

President,

me congratulate you for your unanimous election to this high office and to assure you that the Greek Delegation will stand on your side for any assistance you might need to bring this Conference to a success. I also wish to express our sincere thanks to the Austrian Government for hosting this Conference. Furthermore, I express my appreciation to Ambassador Wolfgang Hoffman, Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission and Secretary of this Conference.

Let me stress that I entirely associate myself with the statement made by the Presidency of the European Union and I fully subscribe to its request for an early coming into force of the Treaty, in conformity with the article XIV of it.

Mr. President,

Seven years have elapsed, since the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty was signed. Seven years which have brought us to a new era for international peace and security. CTBT itself has marked the continuity of a particular process within the evolving concept of the nuclear security.

On the other hand, the 33 years elapsed between the Limited Test Ban Treaty and the Comprehensive one, reflect a major evolution in our thinking about security issues. Technological, economic and social progress coupled with increasing awareness of the public opinion mark this evolution. The international community has been forced to continue negotiating new arms control and non proliferation agreements with a view to fighting against terrorism for the benefit of our global security.

CTBT is both an indicator and a component of a new security conception ushering the hope of a new nuclear safer century.

The 1968 Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is another such component, intrinsically connected with the CTBT. Its article VI calls its parties to pursue negotiations on effective measures relating to cessation of the arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament as well as on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

So far, 167 States have signed the Treaty, 104 of which have already deposited their instruments of ratification. It is of utmost importance that all states that have not yet signed and ratified the Treaty, do so without delay. In particular the 12 States whose ratification is required for entry into force. Pending this, my country urges all states to abide by a moratorium refraining from any actions, contrary to the CTBT.

The Preamble of the NP Treaty recalls the determination expressed to the Moscow 1963, Limited Test Ban Treaty, to "seek to stop all testing of nuclear weapons for all time and to continue negotiating to this end".

The main responsibility and obligation falls on the Nuclear Weapon States: For, it constitutes an axiom of our political culture, that the strong has to set the pace, so that the others follow this attitude.

The CTBT itself had been criticised by certain players of the international arena, claiming that the Treaty hampers the possibilities of small countries to develop a nuclear arsenal. They forget that the

objective of the Treaty is to prevent, under Article IV, not only the horizontal but the vertical proliferation as well, namely the development of new nuclear weapons. But is it a world with more or less nuclear weapons we want to inherit to the young generations? We should carefully reflect upon the answer.

Mr. President,

My country has ever been particularly sensitive to the developments in the World peace and security and specifically to the nuclear proliferation challenges. Greece has signed and ratified, among the first, both the Non Proliferation Treaty and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Non proliferation of the Nuclear weapons and Nuclear Disarmament are high priority policies for the Greek Government.

Together with the European Union, my country strongly supports the principles incorporated in the CTBT and considers that this treaty should come into force as soon as possible and without any conditions. It is essential to maintain momentum in building the verification regime, which will be capable of meeting the verification requirements of the Treaty. No Treaty can survive and create confidence, if it is not

accompanied by its verification mechanism. This is the only way to check vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons.

The CTBT Treaty is a part of the cornerstone required for a comprehensive Nuclear Security concept and it is only after a long effort that the International Community has brought it to existence. Let all concerned, those who have not signed, or ratified the Treaty, all those who can contribute, give it full life and strength; to usher the international community to a new era of hope.

Mr. President,

My country, guided by the aforementioned principles, ^{hopes} ~~welcomes~~ the adoption of a Final Declaration, as containing a strong unequivocal signal for maintaining the political momentum needed for the achievement of the goals of the Treaty.

I am confident that the success of this Conference, under your guidance, will gratefully contribute to this direction.

Thank you.