

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Xolisa Mabhongo at the 9th Regular Meeting of Subscribing States of The Hague Code of Conduct Against Ballistic Missile Proliferation, 31 May 2010

Chairperson,

Let me join other subscribing States in congratulating you on your assumption of the Chair. South Africa stands ready to support you in your new capacity.

We express our appreciation to Ambassador Anna Teresa Dengo of Costa Rica for the sterling work she did when she presided over the HCOC during the past year.

We are also grateful to Austria for their continued role as the Immediate Central Contact.

South Africa became a subscribing State in 2002, recognising the important role played by the HCOC in addressing the prevention of the proliferation of ballistic missiles capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and recognising as well the importance of the use of space and technology in general for peaceful purposes.

We support efforts to achieve universality of the HCOC. We believe that it is critical, in particular, that those countries with missile capabilities should continuously be engaged and encouraged to be part of the HCOC. In this regard, South Africa takes note of the various proposals on the issue of universality.

In our view, there is strong merit in the proposals of Costa Rica as expressed by Ambassador Dengo.

Other pragmatic proposals worth exploring include the possibility of granting observer status to some States currently outside HCOC as an interim measure.

We also agree that there is a need for the linkage with the wider United Nations system, in particular UNOOSA and the Conference on Disarmament, in order to avoid duplication, build on synergies where

they exist, and clarify the role of different entities.

We have also noted the EU proposals on universality.

At the same time there are a number of countries who feel that the HCOC is not relevant for them as they do not have any missile capabilities. We therefore look forward to the July Paris conference for African and Mediterranean States, sponsored by the EU, and we hope that this will result in practical measures to address these concerns.

I thank you.