



Editorial



the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

A fresh look at what can be done to secure and strengthen this larger regime is greatly needed, including necessary progress within the context of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is an integral part of this regime. It is the last barrier against nuclear weapons development: it helps delineate between prohibited military and legitimate peaceful nuclear activities. It is also a key step towards nuclear disarmament and acts as a catalyst for other disarmament measures, such as deeper reductions in strategic and non-strategic nuclear arsenals and a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty. Very few measures are as mature and ready as the CTBT. An agreement on a CTBT in force will be crucial for success in the current NPT review cycle.

It is interesting that during the last decade, when the international non-proliferation and disarmament community was “sleepwalking” in the words of former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, remarkable progress was made on the CTBT.

Ten years ago, only 28 countries had ratified the Treaty. Today, 180 countries have signed and nearly 150 have ratified it.

In the last couple of years we have also seen positive momentum being generated in the United States. In 2007, the Reykjavik Revisited initiative, led by U.S. senior statesmen George Shultz, William Perry, Henry Kissinger and Sam Nunn, created

a bipartisan platform on how to reach a nuclear-weapon-free world, including the CTBT’s entry into force. Three quarters of all former U.S. Secretaries of State and Defense support that platform.

Today, there is additional momentum through President Barack Obama and his administration’s strong support for the Treaty.

Over the last decade, significant progress has also been made in relation to the build-up of the CTBT’s verification regime. Ten years ago, no monitoring facilities had been certified as meeting the stringent standards of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), and can send data to the International Data Centre (IDC) in Vienna. The North Korean sub-kiloton nuclear test in October 2006 was successfully recorded and attributed by the CTBT’s International Monitoring System (IMS). Since then, an additional 60 facilities have been put in place and the capability of noble gas—the “smoking gun” of a nuclear explosion—has doubled. The data processing has been improved in general as well as specifically with regards to radionuclide data. Today, with the recent initial data provision by China, all five nuclear weapon States, as defined by the NPT, are sending data to the IDC. And on-site inspection capabilities have been improved through the Integrated Field Exercise in 2008.

This issue of CTBTO Spectrum tries to capture the momentum with regards to both political developments and verification build-up.

Academy Award-winning actor and producer and UN Messenger for Peace, Michael Douglas, explains why it is important that the United States ratifies the CTBT. Norway’s Foreign Minister, Jonas Gahr Støre, talks about the role the CTBT can play in helping to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world. Germany’s Foreign Minister, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, expounds on the new momentum for nuclear disarmament, and the necessity of

the CTBT’s swift entry into force. Deepthi Choubey of the Carnegie Endowment argues that the remaining Annex 2 countries, whose ratifications are necessary for entry into force, should proceed with ratification rather than waiting for the United States to take action.

A number of articles explore the progress made over the last couple of years in the build-up of the IMS, on-site inspections and Atmospheric Transport Modelling. There are also future outlooks: Ola Dahlman, leader of the International Scientific Studies project to assess the readiness of the CTBT’s verification regime, details the importance of close cooperation between the scientific community and the CTBTO. And Raymond Jeanloz of the University of California at Berkeley lays out his vision for the democratization of monitoring data.

As with international financial markets, further regulation of the nuclear landscape is needed. We live in a complex world with economic, social, and political tensions, where clear-cut rules related to nuclear security and non-proliferation are imperative. The CTBT is one of these rules. It is already a de facto international norm with a verification regime that has proven its worth. I am confident that each country, when exploring how the CTBT can benefit national, regional and international security, will come to the conclusion that the Treaty is a powerful security- and confidence building measure.

It is time for all of us to go the extra mile so that this important instrument for international non-proliferation and disarmament can enter into force at last, and become fully operational.

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