



SLOVENIA

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Statement by

H.E. Mr. SAMUEL ŽBOGAR
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**at the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force
of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (Article XIV)**

New York, 24 September 2009

Distinguished Co-Presidents, Mr Executive Secretary, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, please allow me to congratulate the representatives of France and Morocco on the election as the Co-Presidents of this important Conference.

I would also like to associate my statement with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Sweden on behalf of the European Union.

As it has been pointed out a number of times today, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) represents a fundamental legal instrument in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Like other EU countries and many States from all around the world, Slovenia believes that a legally binding prohibition of nuclear-weapon test explosions and any other nuclear explosions, as well as a credible verification regime, are of vital importance. We therefore urge all States to dismantle all their nuclear testing sites in a transparent and open manner.

Slovenia attaches greatest importance to the early entry into force of the CTBT and completion of its verification regime. We therefore reiterate our call upon all States, in particular those listed in Annex II, to sign and ratify the Treaty without delay and preconditions. We urge all States to abide by the moratorium on nuclear testing and refrain from any action contrary to the obligations and provisions of the CTBT, regardless of its current status.

Fortunately, there seems to be a new momentum for CTBT to actually enter into force. The announcement by President Obama in the General Assembly Hall yesterday and in the Security Council Chamber today that the United States is moving forward with the ratification of the CTBT is an extremely important and encouraging sign.

There are also other positive signals that speak of a renewed momentum in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, which give us hope for a positive outcome of this year's Conference.

Allow me to briefly touch upon a few of these elements:

First of all, the outcome of the third NPT Preparatory Committee meeting. In our view, it represents a solid and constructive basis for the 2010 NPT Review Conference and should lead us to good results next year.

Secondly, the ongoing bilateral negotiations between the United States and the Russian Federation on the START Follow-up Treaty, which will additionally reduce the strategic missile arsenal of the two countries. Slovenia welcomes this joint US-Russian initiative, which is very much in the spirit of the landmark US-Russia Summit in Slovenia in 2001.

Thirdly, this year's adoption of the work programme of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva – after more than a decade of gridlock – constitutes an encouraging step forward. In this regard, we urge the Conference to commence negotiations on the verifiable Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT) immediately and without delay. Slovenia believes that the completion of the FMCT negotiations would importantly complement the NPT and the CTBT.

Before concluding, Mr Chairman, I would like to express on behalf of Slovenia our strong support for the able leadership of Ambassador Tibor Tóth in steering the substantial work of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organisation. I would also like to express high appreciation for all the work of the Special Representative Ambassador Jaap Ramaker in promoting universal accession to the CTBT in the past five years. This is important, because this year we are marking the 13th anniversary of the opening of the CTBT for signature. We therefore need to redouble our common efforts with a view to completing the outstanding ratifications required for the Treaty to finally enter into force.

Thank you for your attention.