

Check Against Delivery

**Address by the
Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the
Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization**

Mr Lassina Zerbo

**3rd Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference
New York, 29 April 2014**

Mr Chairman,

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to address this Preparatory Committee meeting.

During this PrepCom session we have so far heard many statements in support of the CTBT and for the urgency of entry into force. It is true that the Treaty boasts 183 States Signatories, of which 162 have ratified. These States have already expressed their firm determination to ensure that the dangerous legacy of explosive nuclear testing is relegated to the past. But while States continue to ‘say yes’ to the Treaty and a world without nuclear tests, expressing this sentiment is not enough. More States need to not just say “no” to nuclear tests, but “never”. The unfortunate reality is that the CTBT will not enter into force without the ratification of the remaining Annex 2 States.

History reveals clear linkages between the CTBT and the NPT. Over the years, the quest for a CTBT has played a critical role in the NPT review process, often serving as a gauge of the determination of the nuclear-weapon States to fulfil their disarmament obligations under Article VI. Prohibiting the testing of nuclear weapons is a necessary step in the process of nuclear disarmament. Just as important, the CTBT is instrumental in limiting the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons by would be proliferators, as well as the vertical proliferation of more deadly and sophisticated nuclear weapons.

As we look forward to the 2015 NPT Review Conference, it is of vital importance that opportunities be identified and acted upon to make progress towards the entry into force of the CTBT within the context of the NPT review process. Just as NPT States Parties considered the CTBT a precondition for granting the indefinite extension of the NPT 20 years ago, it will be you, the States Parties to the NPT, that will ultimately determine the fate of the CTBT. And while searching for compromises on many of the current challenges facing the NPT, it is of critical importance that no harm be done to the objectives of the CTBT. The NPT and the CTBT are mutually reinforcing, and an erosion of support for either treaty will inevitably result in the detriment of both.

Mr Chairman,

Eloquent expressions of support for the CTBT and its entry into force within the NPT review process and other multilateral fora will not suffice to ensure a future for the Treaty and the CTBT. It is time to put words into action, and action into results. Regarding the CTBT as simply one of many initiatives as part of the review process also does not do justice to the high priority that you, the NPT States Parties, designated to the CTBT in 1995, 2000 and again in 2010 when you reaffirmed the vital importance of CTBT EIF as a core element of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Nor does it do justice to the more than 1 Billion Dollar investment that you have made in the CTBT's verification system.

We must also be careful not to diminish the strong message of universal responsibility for achieving the Treaty's entry into force. Just as the implementation of Article VI of the NPT is the responsibility of ALL STATES, the early entry into force and universalization of the Treaty is not only the task of the nuclear-weapon States, but that of all NPT States Parties. Therefore, I urge all States, particularly the remaining Annex 2 States, to consider the consequences of inaction and complacency on the CTBT, and the failure to bring into force a legally binding prohibition on nuclear testing. This Treaty is too important to let the rolling tides of history determine its fate. We need leadership on the CTBT now, lest the dedicated efforts of so many that have come before us to put an end to nuclear testing be for naught.

Mr Chairman,

In 2000, when the NPT Review Conference designated the entry into force of the CTBT as the first of the 13 practical disarmament steps, the system only existed on paper. Over the past 15 years, we have made great strides in building up the Treaty's verification regime. Today, there are nearly 300 stations positioned around the globe that are sending data to the International Data Centre in Vienna, making the International Monitoring System truly global in reach. Moreover, the detection threshold of the monitoring system is far lower than originally envisaged by the drafters of the CTBT.

Although still labelled as a "*preparatory*" organization, we are anything but preparatory in our work. We are succeeding in our most urgent imperative, which is to establish confidence and trust in the verification regime. A credible and trustworthy verification regime is absolutely essential to reaching the goal of entry into force and to deter further nuclear testing.

In view of renewed concerns over the possibility of another nuclear test by the DPRK, it is important to recognize that the CTBTO verification system is the only multilateral instrument at the disposal of the international community to monitor for nuclear tests. Moreover, though the system is not yet fully completed, it already has the proven capability of reliably and accurately detecting even small-scale nuclear tests, as was demonstrated by the performance of the system in detecting the three nuclear tests announced by the DPRK.

Should the DPRK deliver on its threat to conduct another nuclear test, I am fully confident that our system will detect any type of event successfully. BUT, I wish to use this opportunity to call on the North Korean government to refrain from any future testing, and in the context of resume negotiations impose a test moratorium pending signature of the CTBT.

Mr Chairman,

There are opportunities within reach, both within the context of the NPT review process, as well as in a broader sense, to make progress on difficult nonproliferation and disarmament issues, including the entry into force of the CTBT. In fact, I've established a Group of Eminent Persons that will seek to identify and seize upon opportunities to advance the Treaty's entry into force, thus complementing the Article XIV process currently co-chaired by Indonesia and Hungary. I urge all NPT State Parties to actively support these and other

initiatives, and thereby contribute to efforts aimed at strengthening the non-proliferation regime and enhancing international peace and security.

The 2015 NPT Review Conference will be a pivotal moment for self reflection among States Parties, international organizations and civil society alike. We must utilize all opportunities that arise to further our goals, and resist the temptation to make compromises on our core objectives. Let's not look back at this Conference in years to come, and ask why more was not done to proactively advance one of the longest sought prizes in nuclear arms control: a global, verifiable and non-discriminatory nuclear test ban.

With your help and support, I believe that we can firmly establish the trust and confidence necessary to finally achieve the Treaty's entry into force and a fully effective and operational verification regime.

Thank you.