

**Statement by the African Group during 28<sup>th</sup> Session of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), Delivered by H.E. Ambassador Selma Ashipala-Musavyi, Permanent Representative of Namibia, 19-22 June 2007**

Chairperson

1. At the outset, the African Group associates itself with the Statement delivered on behalf of the Group of 77 and China by the Permanent Representative of Sudan. The Group would like to express its appreciation to the Executive Secretary for his oral and written report and for the PTS for preparing the documentation.
2. The African Group expresses its satisfaction in seeing you Chairing the 28<sup>th</sup> Session of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty Organization and would like to assure you of its full cooperation.

Chairperson

3. The Group would like to make the following comments on the issues under consideration during this Prepcom.
4. Concerning Agenda item 3, consideration of the Report of Working Group B, the Group would like to thank Mr. Hein Haak, Chairperson of WGB for presenting the report of the 28<sup>th</sup> Session of WGB.

Concerning the review of the duration and organisation of WGB meetings, including the holding of parallel sessions, the Group would like to emphasize that this is an issue of high importance to the Group since it has an impact on the participation of the Group to the meetings of WGB

The Group encourages that all efforts be made to achieve an acceptable proposal for a final decision during the Prepcom to be held in November.

The Group believes that any proposal should take into account the following:

- The prospects of the entry into force of the Treaty,
- The completion of verification system of the Treaty,
- The Prioritization of the topics and issues,
- The reduction of the financial burden for States Signatories, particularly Developing countries.

Chairperson

5. Concerning Agenda item 4, consideration of the Report of Working Group A, the Group would like to thank Ambassador Abdulkadir D. Rindap, Chairperson of WGA for presenting the report on the 31<sup>st</sup> Session of WGA.

The Group would like to express its appreciation to Ambassador Rindap for his efficiency during his chairpersonship of WGA, during the last two years.

Regarding the issue of Representation of State Signatories in the PTS, the Group remains concerned about the unbalanced representation of State Signatories in the PTS, and would like to re-emphasize its position that developing countries need to be adequately represented in the PTS. The representation of women is also regarded by the Group as a matter of high importance.

Furthermore, the Group urges the PTS to observe the policy of the seven-year limit for the category of professional and internationally recruited staff, and the view that it should be fairly and transparently and implemented.

#### Chairperson

6. Concerning Agenda item 5, Review of the Advisory Group , the African Group expresses its appreciation to Mr Andre Gue for presenting the Advisory Group's report and its recommendations of Part II of the 28<sup>th</sup> Session of the Advisory Group as contained in CTBT/AG-28/2.

In this connection, the African Group would like to stress the importance of a comprehensive review of Unliquidated Obligations (ULO) in the CIF to assess the underlying reasons as to why huge amounts of ULOs were outstanding, in particular in light of the reported overall excess of income over expenditure. The Group is particularly concerned that this situation suggests that the budget may be unrealistic.

Regarding the situation by station by station budgeting approach, recommended by the Advisory Group and External Auditor, the Group requests the PTS to provide more information on the possible impact of this approach.

With these comments, the African Group takes note of the Advisory Group's recommendations.

#### Chairperson

7. Concerning item 6, on the 2008 Draft Programme Budget as contained in document CTBT/PTS/INF.880, the African Group reiterates its position that the proposed budget should reflect zero real growth with no additional financial burden on States Signatories with no overall programmatic increase. The Group reserves its right to presents further comments on this issue at a later stage.

The Group is also of the view that the four-day reduction of the meetings of some Policy Making Organs, which has resulted to some savings, be

reflected in the 2008 budget. The Group believes that budget proposal should take into account the actual prospects of the entry into force of the Treaty.

The African Group is of the view that the PTS should make a realistic re-assessment of the draft 2008 Programme and Budget and identify savings where possible. The Group considers that savings could be made in the PTS promotional activities.

#### Chairperson

8. Concerning item 8, appointment and elections. Regarding the views expressed to link the appointments or extensions of chairpersons of Policy Making Organs with payment of contribution, the Group is of the view that aspects related to the Treaty, geographical rotation, and professional skills are the only criteria to be taken into account.

The African Group highly appreciates the remarkable work done by Dr. Lissina Zebro during his three years as Director of the International Data Centre Division. His scientific skills, commitment and availability have been highly demonstrated. In this regard, the African Group supports the Executive Secretary recommendation for the reappointment of Dr. Lassina Zebro as contained in Document CTBT/PTS.INF.896.

9. Concerning item 11.1, related to the request from Palestine for observer status with the Commission. The African Group would like to associate its self with the statement of Non- Aligned Movement on this issue, and in view of the fact that Palestine has been accorded observer status in the United Nations and other International Organizations, this Preparatory Commission should make a positive decision on this issue by granting observer status to Palestine.

#### ANY OTHER BUSINESS

#### Chairperson

On the issue of the financing of participation of experts from developing countries to the technical meeting including WGB, the Group would like to reiterate its earlier assessment that the financial resources available are only sufficient for the year 2007. In this regard, the Group calls for a sustainable and predictable funding mechanism for the initial 9 experts as requested by the Group. The Group would also like to request the Executive Secretary to inform the PrepCom on his efforts on the use of his good offices for fund raising for the project. The Group expresses its appreciation to the recent financial contribution made by the Great Kingdom of Morocco, to the pilot project.