

THE REPUBLIC OF

KOREA

EMBASSY/PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Gregor Mendel Strasse 25, A-1180 Vienna, Austria

Tel. (43-1) 4781991, Fax (43-1) 4781013

(Check Against Delivery)

Statement

by

**H.E. Mr. LEE Sun-jin
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
of the Republic of Korea**

at

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

**3 September 2003
Vienna**

Mr. President,

Before starting my statement, I express Korean people's heartfelt sympathy to the victims of the terrorist bombing of the United Nations headquarters in Baghdad last month. This act of indiscriminate and murderous violence against the personnel of the United Nations is strongly condemned by the government and people of the Republic of Korea. At the same time, we firmly believe that such terrorist attacks cannot deter the noble efforts of the United Nations and the international community to help Iraq successfully restore peace, security and economic stability. The Republic of Korea will steadfastly support such global endeavors to assist the Iraqi people in rebuilding their nation and future.

Mr. President,

Let me first take this opportunity to congratulate you on assuming the Presidency of this important conference. Your devotion and hard work for the past months, in cooperation with delegates based in Vienna, have laid a solid foundation for this gathering to build upon in our efforts to bring forward the date on which the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) takes effect. I believe that, with the benefit of your diplomatic skill and stewardship, this conference will see productive results. I would also like to assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation as you fulfill your duties.

Mr. President,

We vividly recall the acclamation of seven years ago, when the CTBT was concluded with the overwhelming support of the international community. The CTBT marked a historic achievement in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, comparable to the adoption of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1968.

When the CTBT comes into effect, it will raise another hurdle to dissuade future proliferators. It may also deter existing nuclear weapon states from conducting weapons testing, thus facilitating nuclear disarmament. As you all recall, this vision of a double-edged sword was fully endorsed at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the NPT and its 2000 Review Conference.

The ultimate purpose of the CTBT to annihilate the threat of nuclear destruction has found widespread support in the international community ; 168 states have signed and, of these, 104 states have ratified the Treaty. Notwithstanding these encouraging developments, seven years have passed and the CTBT has not yet entered into force. The enthusiasm that we felt in 1996 is not easy to sustain in the face of mounting disappointment and skepticism. Therefore, what brings us together here again after the 1999 and 2001 meetings is our resolve to revitalize the political will to achieve an early entry into force of the Treaty. All states need to take the issue in hand at the highest political level and, not just repeat political rhetoric but take practical steps to resolve the situation.

We appeal to those 12 countries listed in Annex 2 to the Treaty that have signed but not yet ratified the Treaty, whose ratification is needed for its entry into force, to complete the ratification process without further delay. My government also urges those three states on the list, which have so far not even signed it yet, to reconsider their position and to sign and ratify the Treaty at the earliest possible time.

When the CTBT was adopted at the UN in 1996, the world community made it clear that we are all bound by the spirit and letter of the CTBT. Accordingly, along with all other delegates present here, I would like to appeal to those holdout countries to reconsider their position and to join us in our endeavors to realize a less dangerous world.

In the meantime, while we wait for this favorable development to occur, we need to do two things.

First, it is important that all states refrain from acts which would undermine the object and purpose of the Treaty pending its entry into force. We welcome the fact that countries are maintaining their voluntary moratoria on nuclear testing and hope that they will continue to do so.

Second, establishing a reliable verification regime is central to ensuring compliance with the Treaty obligations. The CTBT verification regime, once fully in place, will offer confidence that proliferators can be detected in a timely fashion. We should not let up in our efforts to build such a verification system, and must continue to lend support to the Preparatory Commission for the CTBTO in this regard.

Seizing this opportunity, I would like to commend Ambassador Wolfgang Hoffmann, the Executive Secretary of the Provisional Technical Secretariat, and his staff for their hard work to establish a verification system in preparation for the entry into force of the Treaty.

Mr. President,

Northeast Asia is faced with another nuclear crisis prompted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's (DPRK) nuclear programme. The DPRK nuclear issue certainly presents a grave challenge to the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and threatens to endanger peace and security in Northeast Asia. How we deal with this challenge will have a long-term bearing on the future of the global non-proliferation regime.

It was against this backdrop that the Six-Party Talks was held in Beijing last week, with the participation of the DPRK, Japan, the People's Republic of China, the Russian Federation, the United States of America and my country. The aim of the talks was to find a comprehensive solution to the DPRK

nuclear issue. We believe that the talks provided a valuable occasion for all participating countries to deepen their understanding of each other's positions through a frank exchange of views. The Beijing talks, as a starting point in a long process of dialogue, reconfirmed the possibility of resolving the issue through dialogue and confidence-building among the participating countries, and created conditions for the management of the situation.

The six parties to the talks reaffirmed the principles of the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and a peaceful resolution of the nuclear issue, and expressed hope to continue this dialogue. We strongly believe that if the parties further build on common ground through the dialogue process, they will be able to reach a peaceful solution to the nuclear issue. The Government of the Republic of Korea will continue its endeavours on the path to the eventual resolution of the nuclear issue and the establishment of permanent peace on the Korean Peninsula.

We believe that North Korea's joining the CTBT will better position us to consolidate nuclear non-proliferation norms on the Korean Peninsula and beyond.

As one of the original signatories ratifying the Treaty, the Republic of Korea remains fully committed to the early entry into force of the Treaty. Our participation in the Joint Ministerial Statement in support of the CTBT at the UN Headquarter in September last year is a clear illustration of this commitment. We hope that bilateral, regional and multilateral initiatives will be further explored. It is encouraging to note that at the recent ASEM Foreign Ministers Meeting in Bali, Indonesia, the Ministers stressed the importance of the CTBT in their Political Declaration on the Prevention of the Proliferation of WMD. Our future work should build on such initiatives.

Let me conclude my remarks by reiterating that the Republic of Korea will spare no efforts to contribute to advancing the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Thank you.