

Thirty-First Session  
Vienna, 17-18 November 2008

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**ANNEX VII**  
**to the Report of the Thirty-First Session**  
**of the Preparatory Commission**

**ORAL REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**  
**TO THE THIRTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE**  
**PREPARATORY COMMISSION\***

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1. The report of mine today will take you on a journey longer than the routine six months. The maturity reached by our arrangement and the new window of opportunity opening up for entry into force require a more strategic outlook. In addition, due to the agenda of this session, I owe you a report about the achievements of the Preparatory Commission during my tenure as Executive Secretary as well as what lies ahead of us.
2. When the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty was first opened for signature in 1996, in the euphoria following the end of the Cold War, the twenty-first century stood for many things, among them promise and opportunity. A great deal has happened since then. The century has begun in a manner unlike anyone had thought it would. During the first couple of years of this organization's existence the perceived urgency of this Treaty receded as it faced serious challenges and the world was preoccupied with seemingly more immediate problems.
3. The Treaty and the Commission displayed unparalleled acts of resilience to those challenges. But still the defining feature of the past period may prove to be not *what* has taken place. But that *so much* has occurred over such a short period of time.
4. We have seen our membership grow substantially. On the eve of the series of nuclear tests conducted in 1998, this Treaty had 13 ratifiers. Ten years and 133 ratifications later, the now established norm against testing waits to be enshrined in the international rule book. One region in the world has fully ratified the Treaty and another two draw close. In terms of political support, the Treaty and this Commission are now as strong and vibrant as an international organization with 180 members behind it can be. With

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\* The Oral Report of the Executive Secretary to the Thirty-First Session of the Preparatory Commission was previously issued as CTBT/PC-31/CRP.1.

- 180 countries signed up to the Treaty – 81% of these having also ratified their commitment – there can be no doubting our common goal.
5. The verification regime has come along significantly under my watch, as the rate of installation of the International Monitoring System (IMS) has been maintained. This happened in a financial period of zero real growth. Significantly, all five nuclear weapon States are now contributing data to the IMS. By the end of this year, 73% of the 337 facilities to be built around the world will be transmitting Treaty-standard data back to the International Data Centre (IDC) here in Vienna. Operations in the IDC have been streamlined and improved. The Global Communications Infrastructure has been completely revamped and GCI II is now in effect. The first Integrated Field Exercise (IFE) has taken place, and with it a great leap forward has been made in terms of on-site inspection readiness. New areas, with new functions and responsibilities, have been created. New people have come on board with the implementation of the tenure policy. The organization has literally been restructured and renewed.
  6. The number of users accessing the system, and the number of National Data Centres (NDCs) established to do so, have crossed the symbolic barriers of 1000 and 100 respectively. States, institutions and experts want what we have. Because in certain areas of our work, as with the system as a whole, we are pioneering: we are leading the way. Nowhere is this more evident than in the recent tsunami warning alert agreements signed with institutions in Australia, Indonesia, Japan and the Philippines, and additional agreements are in the pipeline.
  7. A pilot project to assist developing countries in expanding the capacities and technical expertise of this organization is under way and continues from strength to strength. The number of recipient countries doubled in 2008, and 17 donor countries are now financially backing the project. After the success of the scientific symposium of 2006, an important International Scientific Studies project has been launched this year. We are opening our doors to the international scientific community. We all understand that it is not a luxury item, but an absolutely necessary commodity for the future of this organization. Because this unprecedented global joint venture on verification and civil applications will have to remain relevant for decades to come.
  8. It has not all been plain sailing. And as with other aspects of our lives, these achievements have taken place in the face of a series of challenges over the last number of years.
  9. We all remember the burden placed on the Commission by the nuclear event in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in 2006. An event which ostensibly broke the then eight year moratorium on testing and the longest silence in the history of nuclear explosions that the world had ever known. The world demanded that we deliver as a functioning and operational international organization. And we did. The event was successfully detected and attributed. And Treaty-standard time lines for analyses and delivery of information were met.
  10. From an organizational and operational perspective, there was the renewal and restructuring of the organization that began in 2005. Both were substantial undertakings in their own right, but together served as a formidable challenge, from a management

point of view. But the situation was managed, with the least possible disruption to other areas of our work, and the Commission is now stronger for it.

