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STATEMENT BY

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**Seventh Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force
of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty**

NEW YORK, 23 September 2011

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

As President Lyndon Johnson said when the Non-Proliferation Treaty was signed in 1968, 'Man can still shape his destiny in the nuclear age – and learn to live as brothers.' Today, however, more countries possess nuclear arms or are trying to develop them than in 1968. The risk of nuclear terrorism is also increasing.

The proliferation of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction is a major threat to international peace and stability. That is why the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty urgently needs to enter into force. The Treaty is an essential part of the non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control regime. It will constrain the development and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and end the development of advanced new types of these weapons.

The Netherlands has always been a vocal supporter of the CTBT. Also recently, the Netherlands hosted a conference, organized jointly with Kazakhstan, that addressed a range of nuclear challenges including testing. In Kazakhstan, in the past, hundreds of nuclear tests were carried out at the Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test Site and the destructive effects of this, for instance on health and the environment, are still felt today. The Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test Site shows how important it is for the CTBT to enter into force.

The Netherlands is cooperating closely with Kazakhstan on other nuclear challenges as well. For instance, the Netherlands committed half a million dollars to cleaning up and securing orphaned radioactive sources to prevent terrorists and other, criminal groups from acquiring them to make a 'dirty bomb'.

But let me return to the CTBT again. Today, I am pleased to announce the publication of a book entitled *Detect and Deter: Can Countries Verify the Nuclear Test Ban?*, to which we have contributed as well. It was launched in Vienna earlier this month. It deals with how States can use the International Monitoring System and other available technologies to verify compliance with the Treaty. After all, verification is their responsibility. Next month, the book will be presented in New York as well.

The verification regime deserves a special mention this year. During the first phase of the 11 March disaster, data from the International Monitoring System helped Japanese authorities issue timely tsunami warnings. Without them we would have witnessed an even higher number of casualties. And from the very next day, the monitoring system's radionuclide stations traced the dispersion of radioactivity from the Fukushima nuclear power plant across the globe. The provided data proved extremely valuable. We should explore the scope for expanding civilian use of the monitoring system in other areas of early warning and emergency response.

The security and civil benefits of the CTBT verification system were also recognized by the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative, in its ministerial statement of last Wednesday. The NPDI is a group of 10 countries that wants to take forward in practical ways the outcomes of the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Review Conference. The Netherlands as well as the other members of the NPDI will continue to utilize diplomatic opportunities to urge states that have not done so, to sign and ratify the CTBT.

And now, gentlemen, let me conclude.

The Treaty has already contributed to the international norm against nuclear weapons testing, and its verification regime has already proved useful and effective. But we still need nine remaining Annex 2 States to ratify the Treaty before it can enter into force. In the words of President Clinton, who was the first to sign the Treaty fifteen years ago, it is 'the longest sought, hardest fought prize in the history of arms control'. Let these efforts not go to waste. Together, let us walk the final mile and make the Treaty's entry into force a reality.

Thank you.