

JOINT MINISTERIAL STATEMENT ON THE CTBT

1. We, the Foreign Ministers who have issued this statement, join together to reaffirm the vision which was the basis for the conclusion of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. That vision was for a treaty which would rid the world of nuclear weapons test explosions and would contribute to systematic and progressive reduction of nuclear weapons and the prevention of nuclear proliferation, as a major instrument in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.
2. The early entry into force of the CTBT, which would bring about the cessation of all nuclear weapon test explosions and any other nuclear explosions, has been identified by the UN General Assembly as being central to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation objectives. The last Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) also emphasised the importance of the CTBT, listing its entry into force as the first of a series of practical steps needed to achieve NPT nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation objectives.
3. The prevention of the proliferation of materials, technologies and knowledge which can be used for weapons of mass destruction is one of the most important challenges the world is facing today. Additional international tensions have developed since the CTBT was negotiated, which make entry into force of the Treaty, within the broader framework of multilateral arms control and non-proliferation efforts, even more urgent today. We affirm that the CTBT has an essential role to play in strengthening global peace and security. This role should be recognised by all of us.
4. We call upon all States that have not yet signed and ratified the CTBT to sign and ratify the Treaty as soon as possible, in particular those whose ratification is needed for its entry into force. To help bring this about, we will make representations as appropriate, individually or together, including at regional and multilateral meetings, in order to make the Treaty a focus of attention at the highest political levels. The scientific community, non-governmental organisations and other elements of civil society also have a role to play, in raising awareness of and in strengthening support for the Treaty.
5. We call upon all States to continue a moratorium on nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions. Voluntary adherence to such a moratorium is of the highest importance, but cannot serve as a substitute for entry into force of the Treaty. Only the CTBT offers to the global community the prospect of a permanent and legally binding commitment to end nuclear testing.
6. We consider that it is vital to maintain momentum in building the verification machinery, so that it is ready to guarantee compliance with the Treaty. We appeal to all States Signatories to make available the financial resources needed to build and operate the verification system as soon as possible, through full and timely payment of assessed

contributions. Completing the verification system foreseen in the Treaty by entry into force will ensure a high level of confidence that States are maintaining their treaty commitments.

7. The verification system will be unprecedented in its global reach. In addition to its primary function, it will bring scientific and civil benefits, particularly to developing countries, through technology transfer and exchange of scientific know-how, as a result of the installation and use of seismic, radionuclide, infrasound and hydroacoustic networks. Moreover, technical cooperation between states can help to enhance the already impressive verification capabilities under the CTBT. We will be seeking ways to ensure that co-operation among States Signatories allows for effective technical assistance, and we call upon other States to join us in this endeavour.

8. We will spare no effort in seeking to realise the vision of a ban on nuclear weapons test explosions which culminated in conclusion of the CTBT in 1996, and invite our fellow Foreign Ministers to join us in this task.

14 September, 2002
New York

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