



Statement by

**H.E. Mr. Miroslav LAJČÁK**

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Head of Delegation

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

New York, 25<sup>th</sup> of September 2019

*- as delivered -*

Dear Co-Presidents, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, let me congratulate the Co-Presidents on their election to steer this Conference. You have Slovakia's full support in your efforts to bring us closer to the entry into force of the CTBT. Slovakia fully associates itself with the statement delivered by the European Union. At the same time, I would also like to make additional remarks in my national capacity.

Dear Co-Presidents,

Two years have passed since our last meeting. During that time, much has been done to support the entry into force of the CTBT and its universalization:

Since our last Conference in 2017, the CTBT family has grown by 2 more ratifying states. Slovakia welcomes decisions of Thailand and Zimbabwe to join and bring us closer to our common objective.

Further, it was encouraging to see the UN General Assembly adopt Resolution underscoring the importance of coordination between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Test-Ban Treaty Organization. (*A/Res/73/12*)

But, regrettably, the business of ending nuclear tests for all times remains unfinished. In this regard, the CTBT Annex II countries bear a special responsibility for the Treaty to enter into force. Slovakia once again reiterates its position and calls upon all States, especially the remaining Annex II countries that have not signed or ratified the CTBT, to do so without further delay.

We see no reasons why the Treaty should be prevented from entering into force. The CTBT and the Non-Proliferation Treaty are indispensable components of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation architecture of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. They both reinforce global peace and security; and they both help to create the conditions for a future without nuclear weapons. Slovakia especially sees great importance in CTBT's robust monitoring and verification system. Since its *de facto* existence, it has proven to be a crucial instrument to detect undesired nuclear activities and events - and a valuable tool for the international scientific community. Nevertheless, without a legally binding Treaty, a global nuclear test moratorium remains only a very fragile concept. And since our last meeting, we have seen dramatic developments that make the case for its entry into force all the more urgent.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is the only country from the Annex II states, which conducted nuclear tests in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The total, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is our legitimate goal and a condition for securing international and regional peace. Slovakia calls on the DPRK to resume talks with the United States and other international partners, cease its nuclear

and ballistic programs and comply with all its international obligations, including respective UN Security Council Resolutions.

Dear Co-Presidents,

Slovakia is a founding signatory and ratifying state of the CTBT. Since the beginning, our support for the work of the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the Preparatory Commission has been unwavering - and it will remain so. It was materialized into the Agreement between the Government of Slovakia and the Preparatory Commission on mutual cooperation related to On-Site Inspections.

I am pleased to announce that next year, we will host two large Build – up Exercises on our territory - which will represent our concrete contribution towards the reinforcement of the CTBT verification regime. Our cooperation does not stop there – we are ready to go beyond. Together with the Provisional Technical Secretariat we will try to explore new opportunities of mutual benefit. We do not expect that the path remaining to entry into force to be quick or easy. But we must take the next step. Because we all know that CTBT will benefit the security of each of our countries - and that of the world.

Thank you!