

**Address by the Executive Secretary  
Of the Preparatory Commission for the  
Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization**

**Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the  
Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty  
Vienna, 3-5 September 2003**

1. Thank you Mr. President. As Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization it is a great honour for me to address the third Conference on Facilitating Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. I would like to use this opportunity to thank Austria for hosting this conference.
2. When the CTBT was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 10 December 1996 we were aware that the success of the Treaty would depend on two crucial factors: its universality and its verifiability. On both accounts we have made substantial progress.
3. As of today 168 states have signed the CTBT and 104 have ratified. These impressive numbers demonstrate the ever-growing commitment of the international community to the Treaty. Of the 44 states whose ratifications are necessary for Entry into Force of the CTBT 32 have already ratified, the latest one being Algeria which has deposited its instrument of ratification with the Secretary General of the United Nations only two months ago. The vote of confidence expressed in the large number of signatures and ratifications is a major source of motivation for all of us who are working on the verification system.
4. For almost seven years the Preparatory Commission has been working on ensuring that the verification system of the CTBT is credible, functional and cost-effective. As we speak the working group on verification issues is meeting in a neighbouring building to discuss important technical questions ranging from station construction and data transmission to analysis of the data and modalities of on-site inspections.
5. So far more than half of the 321 monitoring stations provided for in the Treaty have been installed and substantially meet the Commissions specifications. The building programme is continuing at a sustained pace. Data from the established stations are flowing to the International Data Center via our Global Communication Infrastructure to the International Data Center in Vienna. In this nerve-center of the verification system the incoming data are collected, processed, analyzed and transmitted to States for final analysis. The Provisional Technical Secretariat is building up its capacity to support the verification responsibilities of States under the Treaty. In this context the continuously growing number of National Data Centers is playing a crucial role.

6. I would like to use this opportunity to underline that the build-up of the verification regime would be unthinkable without the political and financial commitment of States Signatories, but also without the expertise, talent and dedication of the experts working as delegates or staff members in the Provisional Technical Secretariat or in National Data Centers.

Mr. President,

7. The CTBTO Preparatory Commission is working closely with many States in order to provide assistance in the process of ratification and implementation of the CTBT. Training programmes and information visits help to familiarize experts and decision makers with the work of the Commission. In order to facilitate this process but also in order to exchange technical expertise the Preparatory Commission has entered into relationship and cooperation agreements with the United Nations and other international and regional organizations and specialized agencies.
8. These activities are important accessories, but only accessories to the political will of the international community to bring entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty about. It is the purpose of this meeting to strengthen this political will and create a new dynamism in pursuing our common objective. The comprehensive ban of nuclear test explosions has been a dream for many decades. The political and strategic choices of States and the scientific and technological advances have brought us very close to a universal and verifiable regime. I hope that in the next few days we will get even closer.

Thank you