

**Address by Dr. Michael Linhart, Secretary-General,  
Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs of Austria  
Science and Technology Conference 2015**

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*- transcript from video recording -*

Dear Executive Secretary Zerbo  
Madam Minister Pandor  
Distinguished Delegates, Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is now my turn to welcome you here in Vienna, to welcome you in this beautiful conference hall, Nadja Bernhard has already explained very nicely the historic background and I think it is a very nice example of Austrian history and Austrian Modern Art that you find in here. Both ancient times-history, but also modern times- the future.

Thank you also Executive Secretary Zerbo for your kind words of welcome, be sure that the Austrian Foreign Ministry will always be with you and supporting you in your important task. So, (I) welcome you to this conference, this is the fourth such event in the CTBT Science and Technology Conference series.

And I think it has become by now a regular feature, a tradition, in the calendar of International Conferences in Vienna. I am delighted to see that over the years, each Science and Technology has become bigger and attended by more and more experts from different scientific backgrounds.

I think it is encouraging yet again the importance of this conference has further increased with an even higher number of research papers and posters than before. This evidence not only of the cutting edge monitoring and verification capabilities that the CTBTO has developed in the past 19 years, but also of the very fruitful and intense dialogue and cooperation between the CTBTO and the scientific and technical communities in many different fields.

The unique global monitoring system and the verification capacities of the CTBTO are of considerable value and interest to the scientific community. At the same time, the organisation needs this constant exchange and peer review to remain at the cutting edge in order to be able to fulfil the verification mandate that the treaty foresees.

These verification capabilities have been expressively validated in the past, for example, in the context of the North Korean nuclear test and most recently for the on-site inspection exercise in Jordan.

The verification regime is ready, the organization is ready, and the CTBT should by now be the most unequivocal success of our multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation efforts.

What is of course not ready, however, and I have to say that openly, is the political will in the remaining states whose ratification is required for the entry into force. The fact that the CTBT has still not been brought into legal effect is disappointing and harming the global disarmament on non-proliferation efforts.

We call on all Annex 2 States to take the necessary steps as soon as possible. The CTBTO enters into force only when all Annex 2 States have done so. Consequently, all Annex 2 States can and should show leadership on this important task.

We have recently concluded a very difficult four week long Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, it was to a large extent a polarized and divisive conference that ended without an agreed outcome.

Against this backdrop it is even more urgent I think to make the necessary progress on the one treaty that is ready and whose legally binding effect would make a vital contribution to both nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Last December, Austria hosted an international conference on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. The consequences of nuclear testing were given significant prominence at this event. We heard heroic testimonies of victims of nuclear testing speaking about the impact on the health, the environment and the social and cultural fabric of their families and communities.

We heard experts speak about the wide range of consequences and highlight that, quote: “nuclear testing in several parts of the world has left a legacy of serious health and environment consequences. Radioactive contamination from these tests disproportionately affects women and children, it contaminated food supplies and continues to be measureable in the atmosphere to this day”. Unquote.

The world must never get back to this stage, it must close the door on nuclear testing once and for all and bring this treaty into force.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Earlier this year, the Bulletin of Atomic Scientist moved the famous doomsday clock to 3 minutes to midnight, it said, quote “a nuclear arms race resulting from modernization of huge arsenals poses extraordinary and undeniable threats to the continued existence of humanity. World leaders have failed to act with the speed or on the scale required to protect citizens from potential catastrophe. These failures endanger every person on Earth.” Unquote.

Scientists and experts I think have a great responsibility today to generate the political will that is needed to urgently move away from nuclear weapons.

At this S and T conference it will be you, the scientific community who will take the work forward. You represent those that promote science for security or rather science for human security. We need many more scientists and experts to commit themselves to overcoming the legacy of nuclear weapons.

Together with the experts and the CTBTO, you are all devising and improving ways and means to controlling and overcoming nuclear weapons through science and global cooperation.

Austria is proud to host the CTBTO in Vienna and to welcome you here, scientists assembled to further a crucial goal. I wish you at this conference great success for your future work but as well a pleasant stay in Vienna. I hope you will find some moments to see that town, that beautiful town as well.