trafficking of cultural property and related offences, including the involvement of organized criminal groups, which continues to inflict increasing damage to the cultural heritage of our nations, and thus, to part of our identities.

19. We underscore the need to address crimes that have a significant impact on protected species of wild fauna and flora such as, illegal mining, illicit trafficking in forest products, biological and natural resources, wildlife, as well as precious metals, in the respective fora.

20. We underscore the need to better understand and enhance our efforts, in accordance with each Member's national law, against the smuggling of commercial goods.

21. On the issue of prevention of terrorism, the Group calls for strengthening international responses, in accordance with national legislation and the implementation and application of the UNTOC, and all applicable regional and international counter-terrorism legal instruments, as well as the comprehensive, balanced and effective implementation of the UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy. We strongly reaffirm that terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any religion, civilization, nationality or ethnicity, and reiterates that all efforts to counter it should be in line with international law.

Mr. Chair,

22. We recognize the complex nature of cybercrime and will continue to actively participate in the implementation of UNGA Resolution 74/247 on elaboration of a comprehensive international convention on countering the use of information and communication technologies for criminal purposes within the framework of the United

Nations, taking into full consideration existing national, regional and international instruments and efforts at the national, regional and international levels on combating the use of information and communication technologies for criminal purposes, in particular the work and outcomes of the Open Ended Intergovernmental Expert Group to conduct a comprehensive study on cybercrime". We support the elaboration of a convention that takes into account, inter alia, the concerns and interests of all Member States, in particular developing countries.

23. On the particular issue of prevention of terrorism, and in order to face this challenge, the Group calls for strengthening international responses, in accordance with national legislation inter-alia, through more effective implementation and application of the UNTOC, and all applicable international and regional counter-terrorism legal instruments, as well as the comprehensive, balanced and effective implementation of the UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy. We strongly reaffirm that terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any religion, civilization, nationality or ethnicity, and reiterates that all efforts to counter it should be in line with international law.

24. We recognize the positive role played by the intergovernmental working group to improve the governance and financial situation of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (FINGOV) as an appropriate forum for a fruitful dialogue on UNODC's program development and implementation. In this regard, we commend the leadership of the Cochairs of the Working Group, Mr. Germán Calderón of Colombia and Mr. Ignacio Baylina of Spain.

25. We reiterate that UNODC needs adequate and sustainable resources to allow it to effectively implement an increasingly complex mandate. Therefore, we urge all States to increase their unconditional contributions, specifically to the General Purpose Fund of UNODC.

26. We welcome the efforts on the Staff composition of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and other related matters and expresses concern that geographical representation from developing countries and gender balance, especially at the senior and policy-making levels, are still unpair and adversely affect the highest standards of efficiency, technical competence, and integrity of the UNODC.

27. Therefore, we urge the Executive Director to intensify her efforts to ensure that adequate, and proper equitable geographical distribution and gender balance are fully incorporated, as principles, in the recruitment policy of UNODC, both at headquarters, and its Field Offices, particularly at the senior and policy-making levels and for professional posts requiring specific skills.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.



# Statement by the Group of 77 and China at the joint meeting of the reconvened 64<sup>th</sup> Session of the CND and the reconvened 30<sup>th</sup> Session of the CCPCJ on 8-10 December 2021, delivered by H.E. Ambassador Alejandro Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

1. It is my pleasure to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on this joint meeting of the reconvened sessions of CCPCJ and the CND.

2. The Group appreciates Ambassador Dominika Anna Krois of Poland and Ambassador Alessandro Cortese of Italy for their co-chairpersonship of the joint meeting of the two Commissions.

3. Allow me on behalf of the Group to make extensive our appreciation for the Commissions Secretariat for the timely preparation of the sessions as well as the timely submission of the documents for our consideration, a work that is even more highlighted during these difficult times.

4. The Group reiterates the significance of the 'open-ended intergovernmental working group to improve the governance and financial situation of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime' or FINGOV. The Group sincerely appreciates the efforts of the Co-Chairs Mr. Germán Calderón (Colombia) and Mr. Ignacio Baylina Ruíz (Spain) in enhancing consultations with Member States to work on improving the governance and financial situation of UNODC and its programmes.

5. Now that we have had consultations on the future of FINGOV, the Group wishes to underscore the importance of its consolidation as the principal forum for communication and dialogue between Member States and UNODC's Secretariat, and where follow up to the Office's mandates implementation can be made in an open, inclusive, transparent, and regular manner.

6. The Group calls upon all to strive to take full advantage of the FINGOV in its new format for strengthening its methods of work, its agenda, and for making it even more dynamic. The Group welcomes the top management engagement with FINGOV, particularly the participation of the Executive Director, Madame Waly, in some of its meetings, and welcomes the decision to have such meeting at least once a year, since this allows timely and dynamic responsiveness to the needs and concerns of States, particularly in times of rapid change.

7. The Group is fully aware of the importance of UNODC country programmes and projects in developing countries and also the financial challenges and difficulties in the process of their implementation, and requests UNODC to fully implement country programmes and projects.

Distinguished Co-Chairs,

8. The Group reiterates the importance of adequate, predictable and stable funding for UNODC in order for the Office to enhance provision of technical assistance, capacitybuilding and needed equipment in particular to developing countries, upon request. In the same vein, the Group emphasizes the need for efficient utilization of such resources to ensure long-term sustainability. The Group also notes with concern the challenges UNODC faces due to the Pandemic that still affects the whole world.

9. The Group requests the Secretariat to keep Member States regularly informed and engaged regarding the implementation, effects and implications of the UN reform process on the Office's work, including the UN Development System Reform, and the UN Management System Reform and requests the Executive Director to report to the upcoming sessions of the Commissions on this issue. So far, progress has been made, but more systematic, concrete and friendly readable information is needed, not only on UNODC's headquarters efforts and implications, but specially on how these reforms have affected and improved its work on the field.

10. The UNODC's research work should be based on clear and prior mandates and policy guidance provided by the Governing Bodies. The Group would also like to emphasize the need for regular dialogue and close consultations between Member States and UNODC regarding the ongoing and planned research activities at all its stages.

Distinguished Co-chairs,

11. The Group requests the Executive Director of UNODC to ensure equitable and geographical representation, enhanced participation of women, especially from developing countries, particularly at senior and policymaking levels, and to report on the progress of such measures to the Commissions.

12. The Group reaffirms that the principle of equitable geographical representation, which has been enshrined in the UN Charter, should apply to posts within the UN Secretariat regardless of the source of funding, and underline the importance of respecting and implementing this principle in the composition of UNODC staff.

13. The Group urges UNODC to take serious and concrete measures to improve the representation of developing countries in line with General Assembly resolutions and to report in details and disaggregated by nationality on the progress of such measures to the Commissions, particularly on the work done by UNODC on the matter. Agreed ad ref

14. The Groups recalls that multilingualism, as a core value of the UN, contributes to the achievement of the goals of the Organization, as set out in Article 1 of the Charter of the United Nations and emphasizes the paramount importance of the equality of the six official languages of the United Nations. The Group welcomes the efforts made so far by the Secretariat in this regard, and urge UNODC to take the appropriate measures to implement current multilingualism policies.

15. Finally, this session of the Commissions comes again at a time when our world continues to face the pandemic of COVID-19. While the Group welcomes the efforts made by all parties to make the most of the current situation, we also recognize that these challenging times are a call for an early preparation of the Commissions for the next regular meetings in 2022. The Group is of the firm belief that we cannot delay substantive discussions and taking action on all agenda items related to the world drug problem and crime prevention and criminal justice, in a format agreeable to all. The Group, therefore, calls on the Commissions to take the lead in the international responses to the multiple changing and evolving manifestations of crime, moreover in times of crisis.

Thank you, Co-Chairs.



#### G-77 and China statement during the Ninth session of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption, Sharm-El Sheikh, Egypt, 13-17 December 2021 delivered by H.E. Ambassador Alejandro Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

Mr. President,

1. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, it is my pleasure to congratulate you on your election as President of the 9<sup>th</sup> session of the Conference of the States Parties, as also to the other elected members of the Bureau. The Group also thanks the government of Egypt for hosting this meeting in Sharm el-Sheikh and for the warm hospitality and arrangements.

2. The Group commends the Secretariat for making timely preparations for the Conference, including useful background documents made available.

3. The phenomenon of corruption continues to be one of the major challenges to security and stability, rule of law, and sustainable socioeconomic development of our societies. The Group reiterates the need for preventing and eradicating corruption more effectively by further promoting the full and effective implementation of the UN Convention against Corruption and underlines the critical role of the Conference of the States Parties in this regard.

4. The Group takes note of the ongoing efforts at different levels to implement the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, including its Sustainable Development Goals. Such efforts reinforce the comprehensive approach to substantially reducing corruption in all its forms and at all levels, including measures to address its underlying causes.

Mr. President,

5. The Group welcomes the recent holding of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Corruption, held in New York under exceptional circumstances. We also welcome the resulting Political Declaration "Our common commitment to effectively addressing challenges and implementing measures to prevent and combat corruption and strengthen international cooperation".

6. The Group wishes to recall the 'Kyoto Declaration" adopted by the 14th UN Crime Congress in 2021, in which the international community in a full chapter committed itself, inter alia, to develop, adequately resource and implement effective policies and measures, to analyze corruption and strengthening the integrity, transparency and accountability of public institutions, in order to prevent, detect, investigate, prosecute and adjudicate corruption in a holistic manner for ending impunity.

7. In this regard, the Group underscores the importance of having meaningful, comprehensive and balanced follow-up processes on those outcome documents.

Mr. President,

8. The Group reiterates the importance of developing and promoting effective measures, policies and practices aimed at prevention of corruption, and in this regard stresses the need to enhance efforts in accordance with chapter II of the Convention.

9. The Group deeply regrets that despite the very explicit articles of the Convention, barriers and challenges in the asset recovery process appear to be on the increase. The Group therefore underscores that the return of assets is a fundamental principle of the

Convention as stated in its article 51, and States Parties shall afford one another the widest measures of international cooperation, in particular, in the recovery and return of assets including when settlements and non-trial resolutions or other administrative mechanisms are used in accordance with the Convention and their domestic law.

10. The Group emphasizes that the management, administration, and utilization of returned assets is solely the responsibility of the requesting state and that recovered assets shall be returned without conditionalities and in full respect of the sovereign rights of the states of origin and the Convention.

11. The Group calls on the States Parties, at the present session of the Conference, to commit to accelerating the development of international cooperation, in the area of asset recovery, and urges all States Parties to remove barriers associated with implementing article 46 of the Convention, on mutual legal assistance.

12. The Group remains strongly convinced that upholding multilateralism, including supporting an effective United Nations development system and avoid promulgating and imposing any measures and actions on developing countries not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations, is essential to improve solidarity, international cooperation framework and reinforce States' capabilities to address and combat corruption.

12 bis. The Group takes note of the Report of the High Level Panel on International Financial Accountability, Transparency and Integrity for Achieving the 2030 Agenda.

Mr. President,

13. The Group notes with satisfaction the effective functioning of the Implementation Review Mechanism of the Conference, in accordance with its Terms of Reference and the guiding principles and characteristics of the Mechanism set out in Resolution 3/1, which should be fully and consistently respected throughout the review process.

14. The Group remains of the firm view that Implementation Review Mechanism requires sustainable and predictable funding to ensure its efficient, continued and impartial functioning. Therefore, the Group reiterates its position that the Mechanism should be funded from the regular budget of the United Nations in accordance with the Terms of Reference.

15. Technical assistance is a crosscutting issue and is crucial for effective and efficient implementation of the Convention, and thus needs to be given special attention. The Group appreciates the role of UNODC in providing, within its mandate and upon request, tailor-made technical assistance activities at national, regional and global levels based on the needs and priorities of State Parties, including those identified during the Review Process. The Group calls for sufficient and stable funding to develop and implement programs and projects for the purpose of capacity-building and technical assistance.

16. In conclusion, the Group looks forward to fruitful deliberations during the current session.

I thank you Mr. President.

COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN TREATY ORGANIZATION (CTBTO)



# Group of 77 and China statement during the resumed 55th session of the Preparatory Commission on 27 January 2021, delivered by H.E. Ambassador Alejandro Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

Mr Chairperson,

1. At the outset, the Group avails itself of this opportunity to welcome H.E. Ambassador Ivo Šrámek, Permanent Representative of Czech Republic and congratulates him on his election as Chairperson of the Preparatory Commission for the year 2021. The Group thanks Ambassador Faouzia Mebarki for chairing the Preparatory Commission during 2020. The Group congratulates Ambassador Mebarki for her leadership and hard work in conducting the work of the Prepcom through a challenging year and wishes her success in her future endeavours.

2. The Group reiterates its standing positions that have been stated in previous sessions of the Preparatory Commission and further reiterates that the Vienna spirit and the principle of consensus should prevail in any decision-making process.

3. The Group takes this opportunity to continue encouraging the Executive Secretary in his efforts to significantly improve the gender balance and the equitable geographical distribution within the organization and at all levels of responsibilities.

4. On the sub item related to the appointment of the Chairperson of Working Group B, The Group wishes to reiterate its thanks to Dr. Schulze for all his efforts during his Chairmanship of the Working Group and looks forward to reaching a consensus on the selection of the new Chairperson for WGB in the current PrepCom, while respecting the principles of geographical rotation, inclusivity and unity of the Prepcom.

5. On the sub item of the appointment of Directors of the PTS, the Group welcomes and supports the recommendations of the Executive Secretary in document CTBT/PTS/INF.1574, regarding the appointments to the positions of Director of the International Data Centre Division, Director of the Legal and External Relations Division and Director of Knowledge Management and Human Resources Services, for a period of three years.

6. Finally, the Group takes this opportunity to assure you of its full support and cooperation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.



#### Statement by the Group of 77 and china at the Resumed 55<sup>th</sup> session of the Preparatory Commission, 8 March 2021, delivered by H.E Ambassador Alejandro Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

Mr. Chairperson,

1. The Group of 77 and China is pleased to see you, Ambassador Ivo Šrámek, conducting our work in this resumed 55<sup>th</sup> session of the Prepcom and would like to assure you of its full cooperation and support.

2. The Group reiterates its standing positions that have been stated in previous sessions of the Preparatory Commission and further reiterates that the Vienna spirit and the principle of consensus should prevail in any decision-making process.

3. The Group takes this opportunity to congratulate H.E Jalal ALASHI, Permanent Representative of the State of Libya who has been nominated by the African Group to be elected Vice Chairperson of the Prepcom for 2021.

4. The Group is also pleased to note that the Consultations on the appointment of the Chairperson of WGB have reached a consensus that respects the principle of geographical rotation and supports the appointment of Mr Erlan Batyrbekov from Kazakhstan as WGB's new Chairperson.

5. The Group would like to commend Ambassador Juan Francisco Facetti from Paraguay and Ms. Anne Strommen Lycke from Norway who accepted to withdraw their candidature in favour of consensus.

6. Finally, the Group takes this opportunity to assure you Mr Chairperson of its full support and cooperation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.



# G-77 and China statement during the 56<sup>th</sup> session of Working Group B, 8-19 March 2021, delivered by H. E. Ambassador Alejandro Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

Mr. Chairman,

1. The Group of 77 and China is pleased to see you, Mr M. Sergey Berezin, conducting our work in this 56<sup>th</sup> 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. The Group is pleased to note that the decision on the appointment of the Chairperson of WGB was reached in a consensual manner that respects the principle of geographical rotation. The Group would like to commend Ambassador Juan Francisco Facetti from Paraguay and Ms Anne Strommen Lycke from Norway who graciously withdrew their candidatures in favour of the consensus.

3. We would also like to thank Dr. Lassina Zerbo, the Executive Secretary, for his opening remarks and take note of his report on verification related activities for the period from July to December 2020. The Group also takes note of the documents prepared for this session by the Provisional Technical Secretariat's (PTS).

Mr. Chairman,

4. The Group is pleased to note that since our last meeting, two members of our Group, Cuba and the Union of the Comoros, have ratified the CTBT, bringing the number of State Signatories to 185 and of Ratifiers to 170. The Group commends Cuba's and the Union of the Comoros's decisions. The Group also stresses the need of an early Entry Into Force of the CTBT and underlines the need for all possible efforts 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.

5. The Group reiterates its principled 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 verification regime of the Treaty, upon entry into force, is balanced, coherent, as well as robust while efficient.

Mr. Chairman,

6. 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 Group notes the continuous progress, within the provisional operational nature of the IMS, as reported by the PTS, on the joint efforts of the States hosting IMS facilities, local operator and the PTS. The Group also notes that the data availability of certified IMS stations remained high and automated products of the IDC met the timeliness requirements more than 99% of the time.

b. Regarding the IMS, the Group takes note of the activities undertaken by the PTS during the reporting period, in particular the progress achieved regarding the installations and certification of remaining Stations in developing countries, which illustrates the strong political commitment and material contributions of developing countries to the work of this Organization. The Group further takes note that during the reporting period, the total number of installed stations is 297 (92.5%) and the number of certified stations is 288 (89.7%) with two new IMS stations certified.

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. The Group would like to affirm 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, must respect the territorial integrity of states.

e. The Group looks forward to finalizing direct and clear guidance for noble gas background characterization, as a matter of priority at the next session of the PrepCom and appreciates the work carried out by the Co-facilitators Ambassador Molekane and Ambassador Laggner, as per the mandate outlined by the PrepCom, in this regard. The Group 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.

f. Regarding the International Data Center Progressive Commissioning, the Group takes note of The technical (online) meeting held by the PTS during 13-16 October 2020 with the objective to continue the process of completing the Validation and Acceptance Test Plan (VATP) of the International Data Centre (IDC), the International Monitoring System (IMS) and the GCI of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO). The Group would like to emphasize the importance of continued involvement of experts in conducting the experiments, including the participation of experts from developing countries. The Group looks forward to further briefings on the progressive commissioning of the IMS and the IDC, the validation and acceptance test plan and the experiments conducted and planned by the PTS, noting that the milestones for progressive commission are not time bound and are requirement-based. The Group further believes that the evaluation report should include how past identified performance shortfalls were addressed the assessment report on the four experiments, the plan for the 2021 experiment and update of the VATP for future experiments. The Group also requests that the PTS considers introducing provisions in the NATP to measure the quality of IDC in fulfilling the verification objectives and test the provisions in the next set of experiments.

g. The Group takes note of the progress made under the OSI action plan for 2016-2019, that completed all 43 projects by the end of 2019 and the OSI strategic policy and the 2020- 2021 Programme and Budget. The Group takes note of the postponement of several preparatory activities such as a communications field test, host country training, site preparations and the conduct of both field BUEs, originally planned for June and September 2020 as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic and movement restrictions and looks forward to a successful conduct of the exercise initial phase (BUE-IN) and BUE continuation phase, as soon as conditions permit.

h. On the Radionuclide Monitoring System, the Group takes note of the continued work on the completion of ongoing installation and certification projects and the implementation of a major upgrade and revalidation, which is carried out with Signatory States. The Group looks forward to the successful conduct of the 2021 Proficiency Test Exercise for noble gas samples, scheduled for the first quarter of 2021 and requests the PTS to ensure participation of all interested States Signatories in the test.

