

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

Mr. Tibor Tóth

**Conference on UN Agencies Connecting with
Academics and the Civil Society
(Vienna, 11-13 January 2012)**

I welcome you to this second annual conference on "UN Agencies Connecting with Academics and Civil Society". The first annual conference was held here in Vienna exactly a year ago. It was a great success, much like this year's conference promises to be. The enhanced interaction between UN agencies with academics and practitioners can only have a win-win outcome for all parties concerned. Higher education has a critical role in economic and social development, which in turn, serves as a foundation for world peace. Aligning institutions of higher education with the work of United Nations in the areas of security, disarmament, human rights, sustainability and conflict resolution must be our long-term goal. As an expression of the global agenda and international priorities, the United Nations work helps shape today's world. Drawing on the rich contributions of academia, and employing from the

pool of highly trained and qualified young minds is requisite for the fulfilment of the mandates of both the United Nations and academic institutions the world over.

We in the CTBTO firmly believe in the synergy between diplomacy, academia, research and education on the one hand, and the practice of disarmament and non-proliferation on the other. The CTBT, the CTBTO and its three-pillared verification system both historically and today are very much the product of the close interaction and association between diplomacy, academia, and science and technology.

It would be accurate to say that the CTBT could only have come into existence through the belief that a test ban could be adequately verified through the verification regime that has science and technology at its very heart. The challenge of designing, building and operating such a system was very much the centre of the debate about an international arrangement banning nuclear test explosions. By the 1990s, the members of the UN Conference on Disarmament were confident that a legally binding instrument could be verified in a credible way, and the Treaty was adopted accordingly.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

There is an urgency to invest in the next generation of disarmament and non-proliferation specialists by increasing the awareness and understanding of the international non-proliferation framework. This urgency is a key driver of the Commission's capacity development initiative, which was launched in October 2010. The capacity development initiative is part of the Commission's efforts to build and enhance the necessary capacities in States Signatories so that they can participate equally in the implementation of the Treaty and benefit equally from the services of the Treaty's verification system.

The capacity development strategy is based on the recognition that building and maintaining the necessary capacity to effectively confront the technical, scientific, political, and legal challenges facing the multilateral non-proliferation and disarmament regime is of critical importance now as it will be in the years to come. In addition, political support over the long term for non-proliferation and disarmament is contingent upon expanding the number of stakeholders with the opportunity to participate on an equal footing in the implementation of multilaterally established regimes. As a core element of the international nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime, the CTBT has an important role to play in strengthening verification capacities across the whole range of multilateral arrangements.

As part of the capacity development initiative, the Commission organized two introduction courses and an advanced course in 2010 and 2011. The courses were designed to strengthen and broaden participation in global monitoring and verification efforts. Through a modular approach to learning and an online component, some 1000 users from all across the world were able to participate.

In order to broaden the scope of the capacity development initiative, we are in the process of building a network of global partnerships, including States, disarmament and non-proliferation organizations and arrangements, universities, research institutes, non-governmental organizations, corporations and individuals with expertise and interest in verification science and technology.

Obviously, ACUNS is naturally placed to become a very active and valuable partner in this endeavour. I look forward to working with you, and all other partners, particularly on your new Regional UN Academy.

Thank you