Sixth Ministerial Meeting on Promoting the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

In the years between the Article XIV conferences that are held to facilitate the entry into force of the Treaty, foreign ministers of CTBT States Signatories are invited to meet on the margins of the United Nations General Assembly in New York in September. The aim of these meetings is to sustain and generate further political momentum as well as public support for entry into force. To that end, the ministers adopt and sign a Joint Ministerial Statement that is open for adherence by other countries. The initiative for these meetings was taken by Japan in cooperation with Australia and the Netherlands, which organized the first “Friends of the CTBT” Foreign Ministers’ Meeting on the margins of the General Assembly in New York in 2002. They have since continued to be held biennially.
Conditions for Entry into Force

The entry into force of the CTBT is conditioned on its ratification by all 44 States listed in its Annex 2. The Annex 2 States are States that formally participated in the final stage of the negotiation of the Treaty in the Conference on Disarmament in 1996 and possessed nuclear power reactors or nuclear research reactors at that time. As of 31 December 2012, 36 of these 44 States had ratified the Treaty. Of the Annex 2 States that had still to ratify the Treaty, three had not yet signed it.

New York, 2012

On 27 September 2012, the sixth Ministerial Meeting on the entry into force of the CTBT was held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. Jointly hosted by the foreign ministers of Australia, Canada, Finland, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands and Sweden, the event served to demonstrate the reinvigorated political determination of the international community to achieve the Treaty’s entry into force and its universality.

The United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, echoed the sentiments of the meeting, telling States that have not yet signed or ratified that “you are failing to live up to your responsibility as a member of the international community”. The Joint Ministerial Statement was supported by the 101 States Signatories in attendance on 27 September, highlighting the scale of international support behind the Treaty.

As a side event, the PTS organized, in close cooperation with the theatre community,
a staged reading of the play “Reykjavik” by the Pulitzer Prize winning author, Richard Rhodes, based on the famous meeting in 1986 of Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev and US President Ronald Reagan. The reading was followed by a panel discussion with the participation of Max Kampelman, Roald Sagdeev and Morton Halperin, as well as the playwright himself. The event was attended by a diverse and influential audience of around two hundred people and accompanied by a multifaceted public information campaign reaching tens of thousands more. The initiative was financed through voluntary contributions from the Governments of Australia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Mexico and Sweden, as well as the Ploughshares Fund.

Around one hundred identified news sources reported on the Ministerial Meeting and on the play; the latter featured also in the *New York Times*. 

Panel discussion following the staged reading of “Reykjavik”. From left to right: Philip Taubman (panel moderator, standing), Max Kampelman, Richard Rhodes (the author of the play), Roald Sagdeev and Morton Halperin.