Mr. Chairman,

7. The Group would like to highlight the importance of capacity building activities, especially through technical trainings, workshops and capacity building courses, and expresses its appreciation for the PTS's efforts to continue providing and expanding capacity-building activities despite COVID-19 pandemic and movement restrictions, through organizing online workshops and trainings. We reaffirm the continuing need for cooperation and support, including the provision of technical assistance to, inter alia, ensure that all States Signatories, in particular developing countries, have the capacity to effectively participate in the verification regime of the Treaty, and implement obtained knowledge and capacities at the national, regional and international levels.

8. The Group expresses its support for projects, such as the pilot project that facilitate the participation of experts from developing countries in the WGB sessions in 2021, which resulted in the selection of 13 new experts from developing countries in addition to the eight re-nominated experts and looks forward to enlarging the participation of experts in virtual meetings of the WGB. The Group is convinced that such participation will greatly contribute to capacity building in our countries.

9. Cognizant of the exceptional circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and because of the technical and substantive nature of the issues under the agenda of the work of this technical Working Group of the 56<sup>th</sup> session of WGB, and due to the lack of ability of virtual meetings to induce enough interactions between delegations, the Group suggests that the Agenda of this session of the WGB be streamlined to cover the most salient and must-do items, and discussions on substantive issues and documents that need to take some sort of decisions, be deferred to the next session of the WGB, when in person participation of the technical experts of delegation would be possible. The Group emphasizes that the informal technical consultations and expert group discussions conducted under the draft agenda item 6 should be strictly procedural when reflected in the WGB report of this session. In this regard, the Group reiterates that WGB report for its 56<sup>th</sup> session must be procedural, focusing on business continuity, and duly considered by technical experts from States Signatories.

10. As part of its integrated capacity building activities, the Commission has to continue offering States Signatories, in particular developing States, a wide range of training courses and workshops aimed at strengthening capacities in areas relevant to the Treaty. Capacity building activities should also include the provision of hardware and software to NDCs, especially those in developing countries, enabling them to access and analyze IMS data and International Data Centre (IDC) products.

11. 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. In this regard, we encourage Working Group B to contribute to improving such representation among its officers in accordance with the abovementioned principles.

Mr Chairman,

12. 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.



#### G-77 and China statement during the fifty-ninth session of Working Group A, 31 May-1 June 2021, delivered by H.E. Ambassador Alejandro Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

Madam Chairperson,

1. The Group of 77 and China would like to thank you, Ambassador Nada Kruger, for chairing this meeting and assure you of its full support and cooperation.

2. The Group welcomes the conclusion of the process of electing the Executive Secretary. In this regard, the Group congratulates Dr. Robert Floyd on his appointment as the next Executive Secretary and looks forward to working with him at the beginning of his tenure. The Group expresses its appreciation for the good work that Dr. Lassina Zerbo has done and continues to do for the CTBTO in his capacity as the incumbent Executive Secretary.

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. Cooperation to contain, mitigate and defeat the pandemic, including through a multilateral approach, should be strengthened and intensified. The Group welcomes the Organization's business continuity, flow of data and data products despite restrictions caused by COVID-19 and express its gratitude for the efforts of the PTS in this regard.

4. The Group is of the view that, this is a time for the international community, to demonstrate its capability to work together in solidarity to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19. The international community must unite in its efforts to ensure access to scientific guidance, training, equipment, essential medical supplies, and concrete life-saving services to countries in greatest need and in regions where the full impact is yet to be felt.

5. The Group considers that at this juncture cooperation and solidarity should prevail among nations, and calls upon countries to ensure that their measures will not have a negative impact on the capacity of States to respond efficiently to COVID-19.

6. The Group would also like to thank the Executive Secretary Dr. Lassina Zerbo for his opening remarks. The Group takes note of the Executive Secretary's report on verification related activities for the period from July to December 2020, the Annual report 2020 and the report on non-verification related activities of the Provisional Technical Secretariat (PTS) from January to March 2021.

7. The Group would like also to extend its appreciation to the PTS for the timely issuance of the documents.

Madam Chairperson,

8. The Group welcomes the recent signature and ratification of the CTBT by Cuba and ratification by the Union of the Comoros, which brings the total number of signatures to 185 States and ratifications to 170, including 36 of the 44 Annex 2 States whose ratification is required for entry into force of the Treaty.

9. The Group believes 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. The Group looks forward to the Article XIV Conference 2021.

Madam Chairperson,

10. Regarding agenda item 3, the Group takes note of the report of the Advisory Group at  $56^{\text{th}}$  session and the recommendations contained therein (CTBT/AG-56/1). 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.

11. On the financial statements of the Preparatory Commission for 2020, the Group takes note of the External Auditor's report and its recommendations aimed at strengthening the implementation of Major Programmes in the Preparatory Commission and welcomes the report of the External Auditor and its conclusions. The Group takes note of the new recommendations issued in 2020 and requests the PTS to fully implement those recommendations in a timely manner.

Madam Chairperson,

12. The Group takes note of the draft 2022-2023 Programme and Budget Proposal, as contained in document CTBT/PTS/INF.1580. The Group thanks you Madam Chairperson and the PTS, for convening on 15 April 2021 the Informal consultations on the draft proposal, and would like to make the following preliminary comments:

(a) The Group notes that the budgetary proposals for 2022 reflect a slightly less than zero real growth budget of \$125.92 million at 2022 prices with an overall price adjustment of 1.75%. The Group notes as well that most of the 2022 Budget is allocated to verification activities (81.2%).The Group requests the PTS to provide detailed clarification about the 2022 price adjustment and factors used in the calculation of its overall average of 1.75 percent as well as providing further clarification on Budget Drivers;

(b) The Group notes the total biennial savings and reprioritization of \$6.01million. 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. 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;

(c) 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. In this regard, the Group takes note that the share allocated to the OSI programme within the draft Programme and Budget 2022 has decreased from 8.8 percent to 8.6 percent compared to the previous year, while the share allocated to the IMS programme has increased;

(d) The Group takes note of the decision on the carry forward of the Capital Investment Fund (CIF) and Multiyear Funds unspent balances of 31 December 2021 to the financial period 2022, as soon as they are audited and approved;

(e) The Group is of the view that since the plan of exercises for the years 2019-2021 was not carried out as foreseen in the "On-Site Inspection Exercise Plan for 2016-2020" due to the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, it remains the responsibility of the PTS

to revise the abovementioned plan and present it to the next Working Group B (WGB) session for consideration. In view of this, to prepare for the next IFE, the Group requests the Secretariat to convene necessary Expert Meetings during 2021 to define the projects and elaborate the exercise plan based on challenging scenarios to be held in the future;

(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).

13. 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 further notes that despite these challenges, the participation rate was at record high. In this regard, 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 requests 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.

Madam Chairperson,

14. On the 2020 Human Resources Management Report, after preliminary analysis the Group would like to reaffirm 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 appreciates the information provided regarding the professional fixed-term staff members of the Group of 77 and China, while expressing its concern with the low level of representation of the Group.

15. The Group also 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 a constructive deliberation and timely conclusion of the work of this Working Group.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.



# Statement of the Group of 77 and China during 56<sup>th</sup> Session of the Preparatory Commission, 21-22 June 2021, delivered by H.E. Ambassador Alejandro Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

Mr. Chairperson,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

2. The Group of 77 and China is pleased to see you, Ambassador Ivo Sramek, chairing the 56<sup>th</sup> Session of the Preparatory Commission (PrepCom). The Group takes this opportunity to renew to you, Ambassador, the assurances of its full support and cooperation. Furthermore, the Group expresses its full support to the PrepCom in executing its tasks in the most efficient and effective manner.

3. The Group would like to thank Dr. Lassina Zerbo for his opening remarks and dedication to the Commission in the past eight years. As Executive Secretary, Dr. Zerbo's tenure has been marked by the successful promotion of the treaty, promotion of capacity building especially for developing countries, the excellent management of the organisation and the enhancement of its stature as an International Organisation. The Group appreciates, in particular, the initiatives to promote capacity building and training and believes that such activities will be further improved by the elected Executive Secretary. The Group wishes Dr. Lassina Zerbo success in his future work.

Mr. Chairman,

4. It is a privilege and an honour for the Group to welcome Dr. Robert Floyd as the new Executive Secretary, initiating his duties in August. The Group would like to assure Dr. Floyd of its continuous cooperation and full support, and wishes him every success for his forthcoming tenure of office.

