



EDITORIAL

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nuclear testing and its effects on human health and security, the history of arms control efforts, the current debate on entry into force, and daily press clippings.

We soon discovered that video-audio, animations and multimedia were the ideal means to explain the complexities of the verification regime. We built up video-audio capabilities from scratch and produced broadcast quality reports from the on-site inspection exercise in Kazakhstan, maintenance work at stations in Greenland, Argentina and Canada, and the triple disaster in Japan in March 2011. Social media were embraced and online campaigns such as the “infamous” nuclear test anniversaries helped reach millions of new, young viewers, including audiences in countries less accessible through the traditional media.

Exhibitions were set up for visitors to the UN in Vienna, New York and Geneva. CTBTO Spectrum developed into a professional and intellectually stimulating magazine.

These developments would not have been possible without the support of Member States, colleagues in the technical divisions who have mainstreamed public information into their activities and have contributed through articles, blogs, interviews and visuals, my professional and dedicated team of ten staff members and consultants plus interns. The transformation also had the full support of the Executive Secretary Tibor Tóth and his successor, International Data Centre Director Lassina Zerbo, who both understand how crucial advocacy is for achieving the objectives of the CTBTO, for completing and enhancing the performance of the CTBT verification regime and for promoting the universality and entry into force of the Treaty.

The debate about the CTBT has always been vibrant in the United States with the participation of all aspects of society. Recently, we have also witnessed a stronger engagement in Asia, including China, India and Pakistan, and partially also in the

Middle East. The media reports and publishes op-eds, and experts and students visit the CTBTO where they receive in-depth briefings. I expect this trend to continue.

I hope you will enjoy the articles in this issue – each one of which develops a topic touched upon above. Iraq’s Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari reports on the Iraqi Parliament’s steps towards ratification. Ambassador Thomas Pickering, who helped the Kennedy administration draft the Partial Test Ban Treaty, describes how much the United States has to gain from ratifying the CTBT. Zia Mian from Princeton University focuses on the role of civil society in South Asia in advocating nuclear disarmament.

Columbia University’s Paul Richards explains the seismic findings of the announced North Korean nuclear test. We also elaborate on the radionuclide findings. Astronomer Margaret Campbell-Brown explains how CTBTO data help us understand the characteristics of the meteor over the Ural mountains. Anders Ringbom and Anders Axelsson of the Swedish Defense Research Agency draw lessons from the detection of noble gases from the Fukushima nuclear accident. An overview of the recent Science and Technology Conference in Vienna is also presented.

The paintings by Elin o’Hara Slavick show the power of the arts in communicating political messages.

We look forward to hearing from the next Executive Secretary of the CTBTO, Lassina Zerbo, who will take office on 1 August, in the next issue of CTBTO Spectrum, and wish him every success as the new head of the organization.

Last but not least, let me take this opportunity to thank the Executive Secretary, Tibor Tóth, for his visionary and creative leadership and professional and efficient management during his eight years in office. His own reflections can be read on page 16. We wish him all the best and look forward to our continued collaboration in the future.

When North Korea announced that it had conducted its third nuclear test in February, CTBTO Member States had already been informed. So had the media. Over the years, the CTBTO has become a reliable, credible and swift source of information for any journalist who follows nuclear issues – be it nuclear tests or a nuclear accident such as Fukushima – or any other man-made or natural phenomenon that our global monitoring system picks up.

The unique information registered by our infrasound sensors when a meteor exploded over central Russia in February appealed to new audiences. The video we produced went viral on YouTube and was watched by outer space geeks and entertainment buffs alike. The media and online interest was unprecedented: in February alone, the number of press reports exceeded 2,500 plus broadcast coverage by CNN, BBC and other major networks. With the detection of radioactivity in April that could be attributed to the North Korean test, interest surged again.

Naturally, these results are due to the impressive performance of the CTBT verification regime. But they are also due to the advocacy work developed by CTBTO Public Information over the years.

From having been reactive, public information has become proactive, strategic and transparent. The public website has been turned into a “one-stop-shop” for everything relevant to the CTBT, including the history of