

**Remarks by H.E. Mr. Taro Kono,
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan
at the Ninth Ministerial Meeting of the Friends of
the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty
(27 September 2018, New York)**

Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

We are the Friends of the CTBT.

We know what remains to be done.

This is why we have gathered biennially since 2002 to work towards the Treaty's entry-into-force.

The CTBT was adopted in 1996 with widespread support by both nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States. The Treaty embodies one of the most concrete and practical measures of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, equipped with a robust verification regime. I am honored to co-chair today's Meeting for such an essential Treaty, and reiterate Japan's unwavering commitment.

Japan prioritizes the following four points.

First, entry-into-force of the CTBT. Japan calls on all member states, particularly the remaining Annex 2 States, to sign and ratify the Treaty. I myself have made this call in various bilateral and multilateral settings. Specifically let me emphasize that North Korea should sign and ratify the Treaty.

Second, the universalization of the CTBT. I congratulate Thailand for accomplishing its ratification that harnessed all of ASEAN's commitments. I also welcome Tuvalu's signature. Japan is ready to support international efforts through capacity building. For example, Japan has welcomed 242 trainees from 74 states in total to Global Seismological Observation Training since Foreign Minister Yohei Kono, who is my father, initiated the program in 1996.

Third, reinforcing the CTBT verification regime. The International Monitoring System (IMS) has provided reliable means to ensure compliance with the Treaty. Its reliability was indeed proven by detecting the past six nuclear tests conducted by North Korea. IMS capability depends on data availability. I would like to encourage all signatories to send relevant data to the International Data Center.

Fourth, the advancement of the CTBT. We should continue to pursue creative ideas on how to substantially advance the CTBT. Keeping that in mind, Japan will fund a research project in collaboration with the Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-proliferation.

Let me conclude my remarks by repeating Japan's commitments to the Treaty, and welcoming all participants to share in the objectives and aspirations of the Friends of the CTBT.

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