

**Remarks by the
Executive Secretary of the
Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization**

Dr Lassina Zerbo

The CTBT in the NPT Review Process

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my distinct pleasure to participate in this SIPRI event less than one month before the NPT States Parties gather in New York to take stock of the developments since the 2010 NPT Review Conference and chart course for the next five years. I would like to thank Dr Tariq Rauf and SIPRI for the opportunity to talk about the CTBT in the context of the NPT review process.

My gratitude also goes to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sweden and the Permanent Mission in Vienna for their role in organizing this event and, of course, their unwavering support for the CTBT and the work of the CTBTO.

There are many in this room who will play instrumental roles in the efforts to forge consensus on the difficult issues among the NPT States Parties in New York. I am hopeful that today's discussions will help pave the way towards achieving a comprehensive, balanced and action-oriented outcome at the conference.

And with this in mind, I shall make some observations about the status of the CTBT and the state of the non-proliferation regime, and then put forward my own thoughts on the role of the CTBT within the NPT review process, highlighting both the challenges and opportunities associated with the forthcoming Review Conference.

The CTBT has come a long way in the past five years. One signature¹ and twelve ratifications² brought the number of States Signatories to 183 and the number of ratifying States to 164 – including Angola on 20 March 2015. Among the Annex 2 States, Indonesia

¹ Niue

² Central African Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, Ghana, Guatemala, Indonesia, Brunei Darussalam, Chad, Guinea-Bissau, Iraq, Niue, Congo, Angola

fulfilled the promise it made at the last Review Conference and ratified the Treaty in February 2012, increasing the number of ratifying Annex 2 States to 36 out of 44. These accomplishments notwithstanding, we still find ourselves far from the finish line of finally achieving the Treaty's entry into force.

As we approach the 20th anniversary of the opening for signature of the CTBT, we must not lose the sense of urgency in bringing this Treaty into force.. It is indeed disheartening that while the importance of the entry into force of the CTBT has been widely recognized by the international community, it is yet to be reached.

The 2010 NPT Review Conference reaffirmed the “vital importance” of EIF of the CTBT as a core element of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime.. However, it is my belief that in order to fully convey the gravity of the situation we find ourselves in 20 years after the CTBT was concluded, a final document at this RevCon should include language that is bold in ambition and strong in emphasis. It should reflect both the “vital importance” and “urgency” of the entry into force of the Treaty. This is language that has already found nearly unanimous agreement through the CTBT Resolution at the UNGA First Committee.

If the international community is serious about the CTBT, then then it must act. That political will must be felt. Those countries that have continued to block the entry into force of the Treaty need to hear from their friends and allies that the CTBT is and will continue to be a top priority in the efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and reduce the nuclear threat.

For example, I was very encouraged by the statement by French President François Hollande that the top priority in the framework of the NPT Review Conference is the entry into force of the CTBT. Given the competing interests moving forward towards the RevCon, this is a powerful statement, and a sentiment that I hope will be emulated by all States as we approach the conference.

The entry into force of the CTBT is not just the responsibility of any one group of states. The CTBT represents the culmination of a decades-long endeavour by the international community, both scientific and technical, but also diplomatic and political, to put an end to nuclear testing by anyone, anywhere, for all time. And the world is already reaping the benefits of the Treaty even though it has not yet entered into force.

The track record of the CTBT and the strengthened norm against nuclear testing is unambiguous. We have only seen one country conduct nuclear testing in the past 15 years. Since the Treaty opened for signature in 1996, every nuclear test conducted has been met with virtually unanimous international condemnation. The CTBTO has a proven capability to identify and locate nuclear tests well below the yields envisioned when the Treaty was negotiated.

If States are to continue enjoying the benefits to international peace and security, as well as in the civil and scientific applications of monitoring technologies, then the obligation to achieve the entry into force of the Treaty needs to be owned by the international community as whole. And efforts towards this end must be made at the bilateral, regional and global levels by all stakeholders.

While it is easy to highlight the many issues of contention that threaten to derail talks and prevent a positive outcome at the review conference, we also must not lose sight of the issues where the overwhelming majority of the international community has found agreement. We have seen encouraging signals with regard to the P5+1 talks with Iran, but NPT States Parties continue to hold widely variant views on issues of compliance, Article IV rights to peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and progress on disarmament obligations under Article VI. However, all NPT States Parties have expressed their support for the entry into force of the CTBT and agree on the importance of the full development of its verification regime.

Since the CTBT opened for signature in 1996, every NPT review conference that has produced a consensus final document has agreed that the Treaty is essential for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. Moreover, there is only one State – the DPRK – that votes against the CTBT resolution in the UNGA First Committee. How many issues are there related to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament where the international community finds itself in full agreement? Why are we not pushing harder for progress on the CTBT within the NPT review process, or in other multilateral fora?

