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Statement of Norway, CTBTO Ministerial Meeting 13.06.16

Thank you very much for inviting all of us to Vienna on this important occasion. The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty is a centrepiece of the global arms control and non-proliferation regime, and it is befitting that we gather to celebrate its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Still, we do so with mixed feelings: On the one hand, the Treaty is a success with its more than 160 states parties. On the other hand, this anniversary is a reminder of a sad paradox: despite its success, the Treaty is still unable to enter into force.

The DPRK nuclear test earlier this year has shown us once again that the ban on nuclear weapons testing is as important and relevant as ever. The instant detection of this test demonstrated that the international monitoring system under the Treaty works properly. The universal outrage that followed the test showed just how strong the norm against nuclear testing is.

Sceptics sometimes ask whether the ratification and the entry into force of the CTBT really matters. Hasn't the global monitoring system already proved its worth? Don't we now have a universal norm against nuclear testing? To this I would say that a norm or a self-imposed testing moratorium can never be a substitute for a comprehensive, universally binding, legal agreement.

There is broad international consensus that the Test Ban Treaty is a cornerstone of the global arms control architecture. Yet, its entry into force is already 20 years overdue. This indefinite interim period threatens to erode the norm against nuclear testing. The eight states that need to ratify the treaty for it to enter into force have a special responsibility. Norway urges these states to ratify – without delay. At the same time, we have to be realistic. We cannot wait forever for accession by the remaining Annex II states. We should start looking into ways to make the CTBT fully legally binding irrespective of the progress made with the remaining ratifications.

I would like to commend Dr. Zerbo and the Provisional Technical Secretariat for their dedicated work in preparing for the implementation of the Treaty and for their tireless advocacy. Norway remains a staunch supporter of the Treaty. We have completed our part of the international monitoring system and have a total of six monitoring stations on Norwegian territory. Norway has also contributed financially to CTBT capacity building, including training courses for developing countries. We pay tribute to the important role played by civil society and the scientific community. We also welcome the new Youth Forum.

Once again, I congratulate the CTBTO on its anniversary, and I hope that we will soon gather here again to celebrate its entry into force.

Thank you.