The plenary body of the Commission, which is composed of all States Signatories, provides political guidance and oversight to the PTS. The plenary is assisted by two Working Groups.

Working Group A (WGA) deals with budgetary and administrative matters, while WGB considers scientific and technical issues related to the Treaty. Both Working Groups submit proposals and recommendations for consideration and adoption by the plenary meeting of the Commission.

In addition, an Advisory Group of experts serves in a supporting role, advising the Commission through WGA on financial and budgetary matters.
MEETINGS IN 2017

The Commission and its subsidiary bodies each met in two regular sessions in 2017. There was also a joint meeting of WGA and WGB on 2 March 2017 and two resumed Sessions of the Commission on 2 March 2017 and 4 September 2017.

Among the major issues addressed by the Commission during 2017 were the promotion of the Treaty, responding to the nuclear test by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, progress in the verification regime of the Treaty, the situation of the Provident Fund of the Commission, the adoption of the 2018-2019 Programme and Budget proposals and the adoption of changes to the Regulations and Rules of the Commission.

SUPPORTING THE COMMISSION AND ITS SUBSIDIARY BODIES

The PTS is the body that executes the decisions adopted by the Commission. It is multinational in composition: staff are recruited from States Signatories on as wide a geographical basis as possible. The PTS provides substantive and organizational support for the meetings of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies and in the periods between sessions, thus facilitating the decision making process.

With tasks ranging from organizing conference facilities and arranging interpretation and translation to drafting the official documents of the various sessions, planning the annual schedule of sessions, and providing substantive and procedural advice to the Chairpersons, the PTS is a vital element in the work of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies.

VIRTUAL WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Through the ECS, the Commission provides a virtual working environment for those who are unable to attend its regular meetings. Using state of the art technology, the ECS records and transmits the proceedings of each official plenary meeting live around the globe. Meetings are then archived for reference purposes. In addition, the ECS distributes supporting documents for each session to States Signatories and alerts participants of new documents by email.

The ECS is a single sign-on infrastructure of the Commission that provides a platform for continuous and inclusive discussion among States Signatories and experts on scientific and technical issues related to the verification regime.

As part of the virtual paper approach, through which the Commission is seeking to limit its output of printed documentation, the PTS continued to provide a ‘print on demand’ service at all sessions of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies.

INFORMATION SYSTEM ON PROGRESS IN FULFILLING THE MANDATE OF THE TREATY

The Information System with Hyperlinks on Tasks Assigned by the Resolution Establishing the Preparatory Commission monitors progress made in meeting the mandate of the Treaty, the Resolution establishing the Commission and the guidance of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies. It uses hyperlinks to the official documentation of the Commission to provide up to date information on the tasks that remain to be completed in preparing for the establishment of the CTBTO at entry into force and the first session of the Conference of the States Parties. The system is available to all ECS users.

ADDRESSING THE ANNOUNCED NUCLEAR TEST BY THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF KOREA

In response to the announced nuclear test by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea on 3 September 2017, the Commission held several informal briefings and a Resumed Session on 4 September 2017.

Delegations made statements regarding their national positions on the nuclear tests. They unanimously and strongly condemned the announced nuclear test by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and expressed grave concern over the serious negative effect of any such
test on international peace and security. They rejected firmly any and all nuclear explosive tests. They also called on the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea to refrain from any further nuclear tests and abide by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the United Nations Security Council resolutions and its other international obligations.

The Commission underlined the importance and urgency of the entry into force of the Treaty and called on the remaining Annex 2 States including the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea to sign and ratify the Treaty without further delay in order to strengthen nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

SITUATION OF THE PROVIDENT FUND

In 2017, the Commission reviewed the situation of the Provident Fund, which is the social security scheme of the staff of the organization. In light of concern over the performance of the fund, it authorized the Secretariat to submit to the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund board an application to become a member organization and to take the necessary steps to effectuate the application.

REAPPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF WORKING GROUP B

The Commission decided to reappoint Mr. Joachim Schulze as the Chairperson of Working Group B for a term of three years beginning 1 January 2018.

The term of office of the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the Working Groups is three years.