



## Editorial



*This is the last issue of the CTBTO Spectrum that I am presenting to you. In July, I will hand over my present position as Executive Secretary of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission*

*to Ambassador Tibor Tóth of Hungary, who will assume office on 1 August 2005.*

*My connection with the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) dates back to the beginning of its negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva in 1993. As the German Representative to the Conference, I chaired the Working Group on Verification. To conclude text negotiations on the Treaty in approximately three years was quite an achievement, even if the results were not to everybody's liking.*

*For a diplomat who is used to do a lot of paper work, it is quite extraordinary to be able to actually create an organization from scratch, from a blueprint that initially only existed on paper. I had this rare opportunity and realized it: On 17 March 1997, the Provisional Technical Secretariat (PTS) started to work at the Vienna International Centre with nine staff members from six different nationalities. We had our own offices, but the furniture was borrowed from UNIDO. In the meantime, the PTS has approximately 270 staff members from some 70 nations.*

*During these last eight years, we have worked in the technical and in the diplomatic field. In the technical field, we have been able to build around 65% of the International Monitoring System (IMS) network. Some of these stations were very difficult to build, due to technical, environmental and political reasons. We received help from the international scientific community, and wherever feasible, we provided the scientists*

*with data. New scientific developments and improved communication technologies made it possible to receive high quality data from the IMS network in quantities not foreseeable during Treaty negotiations. Some of these data may also be used for potential civil and scientific applications. The most recent endeavour is to provide international organizations with IMS seismic data in order to help them build tsunami warning systems.*

*On the political side, the Treaty achieved nearly universal coverage, considering the number of signatures and the steadily growing number of ratifications, which confirms the growing commitment by a vast majority of States to stop nuclear test explosions as set out by the CTBT. Despite these positive developments, we are nowhere near entry into force because of the rather complicated entry into force clause of the Treaty.*

*The African region, which this issue of CTBTO Spectrum focuses on as an overarching theme, is a particularly good example for the ever increasing numbers of signatures and ratifications: Of those States, who signed and ratified the Treaty in 2004, 75 and 66 percent respectively, were from the African region.*

*With 53 Member States, Africa is by far the largest geographical region as defined by the Treaty and therefore an important player in global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Nearly all African States have signed the Treaty, making up close to 30 percent of the Preparatory Commission's membership. The vision of African leaders to spare the continent the nuclear arms race is also expressed in the Treaty of Pelindaba, which will establish a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone once it enters into force.*

*Besides looking at the relations between Africa and the CTBT, this issue of CTBTO Spectrum provides an overview of the Commission's work over the past six*

*months, including an update on the latest session of the Preparatory Commission.*

*On 26 December 2004, the whole world was in shock by the loss of lives and the devastation caused by the Indian Ocean tsunami. The cover article by Mr Masahiro Yamamoto provides the view of an earthquake prone country, Japan, on establishing an effective tsunami warning system with seismic data provided by the IMS.*

*Furthermore, an interview with Hon. Gérard Kamanda wa Kamanda, Minister of Scientific Research and Technology of the Democratic Republic of Congo, and two other African contributions by Ambassador Taous Feroukhi of Algeria, Chairperson of the Preparatory Commission, and Hon. Zabein Mhita, Deputy Minister of Science and Higher Education of Tanzania, reflect upon the role of the CTBT in Africa and provide new insights into the politics of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament in Africa.*

*In concluding, I would like to express my appreciation to the PTS staff for creating a transparent and respected international organization. I find it very satisfactory to work with Member States, the United Nations and other international organizations for a common goal – to make this world a safer place.*

*I think the story of the Preparatory Commission and the PTS is a success story and I am proud to be part of it, but there is more to be done. I am confident that Ambassador Tibor Tóth will carry on the good work and will ultimately achieve entry into force of the CTBT.*

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Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive  
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