

## Africa and the Preparatory Commission for the CTBTO

Despite the challenges facing the African continent, African States play a role in the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the Preparatory Commission for the CTBTO that merits particular attention.

Since the CTBT opened for signature in 1996, nearly all African States have signalled their support for a universal prohibition of nuclear explosive tests by adhering to the Treaty. The number of African signatories and members of the Preparatory Commission has grown from 33 in 1996 to 51 today, and Africa now makes up close to 30 per cent of the membership of the Commission. That just two African States have yet to sign the CTBT and become members of the Commission is an encouraging indication of the extensive regional backing the Treaty enjoys. Indeed, of the international organizations whose mandate concerns the limitation of weapons of mass destruction, the Commission is now the organization with the greatest number of members among African States.

In Africa, the significance of the CTBT and the Preparatory Commission for the CTBTO lies in the opportunity they present to demonstrate the continued commitment of African States to international efforts to contain the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to maintain international peace and

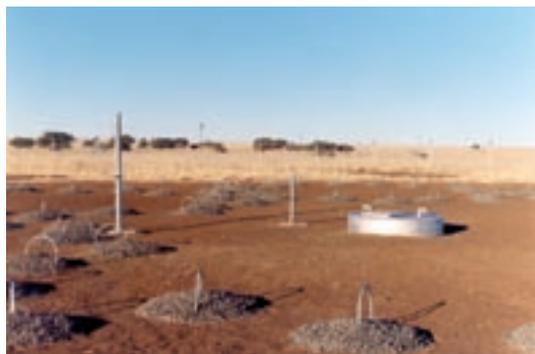


NATIONAL SEMINAR ON THE CTBT IN ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA, JUNE 2005

security. In fact, all African States have already subscribed to other international agreements prohibiting the possession of nuclear devices and restricting their testing, making the overwhelming support these States give to the preparatory arrangements for the CTBT all the more striking. These agreements include, amongst others, the Partial Test-Ban Treaty of 1963 and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1968. In addition, once the African Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone Treaty of 1996 enters into force, article 5 of that Treaty will complement the CTBT by comprehensively prohibiting “the testing of any nuclear explosive device”.

Of the six geographical regions foreseen in Article II, paragraph 28, of the CTBT, Africa is by far the largest. Annex 1 to the Treaty lists the 53 African States eligible for election to the ten seats allocated to Africa on the Executive Council of the future CTBTO. As a regional grouping, Africa already functions in the Preparatory Commission and

regularly proposes candidates for elective office. The current Chairperson of the Commission is the Permanent Representative of Algeria, Ambassador Taous Feroukhi. Previously, the African region has nominated the Permanent Representatives of Algeria, Nigeria and South Africa to the same position.



ARRAY ELEMENT H1 OF IS47, BOSHOF, SOUTH AFRICA, READY FOR EQUIPMENT INSTALLATION



STATION OPERATOR WORKING ON WELLHEAD ELECTRONICS AT SEISMIC BOREHOLE, PS15, DIMBOKRO, COTE D'IVOIRE



## 2005 Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

In total, 24 African States host 38 monitoring facilities under the CTBT, including seven primary seismic stations, 15 auxiliary seismic stations, seven radionuclide stations, nine infrasound stations and one radionuclide laboratory. These facilities are located not only on continental Africa, but on several island states and territories, including Cape Verde, Madagascar and Marion Island. Most African host States have entered into some form of legal arrangement with the Commission to govern the Organization's activities on their territories. Formal International Monitoring System Facility Agreements have been concluded with six African States, of which five have entered into force and one is being applied provisionally pending its entry into force.

The task of the Preparatory Commission in fostering international cooperation is one of particular importance for African States, especially where the activities concerned promote technical capacity, provide relevant training and lead to the useful exchange of information and experience in Treaty-related matters. The Commission has sponsored several regional and sub-regional workshops in Africa, namely in Cairo (1999), Dakar (2001), Nairobi (2002), Kampala (2003), Tunis (2004) and Pretoria (2004). In 2005, three national seminars have taken place in Africa, with the aim to raise awareness on the CTBT and to promote the Commission's work. In June 2005, the most recent one was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, attended by high-level officers of the Ethiopian Government and the House of Representatives and representatives of the Provisional Technical Secretariat.

Africa will no doubt remain a focus of future international cooperation activities, providing a small gesture of reciprocation for the continent's abiding support for the nuclear test ban. ■

At the request of a majority of States which have ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), a Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT will be held in New York from 21 to 23 September 2005.

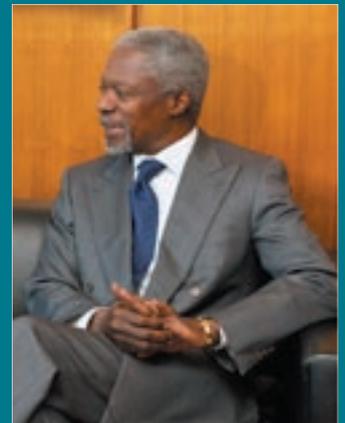
In its Article XIV, the Treaty provides for the holding of such a conference if it has not entered into force three years after its opening for signature on 24 September 1996, and at subsequent anniversaries until its entry into force. Since the 2003 Conference, Member States and the Provisional Technical Secretariat have continued to promote the entry

into force of the Treaty. Nevertheless, more work needs to be done.

The requesting States believe that the timing of the Conference during the general debate of the General Assembly will help ensure high-level attendance and maximize the impact of the Conference.

The Conference will be opened by the United Nations Secretary-General. Hon. Alexander Downer, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Australia, is the President-Designate. The preparations in Vienna are led by Ambassador Deborah Stokes, Permanent Representative of Australia to the CTBTO Preparatory Commission. ■

**“For 35 years, the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, or NPT, has been a cornerstone of our global security. With near universal membership, the treaty has firmly entrenched a norm against nuclear proliferation and helped confound predictions that today there would be 25 or more countries with nuclear weapons... Let me be clear: Failure of a review conference to come to any agreement will not break the NPT-based regime. The vast majority of countries that are parties to the treaty recognize its enduring benefits...**



**When multilateral forums falter, leaders must lead. This September, more than 170 heads of state and government will convene in New York to adopt a wide-ranging agenda to advance development, security and human rights for all countries and all peoples. I challenge them to break the deadlock on the most pressing challenges in the field of nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament...**

**Leaders must also move beyond rhetoric in addressing the question of disarmament. Prompt negotiation of a fissile material cutoff treaty for all countries is indispensable. All countries also should affirm their commitment to a moratorium on testing, and to early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. And I hope leaders will think seriously about what more can be done to reduce - irreversibly - the number and role of nuclear weapons in the world.”**

KOFI A. ANNAN, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS, INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, 30 MAY 2005