

# Commission update

## Report on the November 2004 session

The Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) held its Twenty-Third Session from 15 to 19 November 2004 in Vienna under the chairmanship of Ambassador Yukio Takasu of Japan. One-hundred-and-five Member States participated in the session. The League of Arab States attended as an observer.

### The report of the Executive Secretary

Mr Wolfgang Hoffmann, Executive Secretary of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission, reported on progress in the implementation of the verification regime and on administrative, legal and coordination matters. He informed the delegates that 98 out of the 337 International Monitoring System (IMS) facilities have now been certified, an increase of eleven facilities since the last issue of *CTBTO Spectrum*. Moreover, legal arrangements between Member States and the Commission are now in place for 324 IMS stations in 82 countries.

Mr Hoffmann stressed the significance of the operation and maintenance (O&M) function for the Provisional Technical Secretariat (PTS). He informed delegates about his modifications in the O&M coordination with a view to better handling this ever growing requirement. He also reported that as of 8 November 2004, the collection rates of assessed contributions amounted to 91.27 % for 2004 and 95.08 % for 2003.

### The plenary debate

The main focus of the plenary debate was on the appointment of a new Executive Secretary. States Signatories stressed the importance of arriving at a consensus for a candidate. Other important issues discussed were the review of the PTS

organizational structure by an external review team and budgetary matters.

Member States welcomed the signing of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) by the United Republic of Tanzania and the ratification by the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liechtenstein, Togo, Tunisia and the United Republic of Tanzania since the last session of the Commission. There was broad support expressed for the convening of a Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT in 2005. Several delegates also articulated their appreciation and support for the Joint Ministerial Statement on the CTBT, issued on the margins of the last United Nations General Assembly. Furthermore, Member States welcomed the agreement on cooperation between the Association of Caribbean States and the Commission.

### Conclusions

For the first time in its history, the Commission approved the 2005 Programme and Budget amounting to US\$ 51 047 250 and € 42 540 900 in a split currency system as a measure to deal with the adverse effects of currency fluctuations. The Commission also authorized the PTS to finalize arrangements with the Austrian Government regarding additional conference facilities at the Vienna International Centre.

Ambassador Taous Feroukhi of Algeria was elected as the next chairperson of the Commission for 2005. In addition, under the skilful leadership of the 2004 Commission's Chairman Ambassador Takasu, who steered the negotiations, the Commission elected and appointed by acclamation Ambassador Tibor Tóth of Hungary as the next Executive Secretary. He will assume the office on 1 August 2005. ■

## Profile of newly elected Executive Secretary: Ambassador Tibor Tóth



Ambassador Tibor Tóth is currently the Permanent Representative of Hungary to the United Nations Office, the Conference on Disarmament, and other International

Organizations in Geneva. His entire career is devoted to disarmament and non-proliferation, especially as regards weapons of mass destruction. As a participant at the final stages of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban-Treaty (CTBT) negotiations in Geneva in 1996, he has been closely involved with the CTBT since its beginnings.

Between 1997 and 2001, Ambassador Tóth served as Permanent Representative to the CTBTO Preparatory Commission. In his capacity as Chairperson of Working Group A of the Commission he has been leading efforts of States Signatories to build-up the budgetary, financial, administrative and legal infrastructure of the Organization.

Ambassador Tóth was also involved in the negotiations of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) between 1982 and 1992, and served as Permanent Representative of Hungary to the Preparatory Commission of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in The Hague in 1993. He served as the President of the BWC Review Conference between 2001 and 2002 and chaired the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) follow-up conferences between 1991 and 2003. Furthermore, in 2003 he was appointed Chairperson of the BWC Meeting of Experts.

He served as Permanent Representative of Hungary to the United Nations Office in Geneva from 1990 to 1993, and in Vienna between 1997 and 2001.

Born in 1954, Ambassador Tóth holds a Masters degree from the University of International Relations in Moscow. ■