



**Statement of the Group of 77 and China  
during the 63<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Preparatory Commission,  
11 – 13 November 2024,  
delivered by H.E. Laura Gil, Ambassador,  
Permanent Representative of Colombia**

Mr. Chair,

1. The Group is pleased to see you, Ambassador Atsushi Kaifu, chairing the 63<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Preparatory Commission and we wish to express our full support and cooperation.
2. The Group would also like to thank the Executive Secretary for his opening remarks and takes note of his reports and expresses its appreciation to the Provisional Technical Secretariat for preparing documents and making them available for this session in a timely manner.

Mr. Chair,

3. The Group stresses the need for an early Entry Into Force of the CTBT and underlines the importance of all possible efforts to be made to achieve the universalization of the Treaty, with the ultimate goal to eliminate nuclear weapons and achieve complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.
4. The Group would like to reiterate that the CTBT and the NPT are mutually reinforcing legal instruments of the international disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation regime. We reaffirm the central role of the NPT, as the cornerstone of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, and the envisaged role of the CTBT, in furthering nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation both vertical and horizontal.
5. The Group continues to express its serious concern on any possible planning and preparation for nuclear test explosions. Any nuclear tests explosion would not only break the global moratorium, but severely undermine the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime and international peace and security. The Group calls upon all States to observe nuclear test moratoria and to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to general, complete and irreversible nuclear disarmament under strict and effective international control.

Mr. Chair,

6. The Group would like to thank Ambassador Evangelina Bernas for presenting the report and for her exemplary leadership of Working Group A. The Group takes note of the report of the 66<sup>th</sup> session Working Group A and, in this regard, would like to emphasize some points:

- (a) The Group takes note of the 2025 Budget Update Proposals: Final Draft (CTBT/PTS/INF.1695/Rev.1).

(b) The difficult global macroeconomic circumstances have not abated and continue to negatively impact on States Signatories, adding to the pertinent financial burdens and posing new challenges in particular for developing countries. In this regard, the Group welcomes the consideration of a zero real growth policy and highlights the importance of maintaining this approach while feasible.

(c) Mindful of the Preparatory Commission's mandate to ensure a fully functional verification regime, the Group recalls that the operation of the IMS remains provisional and testing in nature, pending the entry into force of the Treaty and looks forward to the presentation of additional financing scenarios for the IMS sustainment strategy for the consideration of State Signatories. The Group is also of the view that the sustainment strategy should be accompanied by sufficient PTS staffing and capacity building for State Signatories.

(d) The Group strongly underlines the importance of promoting a balanced approach and equitable allocation of resources among the three dimensions of the verification regime namely the International Monitoring System, the International Data Centre and On-Site Inspection.

Mr Chair,

7. The Group takes note of the report of Working Group B at its 63<sup>rd</sup> session and thanks Dr Erlan Batyrbekov for presenting the report and in this regard would like to reiterate some points:

(a) The Group stresses the importance of maintenance and recapitalization of IMS structure and emphasizes the provisional operational nature of the IMS, while highlighting the need to adhere to the provisional operation and maintenance guidelines, and relevant decisions thereafter. The Group requests the PTS to continue to provide regular updates to States Signatories on the IMS sustainment strategy and its funding needs.

(b) 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, as well as dedicating adequate financial resources for these activities.

(c) The Group expresses its support for initiatives, such as the Technical Experts Support Program (TESP) and the National Data Center for All (NDCs4All). The Group is convinced that such initiative will greatly contribute to capacity-building in developing countries and to achieving wider participation of all States Signatories in the decision-making process and ownership of the Commission.

(d) Reaffirming the provisions of the Establishing Resolution and the independent nature of the PrepCom, the Group would like to reaffirm that any activities related to the funding, maintenance, and provisional operation of the IMS stations must respect the mandate of the PTS, and any related action or decision by the PrepCom, should fully respect the purposes and principles of the United Nations, including those on the territorial integrity of the States. In view of this, the Group highlights the importance that engaging in construction, maintenance and/or relocation of IMS facilities must be fully in line with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

8. The Group also takes note of the report of the Advisory Group at its 63<sup>rd</sup> session and the recommendations contained therein. The Group appreciates the Advisory Group's efforts and expertise in providing necessary observations, conclusions and recommendations on issues related to the administrative, budgetary and financial matters.

Mr Chair,

9. The Group reaffirms its principles of equitable geographical distribution, gender balance and multilingualism and would like to emphasize the contribution of youth in promoting peace and security.

10. The Group remains concerned with the low level of representation of developing countries in the PTS. The Group looks forward to further discussing the issue of equitable geographical representation. While noting that the PTS continues to provide updated data, the Group requests further steps be taken to bring geographical representation to equitable levels.

11. The Group recognizes the efforts made to improve the representation of the staff, and encourages the PTS to continue improving gender representation at Professional and director level. The Group also welcomes the inclusion of gender parity criteria in the selection of TESP candidates. The Group requests the PTS to make further efforts to achieve gender balance among the staff of the organization at all levels of responsibility. The Group encourages the PTS to continue to use new and existing tools to encourage the participation of young female professionals, especially from developing countries, in the PTS.

12. 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 and notes the efforts of the PTS providing records of the sessions of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies, in all languages, on the ECS.

13. Recognizing the important and positive contribution of youth in efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, the Group affirms the paramount importance of youth participation in the PrepCom and its subsidiary bodies, as well as in the PTS activities.

14. The Group encourages the PTS to coordinate with the other Secretariats of the Vienna based International Organizations (VBOs), to ensure that major meetings do not coincide, as well as to avoid an overlap, to the extent possible, with major sessions of the VBOs and any major public holiday.

15. 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.

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

Thank you, Mr. Chair.