Mr. Chairman,

5. The Group takes note of the reports of the Executive Secretary and expresses its appreciation to the Provisional Technical Secretariat for preparing documents and making them available for this session in a timely manner.

Mr. Chairman,

6. 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. Cooperation to contain, mitigate and defeat the pandemic, including through a multilateral approach, should be strengthened and intensified. The international community must unite in its efforts to ensure access to scientific guidance, training, equipment, essential medical supplies, and concrete life-saving services to countries in greatest need and in regions where the full impact is yet to be felt. The Group calls upon countries to ensure that their measures will not have a negative impact on the capacity of States to respond efficiently to COVID-19.

7. The Group supports efforts to ensure business continuity in the CTBTO PrepCom and also expresses gratitude to the PTS of all its efforts amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Chairman,

8. The Group wishes to reiterate its full support for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and stresses the need for an early Entry Into Force (EIF) of the CTBT and its universalization, with the ultimate goal of eliminating nuclear weapons, and general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

9. The Group welcomes the recent ratification of the CTBT by Cuba and the Union of the Comoros, which brings the total number of signatures to 185 States and the ratifications to 170. The Group believes that these developments represent significant steps towards the Universalization of the Treaty. This gives palpable signs of the Group's commitment to achieve the universalization of the Treaty and achieve complete nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

10. The Group looks forward to contributing to all discussions and work in preparation for the, the upcoming Science and Technology Conference 2021, the Article XIV Conference and the 10<sup>th</sup> NPT Review Conference.

11. The Group expresses 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. Chairman,

12. On Agenda item 3, the Group takes note of the report of Working Group A at its 59<sup>th</sup> session and its recommendations. We would like to thank the Chairperson of WGA, Ambassador Nada Kruger of Namibia, for leading the consultations that preceded the session, as well as for all her efforts in conducting the virtual WGA meeting in order to achieve consensus despite challenges and difficulties caused by the pandemic.

13. The Group takes note of the initial draft 2022-2023 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.

14. The Group would like to reiterate some points expressed during the last Working Group A session. In this regard, 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.

15. The Group welcomed the fact that the External Auditor had declared the financial statements of the CTBTO as a true reflection of the financial position for the 2020 financial year and is ready to accept the 2020 audited financial statements. The Group expresses its appreciation to the External Auditor of the Commission, the Auditor General of the State Audit Office of the Kingdom of Thailand, and notes that its mandate will end with the conclusion of the audit of the 2021 financial statements of the Commission.

16. On agenda item 4, the Group also takes note of the report of the Working Group B at its Fifty-sixth Session and thanks Mr. Erlan Batyrbekov for the introduction of the report.

17. 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. In this regard, the Group expresses its support

for the pilot project, which facilitates the participation of experts from developing countries in the WGB sessions. The Group is convinced that such participation will greatly contribute to capacity-building in our countries. The Group highlights that capacity building activities postponed due to COVID-19 should be rescheduled as soon as circumstances allow.

18. The Group takes note of the recent report of the Advisory Group at its 56<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.

19. The Group thanks the Chairperson of the Advisory Group, Sir Michael Weston, who has chaired the Group from 2009 to July 2021, and for his excellent stewardship during this long period.

Mr Chairman,

20. 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 welcomes the efforts made to improve the representation of the staff, including towards achieving gender balance at the director level of the PTS. The Group takes this opportunity to continue encouraging the Executive Secretary in his efforts to significantly improve the gender balance and the equitable geographical distribution within the organization and at all levels of responsibility, 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.

21. The Group expresses its appreciation to the Co-facilitators, Ambassador Molekane from South Africa and Ambassador Laggner from Switzerland, for holding informal consultations on the issue of noble gas background measurement, and their updated report on these consultations. The Group also expresses its appreciation to Ambassador Navarrete from Chile for holding consultations on the issue of non-scheduled sessions of the PrepCom. The Group looks forward to finalizing direct and clear guidance for further activities of the PTS on the issue of noble gas background characterization, as well as finalizing guidelines for holding non-scheduled sessions of the Commission, as a matter of priority at the soonest in-person session of the Commission, and expects the PTS to act in accordance with its mandate, in these regards. The Group stresses that the postponement of the deadlines for those decisions is directly linked to the temporary changes in the format and modality of meetings of the PrepCom in light of the COVID-19 crisis.

22. 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.



# G-77 AND CHINA STATEMENT DURING THE 57TH SESSION OF WORKING GROUP B, 23 AUGUST – 3 SEPTEMBER 2021, DELIVERED BY MS. ALINA CAÑAS VARGAS, CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF COSTA RICA ON BEHALF OF H. E. AMBASSADOR ALEJANDRO SOLANO ORTIZ, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF COSTA RICA

### Mr. Chairman,

1. The Group of 77 and China congratulates you, Dr Erlan Batyrbekov, on your appointment as Chair of Working Group B and is pleased to see you conducting our work in this 57th Session of Working Group B together with the Vice-Chairs and Task Leaders. The Group would like to assure you of its full cooperation.

2. We would also like to congratulate Dr Robert Floyd for his appointment as the Executive Secretary and assure him of our full support. Furthermore, the Group thanks the Executive Secretary for his opening remarks and takes note of his report on verification related activities for the period from January to June 2021. The Group also takes note of the documents prepared for this session by the Provisional Technical Secretariat's (PTS) and appreciates the PTS efforts in making them available.

Mr. Chairman,

3. The Group stresses the need of an early Entry Into Force of the CTBT and underlines the need for 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. The upcoming 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the opening of the Treaty for signature should be the rallying point towards this end. The Group looks forward to the 2021 Article XIV Conference, which will take place in September in New York and expresses its full support to South Africa and Italy as Co-Presidents of this Conference.

4. The Group takes note with satisfaction of the success of the Science and Technology Conference 2021 that took a hybrid format as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, as it provided an opportunity to discuss and potentially assist States Signatories in identifying new and improved technologies which may benefit the Treaty's verification regime. The Group notes that the Conference was an effective platform for an exchange of knowledge and ideas between the Preparatory Commission of the CTBTO and the broader scientific community.

5. The Group reiterates its principled 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 verification regime of the Treaty, upon Entry Into Force, is balanced, coherent, and robust while furthering its efficiency.

Mr. Chairman,

6. On specific verification related activities conducted by the PTS, as contained in the Executive Secretary's report, the Group stresses the importance of the PTS conforming with its mandate and would like to make the following remarks:

a) The Group notes the continuous progress, within the provisional operational nature of the IMS, as reported by the PTS, on the joint efforts of the States hosting IMS facilities, local operator and the PTS. The Group also notes that the data availability of certified IMS stations remained high and automated products of the IDC met the timeliness requirements more than 99% of the time.

b) Regarding the IMS, the Group takes note of the activities undertaken by the PTS during the reporting period, in particular the progress achieved towards the installations and certification of remaining Stations in developing countries, which illustrates the strong political commitment and material contributions of developing countries to the work of this Organization. The Group further takes note that during the reporting period, the total number of installed stations and certified stations remained unchanged at 297 (92.5%) and 288 (89.7%) respectively.

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) The Group would like to affirm 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.

e) 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 regard. In this connection, the Group appreciates the work carried out by the Co-facilitators Ambassador Molekane and Ambassador Laggner, as per the mandate outlined by the PrepCom, in this regard. The Group 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.

f) Regarding the International Data Center Progressive Commissioning, the Group takes note of the virtual technical meeting that took place from 23 to 24 June 2021 to continue the process of completing the IDC validation and acceptance test plan (VATP). The Group would like to emphasize the importance of continued involvement of experts in conducting the experiments, including the participation of experts from developing countries. The Group looks forward to further briefings on the progressive commissioning of the IMS and the IDC, the validation and acceptance test plan and the experiments conducted and planned by the PTS, noting that the milestones for progressive commission are not time bound and are requirement-based. The Group further believes that the evaluation report should include how past identified performance shortfalls were addressed the assessment report on the four experiments, the plan for the 2021 experiment and update of the VATP for future experiments. The Group also requests that the PTS considers introducing provisions in the VATP to measure the quality of

IDC in fulfilling the verification objectives and test the provisions in the next set of experiments.

g) The Group takes note of the follow-up to the OSI action plan for 2016-2019 .The Group takes note of the postponement of several preparatory activities such as a communications field test, host country training, site preparations and the conduct of both field BUEs, originally planned for June and September 2020 and postponed to July 2021 as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic and movement restrictions. The Group looks forward to the programme of work for the period 2022-23 in order to validate the outcomes of the OSI action plan 2016-2019, the third training cycle for inspectors, and the development of OSI techniques. h) On the Radionuclide Monitoring System, the Group takes note of the continued work on the completion of ongoing installation and certification projects and the implementation of major upgrade and revalidation projects, as well as the maintenance of stations, which is carried out with Signatory States. The also takes note of the conduct of the inaugural 2021 Proficiency Test Exercise for noble gas samples, held in February 2021.

Mr. Chairman,

7. The Group would like to highlight the importance of capacity building activities, especially through technical trainings, workshops and capacity building courses, and expresses its appreciation for the PTS's efforts to continue providing and expanding capacity-building activities despite COVID-19 pandemic and movement restrictions, through organizing online workshops and trainings. We reaffirm the continuing need for cooperation and support, including the provision of technical assistance to, inter alia, ensure that all States Signatories, in particular developing countries, have the capacity to effectively participate in the verification regime of the Treaty, and implement obtained knowledge and capacities at the national, regional and international levels.

