

**Statement to the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty
on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)**

Dr Lassina Zerbo, Executive Secretary

**Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization
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Madam President, ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to first offer my sincere condolences to the people of Nepal in the wake of the devastating earthquake that occurred on 25 April 2015.

I wish to congratulate you, Madam President, on your election as President of this Review Conference. You have been a strong supporter of the CTBT, having served as an effective and dynamic Chairperson of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization. It is my hope that under your able leadership, this Conference will produce a successful outcome.

The threat of nuclear weapons proliferation is a global threat in all its aspects. It is a true trans-boundary issue that puts all States at risk. A system of laws and treaties has been established to counter this threat. These instruments bring the rule of law to what would otherwise be a lawless and dangerous situation.

In 1995, States Parties agreed on the indefinite extension of the NPT, a decision that flowed from a legal requirement embedded in the treaty. However, it is a well-known and accepted fact that the indefinite extension was achieved through a set of political conditions, a central component of which was an undertaking to complete negotiations of a CTBT no later than 1996. The five NWS all understood that a universal, legally binding, non-discriminatory and verifiable test ban treaty was essential for securing the indefinite extension of the NPT. Similarly, good-faith compliance with the obligations under Article VI of the NPT includes ratification of the CTBT by all NPT States Parties.

The CTBT is a “stepping stone” for strengthening the NPT and for reinforcing the non-proliferation and disarmament regime. A legally binding test ban represents one key area where all NPT States Parties are already in agreement.

We must ask ourselves, why is it that we have failed to bring the CTBT into full legal standing? It has been nearly twenty years since the opening for signature, and yet the Treaty is still not in force.

Let me state the facts: Your efforts and those of the States you represent have not been in vain; it is indisputable that the Treaty has strengthened the international norm against nuclear testing; every nuclear test conducted since its adoption has been met with universal condemnation.

It has been demonstrated beyond a doubt that the CTBT is internationally and effectively verifiable, with 90% of its International Monitoring System completed. This significant element of the Treaty’s verification regime already provides a detection capability far better than what was thought to be attainable 20 years ago. When considered along with national technical means and national facilities that contribute to the Treaty’s verification, the deterrent value of the monitoring system is such that no State can confidently carry out a clandestine test. Furthermore, the Treaty’s monitoring technologies have a proven value in civil and scientific areas, as was demonstrated by the essential role played by the noble gas network in the aftermath of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear accident.

Significant achievements have been made since the opening for signature of the CTBT. Every effort in support of the Treaty has taken us forward - year after year. The Organization and its monitoring assets are at the disposal of the international community today: to support national security needs; to contribute to regional stability as a significant confidence building measure; to reinforce non-discriminatory and participatory multilateral arms control and strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

Then why have we still not achieved our goal? Words of encouragement expressed on the importance of the Treaty are not enough to secure its future. Expressions of support for the CTBT in this and other international fora continue to be made every year, and the CTBT resolution at the General Assembly receives near unanimous backing.

President Hollande named the entry into force of the CTBT as France's first priority at this Review Conference. I hope all States embrace this sentiment and ensure that the opportunities provided by this Conference are not missed. If the international community is serious about the CTBT, then all States must be prepared to act to advance the entry into force of the Treaty.

Two decades ago, the CTBT was negotiated with great effort. Huge investments were made – and continue to be made – by Member States in the development of the Treaty's verification regime. But what is next? What will be the situation if States are not prepared to go the last mile?

We have worked closely with the remaining Annex 2 states to facilitate their respective ratifications. China has taken the important step of connecting its monitoring stations to the system. The US administration is engaged in an education campaign with CTBT ratification as the end goal. My recent visit to Israel reconfirmed my opinion that it could be the next Annex 2 State to ratify the Treaty. I remain committed to engaging with other non-ratifying Annex 2 States. My contacts with all actors have continued, taking me last week to the Vatican, where I was blessed with an audience with His Holiness Pope Francis during which he reaffirmed his personal commitment to a nuclear weapon free world. I am also pleased that Russia has shown its commitment to the CTBT by pledging to complete the IMS stations on its territory within two years, and by promoting the Treaty at the highest political levels. And the United Kingdom has been a staunch advocate of the CTBT, providing vital support for our efforts to universalize the Treaty and secure the ratifications from the remaining Annex 2 States.

At the CTBTO, we are providing an organizational framework to enable the non-ratifying Annex 2 States to pursue ratification in accordance with their constitutional processes. The operationalization of the Treaty's verification regime has been demonstrated through the full-scale simulation of the on-site inspection in Jordan in November 2014. We have done our part.

What the CTBT needs now is determined leadership: leadership from any of the eight remaining Annex 2 States to move ahead with ratification instead of waiting for the others to take the first step. We also need leadership from the States that have already ratified to make clear at every opportunity that the Treaty is a top priority. Mere words of support without real action will not suffice.

Bringing the CTBT into force is the responsibility of all NPT States Parties. And just as importantly, if action is not taken, you will bear the responsibility for letting the Treaty fail. With your continued support for the Treaty and the full development of its verification regime, I am confident that this outcome will be avoided.

Let us move forward together, and seize every opportunity to finally put in place this crucial stepping stone towards a world free from the dangers of nuclear weapons.

Thank you.