With regard to the Treaty's verification regime, there has been significant progress made towards the completion of the IMS network in all four technologies – seismic, hydroacoustic, infrasound and radionuclide. As of March 2015, 300 IMS stations have been installed. This represents about 90% of the total number of stations envisaged by the Treaty. And even at our current level of readiness, the monitoring system is providing a detection threshold far lower than was originally envisioned by the Treaty's negotiators.

An unwelcome but powerful illustration of the value of the CTBT verification system was the nuclear test conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 12 February 2013, the third such event following the 2006 and 2009 announced nuclear tests. The event was detected by 94 IMS seismic stations, and data was made available to Member States approximately one hour after its receipt by the IDC – more than ninety minutes before the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) publicly announced the test.

On 9 and 14 April 2013, the Takasaki radionuclide station in Japan detected a significant quantity of Xenon isotopes consistent with a fission event occurring approximately 55 days prior to the measurement – coinciding with the 12 February event. The Xenon detection was shown to be consistent with the DPRK announced nuclear test.

There is a fundamental point to be underscored here. No national system was able make this detection and associate it with the DPRK test – even those with the most advanced and

extensive capabilities. This is a true testament that multilateral verification is effective, reliable and *necessary* for moving toward a world free of nuclear weapons.

The improvements in system performance, timeliness and precision between October 2006, May 2009 and February 2013 are demonstrative of the CTBTO's achievements in developing and operationalizing the CTBT verification regime. The system has proven to be a valuable investment by the Member States for ensuring that no nuclear test goes undetected.

A major milestone in demonstrating the operational readiness of the CTBTO to conduct an on-site inspection was the OSI Integrated Field Exercise 2014 (IFE14) at the end of last year in Jordan. Three-hundred and sixty-four experts from 53 States Signatories took part in the largest OSI exercise to date. The exercise has proven that the CTBTO is operationally ready to conduct full scale on-site inspections, which constitute the final verification measure as outlined in the Treaty.

This is a record of success, and should be highlighted within the context of the RevCon. It is crucial that the international community remain committed to the full development of the verification regime in all its aspects, as well as to the maintenance and sustainment of the vital assets employed by the CTBTO and its Member States in fulfilling their verification obligations. This is the only way to protect the enormous investment that has been made, and ensure that the verification regime serves as an “effective, reliable, participatory and non-discriminatory verification system with global reach, and provide assurance of compliance with that Treaty”.

It is essential that the CTBTO retain the support of its Member States to conduct full scale testing, validation, and then finally acceptance. Without this support, the CTBTO will not be in a position to deliver on its mandated task. This is an important message that should also be reflected in the NPT Review Conference.

I have been advocating for some time that opportunities to advance entry into force must not be missed, or ignored for political or strategic expediency. While opportunities with regard to Syria in the context of the Chemical Weapons Convention were missed, it is not too late to impress upon the Syrian government the importance of signing and ratifying the CTBT as a powerful confidence-building tool. For example, I believe there was, and continues to be, an opportunity for the P5+1 to engage Iran on the CTBT within the discussions over its nuclear programme. I also believe that any future talks regarding the de-nuclearization of the Korean Peninsula should also focus on ceasing nuclear testing as a first step. These are all examples of how the international community must not only show political support for the Treaty, but also be prepared to act when an opportunity is at hand.

The P5 consultations on the CTBT within the NPT framework are another example proving that the CTBT is a platform for cooperation, be it in mitigating Xenon emissions or discussing transparency measures in the context of the CTBT verification regime. I am pleased that the P5 in London discussed efforts to achieve entry into force and reaffirmed their commitments at the 2010 NPT Review Conference to promote and take concrete steps

towards this important goal. I am hopeful that they will come out with a strong joint statement in support of the CTBT in the run up to the Review Conference, and that they will join forces at the Review Conference to ensure that the outcome of the Conference advances entry into force while increasing support for and recognition of the operational capabilities of the CTBT verification regime .

Let there be no doubt: we seek engagement to build trust and confidence, and open up avenues for dialogue. There is no reason not to talk on these important issues, and I am committed to seeking opportunities to engage all the remaining Annex 2 States in this regard.

Although there were important advancements in the 2010 Review Conference related to the CTBT, the important lesson to be drawn from the 2010 experience is “do no harm”. In other words, the process leading to the outcome of the 2015 Review Conference should avoid making compromises at the expense of one of the longest sought prizes in nuclear arms control.

Though achieving progress on this objective will not be easy, this should not validate arguments not to try. It may be the little steps along the way that create the big opportunities for real success. It is my hope that as the international community gathers in New York for the 2015 NPT Review Conference, we remember to keep our eyes open for opportunity, no matter how large or small.

For we must not stop asking ourselves what the consequences of failure to bring the CTBT into force would be, including to the credibility of the NPT and the international non-proliferation regime as a whole – in other words, on humanity’s most precious asset, and the condition for our well-being and that of future generations: peace and security.