The plenary debate

The main focus of the plenary debate was on budgetary issues and on the introduction of a split currency system to protect the Commission from the adverse effects of currency fluctuations between US dollars and euros. When expressing their views on the 2004 Programme and Budget proposals, several delegations stated that the nominal growth of 6.4% is high compared with the 2003 budget. Other delegations supported the PTS draft budget proposal as a good basis for further discussions.

Member States welcomed the signing of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty by Afghanistan, Eritrea and Palau and the ratifications by Afghanistan, Algeria, Cyprus, Eritrea, Honduras and Kyrgyzstan since the last session of the Commission. Many delegations mentioned the successful outcome of the 2003 Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT and encouraged the PTS to continue its outreach activities and to carry on holding training courses, seminars and workshops.

Conclusions

The Commission approved the budget for 2004 amounting to US$94 548 700. It was decided to implement a split currency appropriation and assessment system starting with the 2005 Programme and Budget. Ambassador Yukio Takasu of Japan was elected as the next chairperson of the Commission for 2004. The contract of the Executive Secretary was extended until 31 July 2005.