

Opening speech at the Conference to facilitate the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty

Distinguished delegates, representatives of the United Nations, fellow ministers and representatives of civil society:

I appreciate the opportunity to address you as co-Chair of this conference. Likewise, I want to express my sincere gratitude for the trust of the Member States in Panama to co-chair the Article XIV process 2023-2025, aimed at facilitating the entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Nuclear.

Today we meet almost 80 years after the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, under the reality that ballistic missile tests, and nuclear tests themselves, continue to represent the greatest challenge to international peace and security that humanity faces.

As Minister of Foreign Affairs of Panama, I have the honor to be here, reaffirming Panama's commitment to the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, bridging divisions and forging consensus to definitively ban both nuclear tests and the advance of nuclear weapons.

As a Latin American, I also proudly represent a region that has been a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone for more than half a century. Our adherence to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, signed and ratified under the chancellorship of my predecessor Juan Antonio Tack, guaranteed that the fight to recover our sovereignty over the Canal Zone—the Panamanian cause—had a focus of non-proliferation and disarmament incorporated from the beginning.

Panama firmly supports the entry into force of this Treaty, of which we have been a part since 1998, and to which we actively contribute through the supervision and verification systems established by the United Nations Security Council to ensure guarantee compliance with the countries' commitments in this area.

Our country, in fact, has the privilege of guarding a key node of the International Monitoring System. Being the point of convergence of the northern and southern winds of the hemisphere, Panama is the

natural home of Station RN 50, which due to its detection capacity is among the ten most sensitive in the entire system. Since 2005, we proudly, and very seriously, fulfill this important mission.

I wish to express my appreciation for the efforts of Executive Secretary Robert Floyd, whose key role has promoted the signing and ratification of the Treaty.

Likewise, I recognize and thank Norway, especially Ms. Eckey and the work teams of both countries in Vienna, for their outstanding work.

Finally, I would like to thank all delegations for their constructive approach during the negotiations of the final declaration in preparation for this Conference.

Panama, and I personally, are and will always be available to work with all States Parties, Signatories and Observers to achieve the objectives of the Article XIV Conference. To advance. Because, as a famous poet (Khalil Gibran) wrote, “to move forward is to walk towards perfection.”

Thank you so much.

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