

Secretariat snapshots

The new state of the art computer centre of the PTS

In August 2005, the new computer centre of the Provisional Technical Secretariat (PTS) took up operations, following an intensive planning, procurement and construction process. Located in the basement of the central conference building at the Vienna International Centre (VIC), this high-tech computer centre hosts all central computer systems, networking devices and related infrastructure equipment that support the verification regime of the Preparatory Commission.

The Computer Infrastructure Section supervised and coordinated the meticulously prepared move of all equipment during a single weekend. Essentially, all equipment needed to be disconnected, disassembled, reassembled and reconnected within this short time frame. The most critical device was the so-called Mass Storage System, comprising 5000 cartridges, which carry about 100 Terabytes (10^{12}) of data. These cartridges contain all verification related data that have been collected since the start of the International Monitoring System in 1997 and all data from the prototype International Data Centre dating back some more years.

The underlying design for power-provision is fully self-sufficient in the case of power outages, relying on two 500kVA emergency diesel generators, un-interruptible power supply and an intelligent cabling system. The glass-fiber and copper network cabling is laid out in a structured fashion that minimizes the connection-time for new equipment. Air-conditioning units guarantee a temperature between 20-25° C, reducing the heat produced by all equipment located in more than 30 large computer racks.

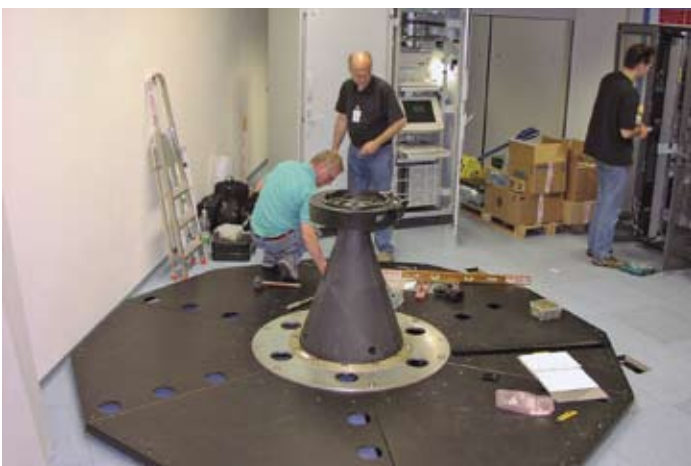
The new computer centre features state of the art technology to provide optimum security for the data. In the case of fire or flooding, detectors will initiate alarms with the VIC and Viennese fire-brigades within seconds. Devices will automatically launch an inert chemical gas that will extinguish any fire.

Over 300 measuring points, registering person access, smoke, water leakage, temperature and humidity control systems, are positioned strategically to measure any anomalies in the centre and alert the VIC Buildings Management Service in the case of malfunction or danger.



CRANE MOVING UNINTERRUPTIBLE POWER SUPPLY TO THE NEW PTS COMPUTER CENTRE

With these technologically advanced security measures, the centre is well equipped to fulfill the important computer security requirements of the Treaty. The centre has a visitors area which presents an overview of the verification regime and allows a peek into the construction phase and the current operations. ■



REASSEMBLING THE MASS STORAGE SYSTEM



THE NEW COMPUTER CENTRE AT THE VIC, VIENNA, AUSTRIA



CTBTO exhibition displayed at the Article XIV Conference



A CTBTO EXHIBITION CALLED 'CTBT – A GLOBAL VERIFICATION REGIME' PREPARED BY PUBLIC INFORMATION WAS DISPLAYED ON THE OCCASION OF THE 2005 CONFERENCE ON FACILITATING THE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN TREATY IN NEW YORK, 21-23 SEPTEMBER 2005. ON ELEVEN PANELS, SIX FREE-STANDING SCREENS AND 24 PHOTOGRAPHS, THE EXHIBITION DETAILED HOW THE GLOBAL VERIFICATION REGIME WILL BE USED TO MONITOR COMPLIANCE WITH THE CTBT. A GLOBE DEPICTING ALL INTERNATIONAL MONITORING SYSTEM FACILITIES WAS ALSO PART OF THE EXHIBITION.

PTS establishes independent mediation procedure

Mediation has become a widely practiced form of alternative conflict resolution in the workplace. Mediation is an informal process in which a neutral third party, an independent mediator, assists the conflicting parties to reach a voluntary, negotiated resolution to their dispute. Mediation is strictly confidential and can help address discrimination or harassment grievances.

The CTBTO Preparatory Commission and its Provisional Technical Secretariat (PTS) are committed to ensure a multicultural work environment. No discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, physical abilities or any other characteristic is tolerated within the Secretariat.

An Administrative Directive issued earlier this year sets out policies and procedures to address harassment-related

grievances in the workplace. In the case of a harassment-related complaint, Administrative Directive No. 52 establishes a three-step procedure which every staff member has the right to invoke: an informal approach, a mediation procedure and a formal investigation.

The informal approach suggests that the best course of action is for the complainant to talk with the staff member whose behaviour is giving offence. If a staff member considers this approach inappropriate or unsuccessful, the staff member may contact one of the Independent Mediators, either directly or through the Mediation Secretary.

Working on a strictly confidential basis, the Independent Mediators will assist conflicting parties to find a workable resolution to their dispute. The Independent Mediators are nominated for a renewable

period of two years. They function as individuals and are fully independent of any official or organizational entity.

Mediation gives the parties the opportunity to discuss the issues raised in the charge, clear up misunderstanding, determine the underlying interests or concerns, find areas of agreement, and ultimately, incorporate those areas of agreements into the conflict resolution.

If mediation does not lead to a satisfactory solution of a conflict, formal ways of addressing the issue may be taken.

Earlier this year, six PTS staff members were trained in conflict management and mediation by instructors from the Vienna Economic University. Five of them will serve as Independent Mediators and one will function as the Secretary of the Mediators. ■