

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

Mr. Tibor Tóth

**Commemoration of the 45th Anniversary of the
Signing of the Treaty of Tlatelolco
(Mexico City, 14 February 2012)**

Foreign Minister Espinosa,
Foreign Minister Castillo,
Director General Amano,
Ambassador Duarte,
Secretary General Ubeda
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our commemoration of the 45th anniversary of the Treaty of Tlatelolco is an occasion for celebration and reflection.

Celebration of the denuclearization of Latin America; celebration of the creation of the first NWFZ in the world; celebration of the triumph of the vision and hope of a world without nuclear weapons at a moment in history when the spectre of nuclear war was very real. The Peoples of Latin America are to be congratulated for leading the world down the road of denuclearization; for

proving to us that the term “people power” is not an exaggeration; for giving us the hope for a better world: a world without nuclear weapons.

As we celebrate the 45th anniversary of this milestone achievement, I would like to recall another anniversary. It was exactly 30 years ago that Alfonso Garcia Robles received the Nobel Peace prize. Garcia Robles was the driving force behind the Tlatelolco agreement. He played a prominent part in the work of disarmament within the UN, both in Geneva and in the GAs special disarmament sessions. He helped to open the eyes of the world to the threat humanity faces in continued nuclear armament.

As a disarmament fellow in 1980, my colleagues and I were in awe at the craftsmanship and diplomatic skills of Garcia Robles. In 1982, the year Robles received the Noble Peace Prize, I was posted to Geneva, where I had the privilege of seeing him in action. It was almost an ice age in the cold war between the two super powers. It was the outstanding efforts of outstanding people like Robles that saw us through these difficult years. Congratulations to the people and government of Mexico. Your leadership, vision and determination of your sons have changed Latin America; indeed: have changed the world.

But our commemoration is also a time of reflection. Reflection on the question “what if”? What if the Cuban missile crisis had spiralled out of control? What if Tlatelolco had never been signed? What if Latin America had not led by example and showed the world that denuclearization is possible? That security can be achieved through denuclearization? That denuclearization is security?

The CTBT was very much part of Robles’ vision. Unfortunately, he departed us in 1991 before the Treaty was opened for signature. The CTBT is the global embodiment of Garcia Robles vision for Latin America. The entry into force of the CTBT shall secure a world that is nuclear test free. Closing the door on nuclear testing is an essential step towards a world free of nuclear weapons.

I have just returned from New York where Indonesia deposited its instrument of ratification of the CTBT. An Annex II state, Indonesia’s ratification brings us closer to the entry into force of the Treaty. It is a vote of confidence in the CTBT and its continued relevance as a pillar of the regime. Indonesia’s ratification, together with the other 104 ratifications that the CTBT

has gathered in the last 10 years must not go unnoticed. These ratifying states have reaffirmed that the CTBT has a key role to play in today's security environment. The CTBT provides the last and clearly visible barrier between the peaceful and military uses of nuclear energy. The overwhelming majority of states have resolved that this legal line needs to be drawn clearly and irrevocably.

The CTBT is a joint international venture of its stakeholders. It is an all inclusive, multilateral, and democratic legally binding framework. It is a prohibition regime of equal obligations. It has a verification regime that relies on its parties, and serves all of them in an equal and transparent manner.

As long as any state has nuclear weapons, others will want them. We cannot be complacent to the threats and risks of the failure to disarm existing nuclear states, the prevention of new states acquiring nuclear weapons, stopping terrorist actors from gaining access to such weapons, and properly managing the rapid expansion in civil nuclear energy. The CTBT verifies the silence of nuclear weapons, for the existing possessors and for the newcomers. It is an essential element along the road to zero.

But the international community needs to decide the direction it wants to take. Are we serious about our calls for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation? Are we willing to work on realizing the vision of a world free of all nuclear weapons? I believe we are at a crossroads. It shall be up to leaders of the international community to seize the moment and to determine the action necessary to go the extra mile; to realize the dream.

As co-coordinators of the Article XIV process, Mexico together with Sweden will have to lead the way forward. We once again look to Mexico to lead the way. I am certain that we are in very good hands.

Thank you