

## Report on the June 2006 session

The Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) held its Twenty-Sixth Session from 20 to 23 June 2006 in Vienna under the chairmanship of Ambassador Volodymyr Yel'chenko of Ukraine. Eighty-five Member States participated in the session. The League of Arab States attended as an observer.

### The report of the Executive Secretary

Mr Tibor Tóth, Executive Secretary of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission, reported on the 2005 budget implementation, pointing out that the Provisional Technical Secretariat (PTS) achieved a 5% increase in the overall budget implementation rate for 2005 compared to 2004. He also addressed the status of the 2006 budget implementation and the proposals for the 2007 programme and budget which represent an overall decrease of US\$ 150 000 compared to the 2006 budget.

The Executive Secretary expressed his concern about outstanding assessed contributions, stating that if the current trend continues a provisional cash deficit of about US\$ 11 million can be expected by the PTS at the end of the year. As of 13 June 2006, the collection rates of assessed contributions for 2006 amounted to 67,8% of the US\$ portion and 65,5% of the €portion. This is lower than at the same time last year, when they stood at 79% of the US\$ portion and 73,6 % of the €portion.

Despite the difficult financial situation, the PTS made substantial progress in the establishment of the Treaty verification regime. In 2005, the Capital Investment Fund (CIF) implementation rate increased by 27% as compared to 2004. Since the beginning of 2006, five additional International Monitoring System (IMS) stations were certified, bringing the total number of certified IMS facilities to 167 out of 337. By connecting eleven new IMS stations to International Data Centre (IDC) operations, the number of stations in IDC operations reached the 50% mark.

The Executive Secretary reported also on governance issues, restructuring of the PTS, and human resources issues. He pointed out that the triple challenge of service limitation, restructuring and completing the build-up of the IMS network over the next two years created higher than usual levels of stress for PTS staff members. In addition, Mr Tóth informed about the scientific symposium to be held on 31 August and 1 September this year in Vienna, and about outreach efforts, training and the appointments of the new IMS Director and Chief of Internal Audit.

### Plenary debate and conclusions

The plenary debate focused, *inter alia*, on budgetary issues, participation of experts from developing countries in Working Group B meetings, the restructuring of the PTS and the seven year service limit.

Member States welcomed the ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) by Antigua and Barbuda, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Haiti, Suriname and Zambia since the last session of the Preparatory Commission. States Signatories particularly welcomed the ratification of Viet Nam, an Annex 2 State.

States Signatories expressed appreciation for the capacity building, outreach and international cooperation activities undertaken by the PTS as well as for voluntary contributions from the European Union, the Czech Republic and the Netherlands to support capacity building through e-training.

Member States welcomed the plans for the scientific symposium and expressed their appreciation for the support of the event by Austria and the voluntary contribution by Hungary for an expert group meeting on civil and scientific applications of the CTBT to be held in Budapest shortly after the symposium.

The PTS was asked to prepare an options paper on a possible contribution of the Commission to tsunami warning systems and to continue efforts to build National Data Centre capacities in developing countries. ■

## Profile of the Chairperson of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission



Mr Volodymyr Yel'chenko, Ambassador of Ukraine to Austria and Permanent Representative to the International Organizations in Vienna, is serving as Chairman of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission for 2006.

Ambassador Yelchenko studied International Relations and International Law at the Kyiv State University. He joined the diplomatic service in 1981 and served in various positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and abroad, including as Second Secretary at the Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the United Nations in New York (1986-1992), and as Director of the Department of International Organizations (1995-1997) at the Ministry. Between 1997 and 2000, Mr Yelchenko served his country as Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York, representing Ukraine in the Security Council in 2000 and 2001. In March 2001, he was President of the Security Council.

His assignment in New York was followed by a number of high-ranking positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs such as Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs (2000-2001), Deputy Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (2001-2003), Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (March-May 2003) and First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs (May 2003-February 2005).

From May 2004 to April 2005, Mr Yelchenko chaired the National Commission of Ukraine for UNESCO and also worked as a Member of the UNESCO Executive Board. He took up his present post in Vienna in April 2005. ■