PROMOTING THE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE TREATY
HIGHLIGHTS

Strong political support for the Treaty and the work of the Commission

Foreign Ministers of Algeria and Germany commencing their work as the new coordinators of the Article XIV process

Ratification of the Treaty by Zimbabwe


The Secretary-General of the United Nations convenes the Article XIV conferences at the request of a majority of States that have ratified the Treaty. Both ratifying and signatory States participate in these conferences. Decisions are taken by consensus of the ratifying States, taking into account views expressed at the conference by signatory States. Non-signatory States, international organizations and NGOs are invited to attend as observers.

Article XIV conferences discuss and decide on what measures, consistent with international law, may be undertaken to accelerate the ratification process in order to facilitate entry into force of the Treaty.
Conditions for Entry into Force

The entry into force of the Treaty requires ratification by all 44 States listed in its Annex 2. These so-called Annex 2 States are States that formally participated in the final stage of the negotiation of the Treaty in the Conference of Disarmament in 1996 and possessed nuclear power reactors or nuclear research reactors at that time. As of 31 December 2019, 36 of these 44 States had ratified the Treaty. Of the eight Annex 2 States that had yet to ratify the Treaty, three still had not signed it.

NEW YORK, 2019

The eleventh Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty was held on 25 September 2019 on the margins of the opening of the seventy-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

The conference presented an opportunity to demonstrate the continued firm political commitment and support of the international community for the entry into force of the Treaty and its universality.

Around 85 States Signatories attended the conference. They reviewed the latest developments and discussed strategies to generate further support for the Treaty and its universality. A high number of foreign ministers and high level officials from ratifying, signatory and non-signatory States participated in the conference, including representatives from five States whose ratification is required for entry into force: China, Egypt, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel and the United States of America.

The President of the United Nations General Assembly, Mr Tijjani Muhammad-Bande (Nigeria), addressed the opening session. The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Ms Federica Mogherini, also delivered a statement on behalf of the EU.

In addition to foreign ministers and high level State representatives, the conference was attended by members of the Group of Eminent Persons, including Ms Tarja Halonen (former President of Finland) as well as officials from international organizations, specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations. Ms Halonen presented the statement on behalf of the Group of Eminent Persons. A member of the CTBTO Youth Group was also given the floor to deliver a statement on behalf of the Group.

Shared Presidency

The presidency of the conference was shared by the Foreign Minister of Algeria, Mr Sabri Boukadoum, and the Foreign Minister of Germany, Mr Heiko Maas.

Expressions of Strong Support

The participants, including ministers and other senior officials, underlined the significance of the Treaty for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and the established norm against nuclear testing. They called on non-ratifying States, in particular the remaining Annex 2 States, to ratify the Treaty as soon as possible. They also expressed appreciation for the activities of the Commission and the effective performance of its verification regime.
The Executive Secretary highlighted the importance of the Treaty for international peace and security. He noted that with 184 signatures and 168 ratifications the CTBT has reached near universality, although it is yet to enter into force. He invited focused outreach and open dialogue with the non-signatory and non-ratifying States to encourage them to consider ratification of the Treaty.

The conference unanimously adopted a Final Declaration that affirms that “a universal and effectively verifiable Treaty constitutes a fundamental instrument in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.” It further reaffirms “the vital importance and urgency of the entry into force of the CTBT” and urges “all States to remain seized of the issue at the highest political level.”

The Final Declaration calls on the remaining States to sign and ratify the Treaty without delay and welcomes opportunities to engage with the non-signatory States, in particular Annex 2 States.

The Final Declaration also calls on all States “to refrain from nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions, the development and use of new nuclear weapon technologies and any action that would undermine the object and purpose and the implementation of the provisions of the CTBT and to maintain all existing moratoria on nuclear weapon test explosions, while stressing that these measures do not have the same permanent and legally binding effect to end nuclear weapon testing and all other nuclear explosions, which can only be achieved with the entry into force of the Treaty.”

It also proposes 15 practical measures to accelerate the ratification process and bring the Treaty into force. These include support for bilateral, regional and multilateral outreach initiatives, capacity building and training activities, and cooperation with civil society, international organizations and non-governmental organizations.

The Final Declaration stresses that participating States will continue to provide the political and tangible support required to enable the Commission to complete all of its tasks in the most efficient and cost effective way, in particular the further build-up of all the elements of the verification regime. It also expresses appreciation for the civil and scientific benefits of the monitoring technologies, including for tsunami warning.

In addition, the Final Declaration welcomes the range of mutually supportive ratification outreach activities, including the activities of the Group of Eminent Persons and the CTBTO Youth Group and the individual efforts of States Signatories.

NEW RATIFICATION AND SIGNATURE OF THE TREATY

Zimbabwe deposited its instrument of ratification on 13 February 2019. As of 31 December 2019, the number of ratifications of the Treaty stands at 168, and the number of signatures is 184. This new ratification makes the Treaty one of the most adhered to international instruments in the field of disarmament and drives it closer to the desired objective of universality.