8. The Group expresses its support for projects, such as the pilot project that facilitate the participation of experts from developing countries in the WGB sessions in 2021. The Group is convinced that such participation will greatly contribute to capacity building in our countries.

9. Cognizant of the exceptional circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and because of the technical and substantive nature of the issues under the agenda of the work of this technical Working Group of the 57th session of WGB, and due to the lack of ability of hybrid meetings to induce enough interactions between delegations, the Group suggests that the Agenda of this session of the WGB be streamlined to cover the most salient and must-do items, and discussions on substantive issues and documents that need to take some sort of decisions, be deferred to the next session of the WGB, when in person participation of the technical experts of delegation would be possible.

10. In this regard, the Group emphasizes that the task leader discussions proposed under draft agenda item 6, addition to other informal technical consultations and expert group discussions should be strictly procedural when reflected in the WGB report of this session. The Group also reiterates that WGB report for its 57<sup>th</sup> session must be procedural, focusing on business continuity, and duly considered by technical experts from States Signatories.

11. As part of its integrated capacity building activities, the Commission has to continue offering States Signatories, in particular developing States, a wide range of training courses, workshops as well as hardware and software for NDCs aimed at strengthening capacities in

areas relevant to the Treaty. Capacity building activities should continue to include all these elements that enable developing countries to access and analyze IMS data and International Data Centre (IDC) products.

12. The Group reaffirms its principles of equitable geographical distribution and gender balance and reiterates that these principles should be reflected in the PrepCom, its subsidiary bodies, particularly when it comes to capacity-building activities. In this regard, we encourage Working Group B to contribute to improving such representation among its officers in accordance with the abovementioned principles.

Mr Chairman,

13. 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.



#### G-77 and China statement during the sixtieth session of Working Group A, 18 – 20 October 2021, delivered by H.E. Ambassador Alejandro Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

Madam Chairperson,

1. The Group of 77 and China would like to thank you, Ambassador Nada Kruger, for chairing this meeting and assures you of its full support and cooperation. The Group wishes to thank you Ambassador Kruger for all your efforts and exemplary leadership of Working Group A from August 2019 until December 2021.

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. The Group is of the view that global cooperation is important acknowledging that no one is safe until everyone is safe.

3. The Group is of the view that, this is a time for the international community, to demonstrate its capability to work together in solidarity to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19. The international community must unite in its efforts to ensure access to scientific guidance, training, equipment, essential medical supplies, and concrete life-saving services to countries in greatest need and in regions where the full impact is yet to be felt. Cooperation to contain, mitigate and defeat the pandemic, including through a multilateral approach, should be strengthened and intensified. The Group welcomes the Organization's business continuity, flow of data and data products despite restrictions caused by COVID-19 and expresses its gratitude for the efforts of 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 of the Provisional Technical Secretariat (PTS) March for the period from April to August 2021.

5. The Group would like also to extend its appreciation to the PTS for the timely issuance of documents for this session.

### Madam Chairperson,

6. The Group notes that since the 59<sup>th</sup> Session of Working Group A no new State has signed or ratified the Treaty, thus the total number of signatories remains at 185 States and ratifications at 170, which includes 36 of the 44 Annex 2 States whose ratification is required for entry into force of the Treaty. The Group stresses the need of an early Entry Into Force (EIF) of the CTBT, with the ultimate goal to eliminate nuclear weapons and general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. In this regard, the Group welcomes the convening of the 12<sup>th</sup> Conference on facilitating the EIF of the Treaty, which took place in New York on 23 September 2021 and takes note of the adoption of the final Declaration of the Conference. The Group appreciates the efforts undertaken by South Africa and Italy as Co-Presidents and thanks the PTS for organizing this event.

Madam Chairperson,

7. Regarding agenda item 3, the Group takes note of the report of the Advisory Group at its 57<sup>th</sup> session and the recommendations contained therein (CTBT/AG-57/1). 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 takes note of the revised 2022-2023 Programme and Budget Proposal, as contained in document CTBT/PTS/INF.1580/Rev.2). The Group thanks the PTS, for incorporating the comments made by State Signatories in its revision of the Budget Proposals and further makes the following comments:

(a) The Group notes that the budgetary proposals for 2022 reflect a slightly less than zero real growth budget of \$125.92 million at 2022 prices with an overall price adjustment of 1.75%. The Group notes as well that most of the 2022 Budget is allocated to verification activities (81.2%). The Group thanks the PTS for providing detailed clarification on the 2022 price adjustment and factors used in the calculation of its overall average of 1.75 percent;

(b) The Group notes the total biennial savings and reprioritization of \$6.01million. 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. 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;

(c) 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. In this regard, the Group takes note that the share allocated to the OSI programme within the draft Programme and Budget 2022 has decreased from 8.8 percent to 8.6 percent compared to the previous year, while the share allocated to the IMS programme has increased;

(d) The Group takes note of the decision on the carry forward of the Capital Investment Fund (CIF) and Multiyear Funds unspent balances of 31 December 2021 to the financial period 2022, as soon as they are audited and approved;

(e) The Group is of the view that since the plan of exercises for the years 2019-2021 was not carried out as foreseen in the "On-Site Inspection Exercise Plan for 2016-2020" due to the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, it remains the responsibility of the PTS to revise the abovementioned plan and present it to the next Working Group B (WGB) session for consideration. In view of this, to prepare for the next IFE, the Group requests the Secretariat to convene necessary Expert Meetings during 2021 to define the projects and elaborate the exercise plan based on challenging scenarios to be held in the future;

(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 deep concern that the implementation rate of the Capacity Building Fund was only 0.7%. 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 commends the PTS for hosting a successful a 2021 Science and Technology Conference in a hybrid format on 28 June to 2 July 2021. The Conference which was anchored on the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the opening of the Treaty for signature, set new records with a participation rate of 1600 participants from 150 countries. It also provided an opportunity for scientists, including those from developing countries, to share experiences and knowledge. We look forward to the report on the Conference at an early date and the identification of lessons learned that could be applied in other functions of the CTBTO.

Madam Chairperson,

11. The Group reaffirms its principles of equitable geographical distribution and gender balance 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. The Group remains 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.

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 and Higher levels remains low at 35.2%. The Group requests the PTS to make further efforts to achieve and 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 looks forward to a constructive deliberation and timely conclusion of the work of this Working Group.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.



### Statement of the Group of 77 and China during the 57<sup>th</sup> session of the Preparatory Commission, 10 – 12 November 2021, delivered by H.E. Ambassador Alejandro Solano Ortiz, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

2. The Group is pleased to see you, Ambassador Ivo Sramek, chairing the 57<sup>th</sup> Session of the Preparatory Commission (PrepCom). The Group takes this opportunity to renew to you, Ambassador, the assurances of its full support and cooperation. Furthermore, the Group expresses its full support to the PrepCom in executing its tasks in the most efficient and effective manner. As this is your last PrepCom as Chairperson, the Group wishes to thank you for all your efforts and exemplary leadership of the PrepCom during the year 2021.

3. The Group would also like to thank Dr. Robert Floyd for his opening remarks and takes note of his reports on the verification and non-verification-related activities of the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the Commission. Furthermore, the Group expresses its appreciation to the Provisional Technical Secretariat for preparing documents and making them available for this session in a timely manner.

Mr. Chairman,

4. 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. Cooperation to contain, mitigate and defeat the pandemic, including through a multilateral approach, should be strengthened and intensified. The Group supports all measures taken to ensure business continuity in the CTBTO PrepCom and its subsidiary bodies. The Group also expresses gratitude to the PTS of all its efforts amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Chairman,

5. The Group wishes to reiterate its full support for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and stresses the need for an early Entry Into Force (EIF) of the CTBT and its universalization, with the ultimate goal of eliminating nuclear weapons, and general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. The 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the opening of the Treaty for signature should be a rallying point towards this end. In this regard, the Group welcomes the convening of the 12<sup>th</sup> Conference on facilitating the EIF of the Treaty, which took place in New York on 23 September 2021and takes note of the adoption of the final Declaration of the Conference The Group also appreciates the efforts exerted by States, in this regard and commends the efforts undertaken by South Africa and Italy as Co-Presidents and thanks the PTS for organizing this event.

6. The Group continues to expresses 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. Chairman,

7. On Agenda item 3, the Group takes note of the report of Working Group A at its 60<sup>th</sup> session and its recommendations. We would like to thank the Chairperson of WGA, Ambassador Nada Kruger of Namibia, for all her efforts in conducting informal consultations on the appointment of the External Auditor as well as on the proposal for the establishment of the position of Chief of Cabinet in the office of the Executive Secretary. We look forward to the attainment of consensual decisions on these matters.

8. As this is the last PrepCom session for Ambassador Kruger as Chair of WGA, the Group wishes to thank her for all her efforts and exemplary leadership of Working Group A from August 2019 until December 2021.

9. The Group takes note of the draft 2022-2023 Programme and Budget proposal. The Group has already expressed its comments during the last WGA session and thanks the PTS for incorporating comments made by State Signatories in the final proposal.

10. The Group would like to reiterate some points expressed during the last Working Group A session. In this regard, 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. Furthermore, the Group reiterates its position 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 mandate of the resolution establishing the PrepCom and the decisions of the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies, as well as the territorial integrity of States.

Mr Chairman,

11. On agenda item 4, the Group also takes note of the report of the Working Group B at its Fifty-Seventh Session and thanks Mr. Erlan Batyrbekov for presenting the report.

12. 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. In this regard, while being aware of the practical difficulties caused by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Group is deeply concerned that the implementation rate of the Capacity Building Fund in the reporting period was low. Hence, the Group calls on the PTS to implement necessary measures to rectify this anomaly and bring capacity building activities to required levels.

13. 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. 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).

14. The Group takes note of the recent report of the Advisory Group at its 57<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.

15. 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 Chairman,

16. 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, through the use of 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.

17. The Group commends the PTS for hosting a successful a 2021 Science and Technology Conference on 28 June to 2 July 2021. The Conference provided an opportunity for scientists, including those from developing countries, to share experiences and knowledge. We look forward to the report on the Conference at an early date and the identification of lessons learned that could be applied in other functions of the CTBTO.

18. The Group expresses its appreciation to the Co-facilitators, Ambassador Molekane from South Africa and Ambassador Laggner from Switzerland, for holding informal consultations on the issue of noble gas background measurement, and their report on these consultations. Members of the Group also stand ready to contribute in consultations on the issue of non-scheduled sessions of the PrepCom. The Group looks forward to finalizing direct and clear guidance for further activities of the PTS on the issue of noble gas background characterization, as well as finalizing guidelines for holding non-scheduled sessions of the Commission, as matters of priority at the soonest in-person session of the Commission, and expects the PTS to act in accordance with its mandate, in these regards. The Group stresses that the postponement of the deadlines for those decisions is directly linked to the temporary changes in the format and modality of meetings of the PrepCom in light of the COVID-19 crisis.

19. 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.

COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (COPUOS)



#### Statement of the G-77 and China during the Fifty-eight session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, 19-30 April 2021, delivered by H.E. Alejandro Solano Ortiz, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Costa Rica

Vienna, 19 April 2021

### Madam Chair,

1. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I would like to express our gratitude on your Chairmanship of the 58th session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of COPUOS and assure you and the members of the bureau of our full support for this session. The Group would also like to extend its appreciation to the Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, Ms. Simonetta Di Pippo, and her dedicated staff in the Secretariat for the documentation and planning required for convening this meeting, particularly given the difficulties and exceptional circumstances posed by the global coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

Madam Chair,

2. The Group welcomes the increasing awareness of the potential, importance and impact that space activities have today, especially among the Group members.

3. This year marks the 60th anniversary of the first period of sessions of COPUOS and the 60th anniversary of human spaceflight activities. The Group would like to seize this opportunity to express its high appreciation for the work that COPUOS and its two Subcommittees have carried out, as the main UN forum, in promoting international cooperation on exploration and peaceful use of outer space and on offering an appropriate environment.

4. The Group is willing to engage in the discussions of this Subcommittee to support measures to enhance international cooperation in space activities so as to make the benefits from space activities available to all the peoples of the world. Considering the high importance the international community attaches to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Group is of the opinion that on-going and future activities in this area should contribute to sustainable development, particularly in developing countries.

5. The Group wishes to recall the established principles related to outer space activities, including the principle of exploration and use of outer space on a basis of equality, the principle of the non-appropriation of outer space including the moon and other celestial bodies, and the peaceful use of outer space.

#### Madam Chair,

6. Several of the issues to be discussed during this session are of paramount importance to developing countries. The Group believes that in order to achieve the main objectives of this sub-committee, it is important to concentrate our work in areas such as building and promotion of the technological capacities, transfer of technology favorable for developing countries, prevention and mitigation of natural disasters and scientific-technological research in developing countries within the framework of international cooperation. The only way we can ensure that outer space remains sustainable and can

continue to deliver benefits to the whole of humankind is by working together through enhanced cooperation and collaboration.

7. The Group is of the opinion that space technology applications must translate into concrete benefits in developing countries. In order to achieve this goal, transfer of technology needs to be promulgated through capacity building and access to technology on favorable terms for developing countries. In this vein, the Group strongly urges States to refrain from promulgating, adopting and applying any unilateral economic, financial and trade measures that could impede the access to space and space activities, particularly, in developing countries.

8. The Group believes that COPUOS must remain the forum for enhancement of cooperation on the peaceful uses of outer space. Therefore, the Group calls upon UNOOSA and the Member States for greater support to enhance both North-South and South-South cooperation to facilitate such transfer of technology among nations.

9. The Group would also like to reiterate its call upon OOSA and the Member States to make more opportunities available for greater academic linkages, long-term fellowships and further collaboration among national and regional laboratories, UN research centers, other national and international institutions on space matters and institutions in developing countries.

Madam Chair,

10. Recalling the constructive efforts made by all to achieve the adoption of Long Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities (LTS) guidelines in 62nd session of COPUOS, it is important to bear in mind that this Achievement was the outcome of a multi-dimensional compromise and therefore has a delicate balance. This delicate balance should be preserved in the future relevant work regarding this subject, this work should also take into consideration the priorities and concerns of all Member States, in particular developing countries. The Group and its Member States look forward to the commencement of the Working Group on LTS and contributing to its work constructively.

11. Regarding space debris, the Group is of the view that the issue of placement of large and mega constellations and its implications is of priority and importance. This topic should continue to be treated as a priority with the view to mitigate the creation of space debris.

12. The Group is also of the view that, the deliberations on the issue of "Space2030 Agenda and its Implementation Plan" should take into consideration the contribution of space-based-systems to sustainable development and avoid any measures that would limit access to space by nations with emerging space capabilities. These processes should be given full consideration to the key concerns of developing countries and avoid setting up overly high standards or thresholds for space activities in a way that may hinder the enhancement of capacity building. In this regard, the Group emphasizes, once more, the need for capacity building to ensure that the required technical expertise is made available to Member States, especially developing countries.

Madam Chair,

13. We have indeed an adequate mechanism before us in COPUOS to address space related issues. We must recall that people worldwide count on the UN system to address global needs particularly the needs of the developing countries. In a spirit of cooperation and consensus, it is the hope of the Group of 77 and China that we will be able to address

these issues and to come up with the outcomes, which will contribute to global prosperity through the promotion of enhanced international cooperation on the peaceful uses of outer space.

I thank you Madam Chair.



#### G-77 AND CHINA STATEMENT DURING THE SIXTIETH SESSION OF THE LEGAL SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE, FROM 31 MAY-11 JUNE 2021, DELIVERED BY H.E. ALEJANDRO SOLANO ORTIZ, AMBASSADOR, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF COSTA RICA

## **AGENDA ITEM 3: GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS**

Madam Chairperson,

1. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I would like to assure you our full support on your Chairmanship of the 60<sup>th</sup> session of the Legal Subcommittee of COPUOS.

2. The Group further takes the opportunity to thank the Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, Ms. Simonetta Di Pippo, and the Secretariat for the preparations and planning made for convening this meeting, particularly given the difficulties and exceptional circumstances posed by the global coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

Madam Chairperson,

3. The Group underscores its firm conviction that the use and exploration of the outer space shall be carried out exclusively for peaceful purposes, for the benefit and in the interests of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic or scientific development, and in conformity with applicable international law.

4. In line with this, the Group reiterates its strict adherence to the principles governing the activities of States in the exploration and use of outer space, including those outlined in GA.1962 (XVIII), GA.1884 (XVIII), specifically:

a. Universal and equal access to outer space for all countries without discrimination, regardless of their level of scientific, technical and economic development as well as the equitable and rational use of the outer space for the benefit and in the interests of all humankind;

b. The principle of non-appropriation of outer space, including the moon and other celestial bodies, which cannot be appropriated by any State, by claim of sovereignty, by means of use or occupation or by any other means;

c. The non-militarization of outer space, which shall never be used for the placement and/or deployment of weapons of any kind, and as province of mankind, its strict use for the improvement of living conditions and peace among peoples;

d. International cooperation in the development of space activities especially those referred to in the Declaration on International Cooperation in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space for the benefit and in the interest of all States taking in particular account the needs on developing countries.

5. The Group reiterates that COPUOS, with its two Sub committees, is the only UN forum to discuss comprehensively all matters related to the peaceful uses of outer space including the Moon and other celestial bodies. The Group would recommend that there should be greater interaction between the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and the Legal Subcommittee in order to promote advancements in space law, so that it would be aligned with the major scientific and technical advances in space activities. The Group is of the view that such coordination and synergies between the two Subcommittees can also promote understanding, acceptance and further the implementation of the existing United Nations legal instruments.

6. The Group reaffirms the importance of preventing an arms race and the placement of weapons of any kind in outer space, and calls upon all States, in particular those with major space capabilities, to contribute actively and commit to preserving outer space as a peaceful environment. The Group believes that the sustainability of outer space activities both in the short and in the long-term requires the international community to ensure that no weapons are ever placed or used there.

7. The Group is of the view that the discussions of this Subcommittee should not lead to any measures, including norms, guidelines and standards that would limit access to outer space by nations with emerging space capabilities, especially the developing countries. Accordingly, the Group believes that the international legal framework should be developed in a manner that addresses the concerns of all States. In this regard, the Group emphasizes the need for COPUOS to devote more efforts for legal capacity-building and make the required expertise available to developing countries, facilitated by UNOOSA.

