

CTBTO Spectrum

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Who we are

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty bans all nuclear weapon test explosions. The Treaty is a cornerstone of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. It opened for signature in New York on 24 September 1996, and today has achieved strong worldwide support.

The CTBTO Preparatory Commission is an international organization consisting of a plenary body composed of all States Signatories and the Provisional Technical Secretariat. It carries out the necessary preparations for the effective implementation of the Treaty, and prepares for the first session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty after its entry into force.

2003 Article XIV Conference – An important step by Ambassador Yukio Takasu of Japan

The 2003 Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (also known as the Article XIV Conference) was successfully concluded on 5 September with the unanimous adoption of the Final Declaration. The 2003 Conference attracted more political level participation than the 1999 Conference previously held in Vienna. Among 107 delegations were eight Foreign Ministers, including Minister Kawaguchi of Japan, and twenty Secretaries of State or Deputy Ministers. A letter dispatched by the Foreign Ministers of Austria, Finland and Japan, representing the host country and the current and past Conference Chairpersons respectively, urging their counterparts to join them at the Conference, contributed to attaining such a high level of participation.



ARTICLE XIV CONFERENCE, AUSTRIA CENTER, VIENNA, 3-5 SEPTEMBER 2003

It is certainly a source of disappointment, particularly to a country like Japan which is totally committed to the Treaty, that the CTBT has not entered into force seven years after its opening for signature. Those who promote the Treaty, however, should not feel too discouraged. Firstly, regarding the ratification of the Treaty by Annex 2 countries, an important step forward was achieved last July with the ratification by Algeria. It is hoped that the twelve remaining Annex 2 countries will follow soon. At a meeting during the Conference, the Foreign Ministers resolved to maintain political momentum by working together in their continued appeals to the 12 Annex 2 countries to sign and ratify as soon as possible. Secondly, with 17 additional ratifiers since the last Article XIV Conference, the universality of the Treaty and therefore its effectiveness as a legal and moral deterrent to nuclear explosions was enhanced. The Final Declaration called upon all States to continue a moratorium on all nuclear explosions and to refrain from acts which would defeat the object and purpose of the Treaty pending its entry into force. Thirdly, the building-up of the verification regime is advancing well and is serving as a confidence-building measure even before the actual entry into force of the Treaty.

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Seminar on CTBT Membership Benefits

A well-attended seminar on the benefits of the CTBT was held on the margins of the 2003 Article XIV Conference on 4 September in Vienna. Ambassador Tom Grönberg, Permanent Representative of Finland, opened the seminar and welcomed the participants on behalf of the Conference Presidency. The seminar was organised by the Provisional Technical Secretariat and chaired by Peter Marshall, a British seismic expert.

In his presentation, Peter Marshall provided an overview of the various benefits of Treaty membership, covering the political benefits and the potential benefits which may derive from the application of the verification technologies for civil and scientific purposes. He also cited examples of membership benefits such as training of State Signatory personnel. As a result of the Preparatory Commission training programme, personnel return home with enhanced knowledge and skills, both scientific and technical. This knowledge can be used to improve national competence in verification and to provide national governments with better advice on Treaty related political and technical issues.

Robert Kleywegt, a South African seismologist, presented a regional perspective on possible applications of the CTBT seismic network. He pointed out that at present Africa has no appropriate level of data to assess the potential effects of natural hazards such as large earthquakes. "The CTBTO seismic network could provide much needed data and be the catalyst for the development of sub-regional and local seismic networks, while the IDC's bulletins and information from other global databases could be accessed to generate the seismic history component for seismic hazard studies."

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Where should we go from here? The Final Declaration includes a list of various concrete measures. The key is to maintain momentum and keep the CTBT high on the political agenda. At the global level, we should make use of occasions such as the 2005 NPT review process, where particular importance should be attached to the urgency of the early entry into force of the CTBT and of maintaining a nuclear test moratorium. We should also aim at holding another CTBT Friends ministerial meeting on the occasion of the United Nations General Assembly next autumn. Furthermore, bilaterally and regionally, we should continue to engage ourselves actively in soliciting the remaining 12 Annex 2 countries, perhaps targeting particularly those closer to ratification. To promote further universalization, we should support and encourage international cooperation projects that make use of verification technology, including its application to civil and scientific purposes. Lastly, I strongly hope that the additional measures to be discussed by ratifying States in accordance with the Final Declaration will make a real contribution to the promotion of the early entry into force of the Treaty. ■

Biographical note



Ambassador Yukio Takasu, Permanent Representative of Japan to the International Organizations in Vienna since 2001, joined the diplomatic service in 1969 and

served in various positions in the United Kingdom, Malaysia, Indonesia and at the United Nations in New York. He studied at the University of Tokyo and at Oxford University.

In the Foreign Ministry in Tokyo, he was responsible for Japan's policy on Western Europe and on the United Nations (1988-1992). In September 1993, Mr Takasu was appointed Assistant Secretary-General and Controller of the United Nations (UN) in New York, where he was in charge of the budgetary and financial operations of the UN.

Between 1997 and 2000, Mr Takasu served his country as Ambassador to the United Nations, representing Japan in the Security Council from 1997 to 1998. In early 2000, he was appointed Director-General of the Multilateral Cooperation Department in Tokyo, and subsequently, Ambassador in charge of civil society. ■



H. E. YORIKO KAWAGUCHI, FOREIGN MINISTER OF JAPAN, STATEMENT AT THE CONFERENCE ON FACILITATING THE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE CTBT, 3 SEPTEMBER 2003

"Since Japan is the only country in the world to have suffered the tragedy of atomic bombings, we Japanese people have a particularly strong desire for a ban on nuclear testing. ... Our efforts toward the early entry into force of the CTBT have permeated international opinion and the norm has taken root that all types of nuclear tests should be banned. Thus, the CTBT, even before entering into force, is playing an important role as a strong deterrent against nuclear testing. It is important that we ceaselessly and tenaciously persevere in our efforts."