



European Union

**CTBTO Preparatory Commission
Working Group B - 37th Session, 22 August- 9 September 2011
Statement by the European Union**

as delivered at the Plenary meeting on 31/08/11

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia, Montenegro, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Iceland¹, the Countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, the EFTA country Norway, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and San Marino, associate themselves with this statement.
2. At the outset, we wish to thank the Executive Secretary for his report and introductory statement last Monday as well as the PTS, the Working Group B Chair and the Task Leaders for their dedicated work in preparation of this meeting.
3. In particular, we would like to once again express our appreciation to Mr Hein Haak for his relentless efforts to find a solution to the controversies over the duration of Working Group B sessions. Our position in that regard is known and we feel that the new experimental arrangement with extended working hours will put additional strain on our experts and the coordination process between delegations. Nevertheless, in the spirit of consensus, we hope that the adopted solution will be effective and fruitful.

Mr Chairman,

4. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty was opened for signature on 24 September 1996. Hence, in less than a month we will pass the landmark of its fifteenth anniversary. It is therefore pertinent to reflect on the commitment of the international community to establish a universal and effectively verifiable Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty as a major instrument in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We would like to take advantage of

¹ Croatia and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilization and Association Process. Iceland remains an EFTA country and member of the European Economic Area.

this opportunity to pay tribute to all States – signatories and ratifiers, most recently Ghana – and to once again urge all States which have not yet signed or ratified the Treaty, in particular the nine remaining Annex 2 States, to do so without further delay.

5. We are confident that the seventh Article XIV conference, which will be held in New York just one day before the fifteenth anniversary of the Treaty, will provide yet another proof of our resolve to bring the universalization process to successful completion.
6. In the fifteenth year of the functioning of the CTBT, the European Union is pleased to note a further substantial progress in the build-up of the verification regime. It should be noted that with this we are in fact pursuing two goals: fulfilling our Treaty obligations and at the same time providing to the yet uncommitted evidence that a universal, participatory, effective and reliable verification regime is within our reach.

Mr Chairman,

7. We would like to commend the Provisional Technical Secretariat for its dedicated work in the aftermath of the Tohoku earthquake in Japan earlier this year. The verification system played an important role in tsunami warning and in providing precise data on the global distribution patterns of radiological material released from the Fukushima power plant. The tragic events highlighted the CTBTO's civilian capability in the context of natural disasters and other emergency situations, and reflected the mutually beneficial interface between the CTBT verification system and its civilian applications.
8. We attach great importance to the widest possible involvement of the scientific and technical community in support of the CTBT, including in developing further beneficial scientific applications of the CTBT verification infrastructure. We were pleased to participate in the successful Science and Technology 2011 conference which provided a valuable opportunity for the sharing of ideas, best practice and expertise. The value such cooperation can provide has been demonstrated in the CTBTO's capabilities in the field of tsunami warning. Indeed, the EU through its 2010 Council decision included funding to strengthen the cooperation with the scientific community.
9. The availability of quality data remains of paramount importance for provisionally operating the IDC, progressively developing and testing the IMS element of the verification regime and for the development of NDCs. We note the plan for validation and acceptance testing by the end of 2011 (CTBT/PC-36/WGB/1, paragraphs 71 and 72) and look forward to further progress in the IDC commissioning plan and on a timetable for moving to phase 5b and to phase 6. The EU assigns priority to continuous operation of the IDC, to improvements in the performance of automatic processing and interactive analysis, and to product development and delivery. We look forward to IDC analyst availability and

capability being placed on a sound long term footing. We value the experience the PTS has developed and look forward to hearing the lessons the PTS has learned as a result of the Fukushima accident following the tragic 11 March 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Japan.

10. We welcome the continued progress towards the commissioning and certification of IMS stations by the PTS, expanding the global coverage of the IMS network. In support of the priority accorded by WGB to protecting investments already made, we call for the certification of those stations already installed, including those transmitting data via independent subnetworks. We appreciate the effort done by the PTS and Chile on the HA3 reconstruction. The EU has supported the IMS network, including for improvements to auxiliary seismic stations, noble gas systems and strengthening on-site inspection, and the provision of technical assistance.
11. An excellent indicator of the preparedness and effectiveness of the system is the steady increase in data availability of certified IMS stations since 2009 from 86.56% to 90.13% in the first half of 2011. This has reversed the negative trend of 2008 and is particularly commendable keeping in mind that the number of stations is continuously growing with ageing stations being more prone to break down. The European Union is glad to note that through the 2010 Council decision on support for the activities of the CTBTO and the efforts of the host countries with the PTS, a similar increase has been achieved in data availability from auxiliary seismic stations.

Mr Chairman,

12. With that level of advancement in the build-up of the IMS pillar of the verification regime, accompanied by parallel achievements with regard to the IDC, it is natural that we turn our focus to the third pillar – the OSI.
13. We express our full support for the further implementation of the OSI action plan at all its sub-projects in the areas of operations, operations support and logistics, equipment development and implementation, documentation and training. Bearing in mind the required intensification of OSI work, the EU will continue to follow with great attention the status of human and financial resources allotted to the OSI Division to fulfill all its missions.
14. We continue to attach particular importance to further defining OSI readiness and refining OSI milestones, while carrying on the identification of pragmatic and valuable key performance indicators which will contribute to a more streamlined budgeting and reporting and will define concrete milestones. We look for completion of the issue papers as specified by the Task Leader in his paper CTBT/WGB/TL-18/45/Add.1 of 21 February, which sets out a programme for work on the outstanding issues for the next few sessions of WGB.

15. The Equipment Storage and Maintenance Facility (ESMF) is destined to be a major component for storage and maintenance of OSI equipment but also for preparing and conducting the next Integrated Field Exercise as well as for training staff concerned from States Signatories or PTS. In view of the recent and significant developments made in the implementation of this project, we consider that the information received so far through oral presentations during previous sessions of WGB should be updated and formalized. In this context we request the PTS to issue an INF paper presenting the concept of utilization of the ESMF, its functions and potential users, the costs involved and their distribution among the different budgetary programmes of Major Programme 3, as well as other relevant information including staffing requirements.
16. It would be of interest to us to hear a report from the PTS on the establishment and running of the Operations Support Centre which was recently moved from VIC to ESMF.
17. We would like to reiterate our full support to the PTS for preparing and conducting the next IFE in 2014, which constitutes a highly important milestone on the way to OSI operational readiness. To this effect, we encourage both the PTS and all States Signatories to continue a cooperative approach to reduce, as far as possible, the financial burden of the States Signatories and assess the desirability of offset costs, whilst implementing the concept proposed in CTBT/PTS/INF.1105 and approved by States Signatories. A very important element in preparation for the IFE in 2014 is the choice of date and location for the exercise. We encourage the PTS to keep this priority in focus.
18. We welcome the request from the PTS for a contribution in kind for equipment for the IFE in 2014 as presented in the note verbale issued on the 11 August. The EU fully supports this approach that will allow States Signatories to share all efforts made with a view to lightening the financial burden for preparing next IFE. Firmly resolved to explore all possibilities in order to propose the most complete, efficient and adapted contribution in kind, we are convinced that the deadline should be postponed until mid-October, instead of the 23 September. We would naturally also appreciate being kept updated on the results of the request by the PTS.
19. We will monitor carefully how the additional time for the drafting of the draft OSI Operational Manual allocated at the 36th Session of WGB translates into real progress. All of us should undertake every effort to achieve a draft manual that can be tested by the PTS during the next IFE in 2014. The EU is committed to this goal and we will give you our full support.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.