8. Developing countries are increasingly engaged in space activities and in the discussions in the COPUOS. While several Member States of this Group have achieved important milestones in space activities, others are only starting to include them into their national programs. This fact reaffirms our recognition of the potential, importance and impact of space activities and their relevance in the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

9. In this connection, it is imperative to increase efforts so that the benefits from outer space activities can be extended to all States. Furthermore, and in line with the enhancement of international cooperation in outer space activities, it is vital to promote the wider participation of developing countries through proactively offering assistance by advanced space faring nations. Capacity building and technical assistance are key factors in this regard.

10. Several of the issues to be discussed during this session are of paramount importance to developing countries, including, among others: the definition and delimitation of outer space, geostationary orbit, capacity building and application of international law to small satellites, and the scheduled informal consultations on space resources. The Group of 77 and China is willing to engage in the discussions during this session of the Legal Subcommittee and will express its views under each specific agenda item, as appropriate.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

# AGENDA ITEM 5: STATUS AND APPLICATION OF THE FIVE UNITED NATIONS TREATIES ON OUTER SPACE

Madam Chairperson,

1. The Group of 77 and China is of the view that a wide adherence to the United Nations treaties contributes to creating a safe, secure and sustainable atmosphere for the development of outer space activities and enhancing the effectiveness of COPUOS as the main body for discussing

and negotiating international space law. We therefore note with appreciation the growing number of parties to the treaties and encourage those States that have not yet become parties to them to consider doing so.

2. Considering the growing number of space actors and the benefits derived from space science technology and their applications, the conduct of such activities by States and intergovernmental and non-governmental entities, continues to expand. In this regard, the Group is of the view that the conduct of space actors involved in developing international and regional space cooperation should conform to applicable international space law.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

## AGENDA ITEM 6A: THE DEFINITION AND DELIMITATION OF OUTER SPACE

Madam Chairperson,

1. The Group of 77 and China would like to thank the Secretariat for preparing the documentation on this agenda item, particularly the contributions from Member States on their legal approaches to the definition and delimitation of outer space and suborbital flights, as well as the historical summary on the consideration of the question on the definition and delimitation of outer space.

2. The Group believes that the definition and delimitation of outer space is an important topic that should be kept on the agenda of this Subcommittee and that more work should be done in this direction because the legal regimes governing airspace and outer space are different.

3. The Group reiterates its commitment to continue the discussion on issues related to definition and delimitation of outer space and invites other countries to do as such in order to reach a consensus and in this regard we feel that the working group on Definition and Delimitation of Outer Space should continue its activities.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

## AGENDA ITEM 6B: GEOSTATIONARY ORBIT

Madam Chairperson,

1. The Group of 77 and China firmly believes that geostationary orbit — a limited natural resource clearly in danger of saturation — should have been used rationally and should be made available to all States, irrespective of their current technical capacities. That would provide States with the possibility of gaining access to the geostationary orbit under equitable conditions, bearing in mind, in particular, the needs and interests of developing countries and the geographical position of certain countries, and taking into account the processes of ITU and relevant norms and decisions of the United Nations.

2. With the unprecedented rate at which developed countries are employing satellites to exploit the latest technology, there has been increasing awareness of the limitations of the geostationary orbit. Despite the relatively rapid development of certain developing countries in recent years, significant disparity between the ability of developed and developing countries to utilize satellite technology generally remains.

3. The Group underscores that the geostationary orbit shall not be subject to national appropriation, and that its utilization should be governed by applicable international law and in accordance with the principle of non- appropriation of outer space, in order to ensure the guaranteed and equitable access to orbital positions of the geostationary orbit according to the needs of all countries, in particular developing countries and countries in certain geographical positions.

4. Bearing in mind that communications satellites are an indispensable tool in the efforts to promote the development of all countries, the Group is of the view that, in order to develop adequate mechanisms to ensure the equitable access to geostationary orbit, it is necessary to keep this issue on the agenda of this Subcommittee.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

## AGENDA ITEM 8: CAPACITY-BUILDING IN SPACE LAW

Madam Chairperson,

1. Capacity-building, training and education in space law help to promote international development and cooperation in space activities, and assist in building national expertise and capacity in countries with emerging space capabilities. It also provides the means for a better understanding of the interdependent roles of science, technology and law in space activities.

2. In this connection, the Group believes that the successful implementation and application of the international legal framework governing space activities will depend on the understanding and acceptance, by policymakers and decision makers, of the legal framework governing the conduct of space activities. The presence of suitable professionals, in particular in developing countries, who are able to provide legal advice and disseminate information and knowledge relating to space law therefore relies on the availability of suitable opportunities for education in space law and policy.

3. The Group reiterates its view that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its subsidiary bodies is a unique common platform for strengthening the capacity of States, in particular for developing countries. In this line, the Group encourages the Office for Outer Space Affairs to conduct targeted capacity- building, education and training in space law and policy, modelled upon the UN-SPIDER programme.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

#### AGENDA ITEM 10: GENERAL EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND VIEWS ON LEGAL MECHANISMS RELATING TO SPACE DEBRIS MITIGATION AND REMEDIATION MEASURES, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE WORK OF THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL SUBCOMMITTEE

Madam Chairperson,

1. The issue of space debris, its proliferation and challenges posed by its removal, are a growing cause for concern in the space environment, and serves as a constant reminder of the need to take active measures to safeguard our global environment from pollution. The Group therefore is of the view that the potential hazards of accidental collisions of debris with space objects and consequences for the contamination of outer space cannot be underestimated.

2. In this regard, the concept of mitigation and remediation of space debris in the form of removal of debris appears to be a good method of preventing such collisions in space. The Group understands that there are some contentious issues before the LSC regarding this matter. The Group believes that it is important for all States to register all space objects launched into outer space. The Group also believes that no object should be removed without prior consent or authorization of the Registering State.

3. On the issue of the definition of space debris, acknowledging that COPUOS is the proper forum on this, the Group supports a consultative process, involving all Member States of the Committee. With regard to the responsibility of decongesting outer space through remediation, the Group encourages countries to take common but differentiated responsibilities for the congestion in the first place with the actors that were largely responsible for creating space debris should be most involved in space debris removal activities and that those actors should make available their scientific and legal expertise through cooperation agreements to countries with a lower level of space development.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

## AGENDA ITEM 11: GENERAL EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON NON-LEGALLY BINDING UNITED NATIONS INSTRUMENTS ON OUTER SPACE

Madam Chairperson,

1. The Group of 77 and China underscores its firm conviction that the use and exploration of the outer space shall be carried out exclusively for peaceful purposes, for the benefit and in the interests of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic or scientific development, and in conformity with applicable international law. With regard to information exchange, the Group encourages the States launching objects into orbit, in accordance with their commitments under GA Resolutions 1721 (XVI) of 1961, 1721 B and 1962 (XVIII), Declaration of Legal Principles Governing the Activities of States and the Exploration and Use of Outer Space of 1963, to furnish information to COPUOS through the UNSG, who is also requested to maintain a public registry, and consider establishing a national registry for the purpose of information exchange on its space object(s), as appropriate. Principles Relating to Remote Sensing of the Earth from Outer Space

2. The Group underscores the importance of upholding the principle of promoting the availability of remote sensing data on a non-discriminatory basis, as this type of information is essential to the promotion of sustainable development in areas like agriculture and disaster management, and also promotes transparency and confidence among States.

3. The Group welcomes the Committee's adoption of the Declaration on International Cooperation in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space for the Benefit and in the Interest of All States, Taking into Particular Account the Needs of Developing Countries. The Group believes that this instrument is important as it further promotes international cooperation in a bid to maximize the benefits in the utilization of space applications for all States and calls on all space-faring nations to contribute to promoting and fostering international cooperation on an equitable basis and to refrain from introducing unilateral restrictive measures hampering this cooperation. It also underscores that particular attention be given to the interests of developing countries and that the Committee should be strengthened in its role as the main platform for the exchange of information in the field of international cooperation.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

## AGENDA ITEM 13: GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON THE APPLICATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW TO SMALL SATELLITE ACTIVITIES

Madam Chairperson,

1. Presently, a legal or regulatory definition of a small satellite does not exist and under the United Nations treaties, principles and resolutions relating to international space law, the term "space object" refers to satellites, launch vehicles and their component parts.

2. Considering the essential roles of space objects, regardless of their size, in the socioeconomic development of the Member States, the Group is of the view that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) and its Subcommittees should not create an ad-hoc legal regime or any other mechanisms, which might impose limitations on designing, building, launching and use of space objects by developing countries.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

#### AGENDA ITEM 14: GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON POTENTIAL LEGAL MODELS FOR ACTIVITIES IN EXPLORATION, EXPLOITATION AND UTILIZATION OF SPACE RESOURCES

Madam Chairperson,

1. The Group of 77 and China underscores the importance of this topic in connection with future of international cooperation in space exploration, which the Group believes will not depart from the basic principles of non-appropriation, equitable access to, and common province of humankind.

2. In the present scenario in which some countries have introduced national laws allowing the exploitation of celestial bodies for economic purposes, this discussion becomes urgent for the consideration of these legislations with regard to the International Space Law, in order to avoid gaps or contradictions in the legal framework in this area and to provide a clear understanding of the legal obligations of the States in the space exploration.

