

Press Release

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Statement by H.E. Mr. Tatsuo Arima
the Special Envoy of the Government of Japan
at the Fourth Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive
Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

Mr. President,

On behalf of my Government, I should like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to Mr. Downer, on his election to the Presidency of this Conference. I am certain that, under his leadership, this Conference will be able to send a strong message to the international community about the importance of the early entry into force of the Treaty. In light of the omission of the reference to disarmament and non-proliferation from the outcome document of the 2005 World Summit last week, we must sustain even greater recognition of the importance of the CTBT, and strengthen our efforts all the more to realize its early entry into force.

Mr. President,

In nine years since the UN adoption of the CTBT in 1996, 176 States have signed. 125 of them have ratified including 33 Annex II states. This support for the Treaty is transforming the prohibition of nuclear test explosions into an international norm.

Mr. President,

To maintain the momentum for the Treaty's entry into force, it is essential for us to continue the steady build-up of the CTBT verification regime. Japan would like to extend its congratulations to Mr. Tóth on his assumption of the post of Executive Secretary and express its hope that further consolidation of the verification system will be realized under his leadership.

The benefits of the CTBT verification system extend to the promotion of public welfare and science as well. In this context, Japan, together with Germany, held an experts' discussion on civil, scientific and other applications of CTBT verification technologies in May 2004. The Preparatory Commission is currently carrying out a technical test involving the provisions of IMS data for tsunami warning systems. In view of the tremendous loss of life and damage caused by the earthquake off the coast of Sumatra at the end of last year, the provision of such information would be quite significant from the humanitarian point of view.

Mr. President,

This year we commemorate the 60th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As the only nation ever to have suffered nuclear devastation, Japan is totally committed to peace and to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The Japanese thus wish to see the early entry into force of the CTBT and we have worked hard to achieve that end and I should like to highlight three aspects of our efforts.

First, Japan takes every diplomatic opportunity to urge the States that have not *yet* signed or ratified the CTBT to do so. Before the NPT Review Conference in April this year, Foreign Minister Machimura sent a letter to those States to encourage them to ratify the Treaty as soon as possible. It is extremely regrettable that the international community was not able to agree on the importance and urgency of the CTBT as well as other substantive matters either at the NPT Review Conference or the 2005 World Summit last week. To avoid such failures, Japan calls upon the international community at the highest political levels to take the decisive step of ratifying the CTBT at the earliest possible date. Japan calls, in particular, upon the remaining II Annex H countries to sign and ratify the Treaty.

Second, Japan continues to play an active role in the international community's efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons based on a practical and incremental approach. Thus Japan again will submit a draft resolution to the United Nations General Assembly this year, which contains such concrete steps as the early entry into force of the CTBT. We hope that our draft resolution will once again be adopted by an overwhelming majority of the member states.

Third, Japan is making contributions towards the establishment of the CTBT verification system. We launched our "CTBT National Operation System" in November 2002, and have been doing our utmost to install and operate relevant IMS facilities in Japan provisionally, and consolidate National Data Centers. We are also providing technical assistance to developing countries to improve their verification capacity through training courses for global seismological observation. To date, we have welcomed 97 trainees from 63 countries.

Mr. President,

Before the CTBT was adopted in 1996, all the nuclear weapon States had declared a moratorium on nuclear testing. India and Pakistan did so after conducting nuclear tests in 1998. Although moratorium is not a substitute for the Treaty, Japan still values it and strongly urges those States with moratorium in place to maintain it pending entry into force of the Treaty. We also strongly urge all States not to carry out any nuclear weapon test explosions at any location.

Mr. President,

Let me conclude by expressing yet again the determination of my government to continue to work with the international community to realize the earliest possible entry into force of the Treaty.

Thank you.