



Editorial



2006 marks the 10th anniversary of the opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Almost ten years after its conclusion,

the CTBT is close to universalization, with 176 States Signatories and 134 ratifiers, the latest being Viet Nam. Although the Treaty has not yet entered into force, it has proven its significance by contributing to the establishment of an international norm against nuclear testing.

The build-up of a functioning verification regime which needs to be in place when the Treaty enters into force is progressing in a dynamic manner. A further five facilities were certified since the end of last year, bringing the total number of certified stations and laboratories to 161 and six, respectively. The growing momentum in station installation and the considerable increase in data traffic over the last two years – the latter has almost tripled in volume from five to 14 gigabytes per day – means that more and more Member States are receiving verification data and products on a test basis. Currently, approximately 700 end users in 90 countries are participating in the provisional operation of the verification regime.

In order to make optimum use of these data, States Signatories are invited to participate in the capacity building activities of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission and its Secretariat with the aim to fulfil their verification responsibilities under the CTBT and to fully realize the potential benefits deriving from the Treaty. In addition to the traditional training methods,

e-training offers a range of possibilities for deepening and broadening capacity building. In this context, the Provisional Technical Secretariat (PTS) is developing a global e-learning project that will provide electronic, interactive access to training courses and technical workshops for authorised users. The European Union is supporting this initiative with more than 1.1 million Euros.

The question of capacity building in order to maintain and develop a global Treaty regime is not only crucial for Member States but also for the interaction between the worldwide scientific community, the Commission and the States Signatories. For this reason and to celebrate the achievements of the Commission, the PTS is organizing a scientific symposium which will be held on 31 August and 1 September in Vienna. The symposium will provide a forum for the exchange of ideas between the verification community and the wider scientific community with the aim to increase global capacity in the fields of science and technology related to the activities of the Commission. It will also provide latest information on the multi-faceted benefits of verification technologies and International Data Centre (IDC) data.

Besides providing an outlook on the scientific symposium by Ola Dahlman, former Working Group B Chairman, this issue of CTBTO Spectrum looks at the many interactions between the South-East Asia, the Pacific and the Far East (SEAPFE) region and the CTBT. The PTS is particularly honoured to publish an interview with the Minister of Disarmament and Arms Control of New Zealand, Hon Phil Goff, focusing, inter alia, on the eminent role of New Zealand in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Furthermore, a special feature article by Ambassador

Yukiya Amano of Japan looks at his country's contribution to the Treaty. The Ambassador of Vietnam, H.E. Nguyen Truong Giang, gives his personal view on Viet Nam's decision to ratify the CTBT as the 34th Annex 2 State.

The cover article, by Gerardo Suárez, Director of the International Monitoring System (IMS) Division, describes the pioneering years of building the IMS network. With over 50% of the IMS stations certified, Mr Suárez, who will separate from the PTS at the end of July, leaves behind a legacy of which he can be very proud. I would like to use this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude for his work.

Some of the unique challenges IMS staff members may encounter when building new stations can be best appreciated when reading the 'Verification Highlights' article on establishing infrasound station IS39 in Palau. It shows how demanding the work of PTS staff members can be.

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