

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF
CROATIA H.E. Ms. KOLINDA GRABAR - KITAROVIĆ

**THE CONFERENCE ON FACILITATING THE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE
COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR TEST-BAN TREATY
21 September 2005
United Nations Headquarters**

Mr. President, Distinguished

Colleagues,

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Croatia let me congratulate you on your election as the President of the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty. I would also like to assure you of the full support and co-operation of my delegation and at the same time I would like to extend our thanks to Ambassador Deborah Stokes of Australia on her committed work done in Vienna regarding the Final Declaration and accompanying practical measures.

In addition my delegation would like to thank H.E. Secretary General of the UN, Mr. Kofi Annan and H.E. Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the CTBTO, Mr. Tibor Toth on their statements. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate you, Mr. Toth, on your election and wish you every success in your future endeavors.

The Republic of Croatia aligned itself with the EU statement delivered by the UK Presidency. Now I would like to share with you our views regarding the CTBT and its early entry into force.

Mr. President,

Nowadays, when the main threat to the international security is international terrorism, we are all aware of the danger of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons. The international community fights against it by all legal means. However, political will to do so is crucial. Additional engagement in this field is necessary in order to improve efficiency in the prevention and suppression of illicit trafficking and smuggling of these weapons and related equipment. Adherence to international conventions and treaties whose aim is the fight against these threats, and their universality is vital if we really want to fight it effectively.

Croatia ratified the Treaty and participated in the Article XIV Conferences on the facilitating the entry into force of the CTBT. Furthermore, we signed the 2004 Joint Ministerial Statement which made an additional contribution to the promotion of the early entry into force of the Treaty. The Republic of Croatia supports all regional and multilateral meetings which stress the importance of the Treaty and accelerate the ratification process.

Croatia is willing to join other signatory and ratifying states in their activities to encourage other countries which have not yet ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) to do so as soon as possible.

Since the 2003 Conference we have witnessed the progress in signing and ratifying the Treaty. As of today 175 States have signed the Treaty and 121 have ratified including 33 of the 44 countries listed in Annex II. Nearly nine years after the Treaty was opened for signature it seems that we are still far away of bringing the Treaty into the life and becoming a universal instrument in the field of nuclear disarmament. This fact is a great disappointment and we should strengthen our efforts to convince the States whose ratifications are required for entry into force of The Treaty to do so without delay and without conditions. Pending entry into force we urge all States to abide moratorium and to refrain from any actions which defeat the object and purpose of the Treaty.

Mr. President,

Since becoming independent. Croatia has given particular importance to the endeavors to strengthen its legislative and administrative procedures with regards to non-proliferation, export control, nuclear safety and import and export of weapons and other military equipment. In addition Croatia adopted laws and regulations governing this field and they are already in place and functioning. We have contributed to the national, regional as well as international security by becoming a Participating Government to the Nuclear Suppliers Group, and admission the Waassenaar Arrangement.

Mr. President,

Croatia appreciates the activities of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission aiming to the completion of the international monitoring system for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Substantial progress has been made in building up this system since the last Article XIV Conference in 2003. Furthermore we are of the view that maintenance of the system is of the special importance. With regard to the civil and scientific applications of the verification regime we welcome the Preparatory Commission decision to explore and assess a possible contribution to a tsunami warning system.

We support the Provisional technical secretariat (PTS) in enhancing the capability and expertise necessary for implementing on-site inspections after entry into force of the Treaty. Being aware of (Recognizing) the importance of the above mentioned areas of the PTS and their benefits to the member states Croatia expressed interest in setting up the National Data Centre. We are grateful for the offered assistance of the Provisional Technical Secretariat (PTS) in its establishment. Also Croatia would like to provide a site for field activities in 2006 or later and we hope this proposal will be accepted.

Concerning the restructuring process of the PTS I would like to express our support to the ongoing activities including the joint meeting of Working group A and B and prepared documents in this regard. I am confident that their implementation and future road-map will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the PTS.

Mr. President,

Despite the difficulties in the ratification process and the uncertainty about the entry into force of the CTBTO, we have to remain firm in our commitment to the Treaty. We have to continue to promote the Treaty and for this reason, it is crucial that we adopt the Final Declaration which will focus attention on the CTBT and necessity of bringing its entry into force. This Conference Declaration is a qualitative step forward and jointly with the measures provides us with the solid base for our future endeavors.

Thank you