3. The Group takes note of the scheduled informal consultations on the utilization of outer space during the sixtieth session of the Legal Subcommittee and looks forward to fruitful deliberations on this timely and pertinent issue. The Group believes that all countries need to engage in this discussion in COPUOS to propose constructive ways that help us develop an approach for the utilization of space resources that is constructive, collaborative and the product of consensus.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.



#### STATEMENT OF THE G-77 AND CHINA DURING THE SIXTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE, 25 AUGUST – 3 SEPTEMBER 2021, DELIVERED BY H.E. ALEJANDRO SOLANO ORTIZ, AMBASSADOR, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF COSTA RICA

## AGENDA ITEM 4: GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS

Mr. Chairman,

1. On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I would like to reiterate our full cooperation and support in discharge of your responsibilities as Chair of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS).

2. The Group further takes the opportunity to thank the Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, Ms. Simonetta Di Pippo, for her opening remarks, and the Secretariat for the excellent preparations made for this session.

3. The Group welcomes the applications submitted by Angola, Bangladesh, Slovenia and Panama to join the membership of the Committee. The steady growth of COPUOS in recent years is a clear sign of the international recognition of the unique role of COPUOS. In this regard, the Group both welcomes and encourages the participation of observers in the Committee and its Subcommittees as this contributes to greater engagement with the activities of COPUOS. It is important that more Member States of the United Nations be welcomed as this contributes to the promotion of the peaceful uses of outer space.

4. The Group underscores its firm conviction that the use and exploration of the outer space shall be carried out exclusively for peaceful purposes, with the view to realizing a shared vision for the future, for the benefit and in the interests of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic or scientific development, and in conformity with the body of applicable international law.

5. Universal and equal access to outer space for all countries without discrimination, regardless of their level of scientific, technical and economic development as well as the equitable and rational use of the outer space for the benefit and in the interests of all humankind, the principle of non-appropriation of outer space, including the moon and other celestial bodies, by any means, international cooperation in the development of space activities especially those referred to in the Declaration on International Cooperation in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space for the Benefit and in the Interest of All States, taking in Particular Account the Needs of Developing Countries, are the most important principles that should govern the activities in outer Space.

6. The Group reaffirms the importance of preventing an arms race in outer space and placement of weapons of any kind in outer space and calls upon all States, in particular those with major space capabilities, to contribute actively to the peaceful use of outer space to prevent an arms race there and to refrain from placement of weapons of any kind in outer space and any other actions contrary to that objective. In this regard, the Group notes that transparency and confidence building measures could play a useful role. The

Group believes that preservation of outer space in the long term requires the international community to ensure that no weapons will ever be placed there.

7. Developing countries are increasingly engaged in space activities and actively participating in the discussions of the Committee. While several Member States of this Group have achieved important milestones in space activities, others are starting to develop their own space programmes and policies. This fact affirms our recognition of the potential, importance and impact of space activities.

8. In this connection, it is imperative to intensify the efforts to extend to all States the benefits derived from outer space activities with a view to promoting the contribution of peaceful uses of outer space to socio-economic development. In line with the enhancement of international cooperation in outer space activities, it is vital to promote a wider participation of developing countries through active assistance by advanced spacefaring nations and the Office of Outer Space Affairs. To this end, capacity building and technical assistance are key factors in the expansion of the abilities of those working in the field, allowing them to gain expertise and knowledge from more advanced spacefaring nations.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

# AGENDA ITEM 6: REPORT OF THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL SUBCOMMITTEE ON ITS FIFTY-EIGTH SESSION

Mr. Chairman,

1. The Group of 77 and China would like to comment on some of the issues put forth during the 58<sup>th</sup> session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and that we consider of utmost relevance for developing countries.

2. The unfavorable financial situation of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, has limited its capacity-building activities. UNOOSA is affected by a shortage of funds to support cooperation programmes. Nevertheless, the Group would like to note with appreciation activities carried out in 2020, under the Programme on Space Applications by the UNOOSA in collaboration with Member States and other international organizations.

3. With regard to the technical attributes of the geostationary orbit and its utilization and applications, the Group would like to reiterate the fact that the geostationary orbit, a limited natural resource clearly in danger of saturation, needs to be used in a way that ensures countries have equitable access to those orbits and frequencies, taking into account the special needs of the developing countries and the geographical situation of particular countries.

4. The issue of space debris, its proliferation and removal, continue to be a cause for concern in the space. The Group therefore is of the view that the potential hazards posed by the collision of debris with space objects and the consequences of the contamination of outer space cannot be underestimated. It is also important that new space actors are not burdened due to the historical activities of established space actors. The Group would also like to emphasize the challenges caused by placement of mega constellations in low-Earth orbit, including those related to sustainable use of orbit and frequencies, and believes addressing these challenges should be a priority in the work of COPUOS.

Mr. Chairman,

5. Space science and technology, and their applications are essential in effectively addressing current and future challenges to social and economic development and sustainability, such as natural disasters, food security, climate change and natural resource security. The Group notes in this regard that space activities are also crucial to realizing the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular as part of efforts to support sustainable economic growth, improve quality of life and manage the global environment. It is therefore important to ensure that the Office is equipped with the necessary resources to assist a greater number of countries in having access to the benefits of space science and technology and its applications in line with the spirit of the Outer Space Treaty.

6. The Group would like to highlight the importance of science and technology dissemination in bridging the space divide. The Group therefore calls upon the Committee and UNOOSA for greater support to the training programs of the regional centers affiliated to the United Nations, and to conduct wider exchange and cooperation among different regional centers, including through alliance of regional centers, with the aim of enhancing North-South and South-South cooperation to empower the development of technology among nations. The Group also calls upon UNOOSA and Member States to make available more opportunities for academic networking, long-term fellowships and collaboration with national and regional institutions in the field of outer space especially in developing countries.

7. The Group welcomes the election of Mr. Umamaheswaran from India as the Chairperson of the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities and looks forward to fruitful deliberations on this timely and pertinent issue.

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

## AGENDA ITEM 7: REPORT OF THE LEGAL SUBCOMMITTEE ON ITS SIXTIETH SESSION

Mr. Chairman,

1. The Group of 77 and China would like to comment on some issues discussed during the last session of the Legal Subcommittee which the Group deems of utmost relevance for developing countries.

2. The Group underscores once again that the definition and delimitation of outer space is a very important topic that should be kept on the agenda of this Subcommittee and that more work should be done in order to establish the legal regime applicable to airspace and outer space. In this regard, we commend all the efforts made by the Chair of the Working on Definition and delimitation of Outer Space and encourage all delegations to contribute to the discussion in a constructive manner.

3. Regarding the issue of geostationary orbit, the Group would like to reiterate that such a domain shall not be subject to national appropriation, by means of use, repeated use or occupation, or by any other means, and that its utilization is governed by applicable international law. Furthermore, we reiterate that this orbit needs to be used rationally, efficiently and economically, in conformity with the provision of the international space laws and relevant regulations, so that countries or groups of countries may have equitable access to those orbits and frequencies, taking into account the special needs of the developing countries and the geographical situation of particular countries.

4. The Group considers that capacity building in space law is a fundamental tool that should be enhanced through international cooperation. Therefore, the Group calls for a greater support by UNOOSA and Member States to foster both North-South and South-

South cooperation to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and expertise in the field of international space law.

Mr. Chairman,

5. The Group believes that the 'Declaration on International Cooperation in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space for the Benefit and in the Interest of All States, Taking into Particular Account the Needs of Developing Countries' is important as it further promotes international cooperation in a bid to maximize the benefits in the utilization of space applications for all States and calls on all space-faring nations to contribute to promoting and fostering international cooperation on an equitable basis. It also underscores that particular attention be given to the interests of developing countries and that the Committee should be strengthened in its role as the main platform for the exchange of information in the field of international cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space.

6. Considering the essential roles of space objects, regardless of their size, in the socioeconomic development of the Member States, the Group is of the view that the Committee and its Subcommittees should not create an ad-hoc legal regime or any other mechanisms, which might impose limitations on designing, building, launching and using of space objects. The Group is of the view that in general, all international rights and obligations of the States with respect to satellites regardless of their perceived sizes are equally relevant for the conduct of space activities with the use of small satellites.

7. The Group also welcomes the decision to establish a Working Group under the Legal Subcommittee agenda item "General exchange of views on potential legal models for activities in the exploration, exploitation and utilization of space resources" and looks forward to fruitful deliberations on this timely and pertinent issue in accordance with rules of procedures, methods of work and established practice of the Committee. The Group believes that all countries need to engage in this discussion in COPUOS to propose constructive ways that help us develop an approach for the utilization of space resources in line with the principles enshrined in the Outer Space Treaty, that is constructive, collaborative and the product of consensus.

8. The Group is of the view that in light of the increasing participation and the evolving potential of the private sector in space activities, the negotiation of an international legally binding instrument that clearly defines and guides commercial activities in outer space could play an important role in expanding the use of outer space and stimulate space activities for the benefit of humanity. The Group considers that, besides the need for a broad debate about the implications of these activities, the developing countries shall not be excluded from the benefits of space exploration and their rights shall be considered in the discussion.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.