11. In 2007, the main challenge facing the organization was a financial one. This was handled vigilantly by our stakeholders, with the minimum amount of impact on our core activities. And the impressive investment made in the IMS to date was protected and even strengthened. Unfortunately, a crisis of finance is no longer particular to this Commission's work. And so, in light of current developments enveloping the global economy, we have moved to put in place a package of prudent financial measures. These are designed to safeguard the interests of the Commission while continuing the important work that must continue in the face of any and all difficulties that beset it.
12. Much remains to be done. It falls to us to do it. To the 78 countries that are already actively involved in building stations across their territories, and to the 11 that are still to join them. To the 37 countries that have put their facilities on a sound legal basis and to the 52 that must follow. To the 107 countries that have established NDCs and are using those centres to improve our distribution time lines, expand the number of users integrated in the regime and enhance the detection capabilities of the system. To the hundreds of State officials, both here in Vienna and at home in their respective capitals, working tirelessly to bring the Commission forward day by day. And to the countless number of station operators and Secretariat staff that support them in this endeavour.
13. In the coming years we must continue the build-up of the noble gas network, which proved itself to be so vital in characterizing the nuclear nature of the event in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. All of the existing technologies employed in the IDC will have to be further integrated into a functioning and efficient system. We will have to introduce infrasound recordings into analyses to enhance our seismic monitoring, and this will have to be fused with radionuclide readings to enhance final products.
14. We must devote ourselves to analysing and evaluating the IFE that took place in Kazakhstan two months ago. As many perspectives as are necessary will be addressed. Workshops will be held, 'think-ins', discussions with participants. The evaluation and assessment of the exercise by the Commission will be critical in retaining every aspect of this unprecedented and unique experience.
15. As the Commission moves closer to a de facto Treaty organization, we will have to contemplate further structural refinements to ensure that the Commission is ready for entry into force and is operating at its most efficient. We will have to better facilitate the involvement of developing countries in our capacity building and bring new people and new thinking to every aspect of our work.
16. A greater synergy will be needed in promoting the Treaty – its aims, benefits and importance – around the world. This will require all of our best efforts, and recent activities in the Latin American and Caribbean region can serve as an example to the other regions of the world.
17. It bodes well for the years ahead that we were able to accomplish what we have in the time that we did, given the circumstances. Years that may come faster than originally anticipated. The CTBT and its entry into force are once more back on the international

agenda. The past two years in particular have borne witness to a resurgence of interest. Recent events such as the Ministerial Meeting in New York have reaffirmed the Treaty's central importance to international peace and security. And very recent events would seem to indicate that new leadership on the issue may soon be forthcoming. Whereas once the question hanging over this Treaty and its entry into force was "will it ever?", now the mood would appear to tend towards "how soon can it?" And so we must grasp the new promise of the current climate. And convert that promise into the completion of a journey long started and well travelled.

18. Great distances have been travelled. Today, the monitoring system is almost complete and the Treaty is almost in force. But the purpose of this journey is the final destination. It is the completion of the verification regime and its entry into full operation. An "almost" comprehensive ban is not what we are working for.
19. Now is the time for leading people on the international stage to take the initiative. We need sustained interest in this Treaty and its entry into force by presidents, prime ministers and foreign ministers. We can build upon the successful Article XIV conferences and Ministerial Meetings and converge in a defining Article XIV conference in September 2009 in New York. Still nine countries remain whose ratification is necessary for this Treaty's entry into force. Each of these nine countries has made a commitment to a comprehensive ban on nuclear testing in some shape or form. This figure once stood at 44. One day it will not stand at all. Our shared destination is the entry into force of the CTBT. All roads now must lead that way.
20. We do not know how much time we have. What is certain is that we will not be afforded the luxury of another 10 years in which to bring ourselves to a level of entry into force readiness. As a system or as an organization. In the coming years difficult demands will be placed on this Commission. We will have to meet these demands, and we will need our best efforts to do this. I have said before that the last mile is often the longest. The final push will require us to call upon all of our resources; it will test our individual and collective capacities.
21. Make no mistake about it. The coming years will be a period of profound transformation for this Commission. The long march towards the entry into force of the CTBT gathers pace and will come in sight of its conclusion. When we face what remains to be done, we know that we have come so far, not just in spite of the many challenges that this Treaty has faced over the past decade. No, we have come so far because of them as well. Because you, the governments of the world, have stood by your belief in the necessity of this Treaty. You have reinforced that belief with action – in your 180 signatures and 146 ratifications of the Treaty; with investment – in the more than one thousand million US dollars invested.
22. Achieving entry into force of this Treaty is a global responsibility. It is an objective we all must pursue. It is a burden we all must share. Of course, it will not be easy. We need to work together. We need to focus on our goal with a real unity of purpose. We need to pursue this goal almost single-mindedly. And we need to act at the highest levels. A new momentum may be found as positive developments unfold. A momentum that could bring us closer to concluding the story of the Preparatory Commission and to beginning anew, as the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization.