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

Mr. Tibor Tóth

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President Gurirab,
Speaker Jenkins,
Ambassador Rodriguez,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to address this 122nd IPU Assembly in Bangkok, the “city of angels”, in this special presentation dedicated to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

As you rightly put it in your resolution adopted in Addis Ababa in April 2009, “the best way to guarantee world peace and stability is to take effective measures for international security, including disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons”. I am gratified that IPU, which many consider the conscience of the world citizen, has remained seized of this fundamental issue. For nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation is and shall remain the most defining global issue of our time.

The Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty is certainly one of the most effective measures that the international community can take to promote world peace and security. The Treaty is not the answer to all questions. But it is a necessary pillar of a comprehensive nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime that is needed to address current and future challenges.

The CTBT is a catalyst for nuclear disarmament. It provides a firm legal barrier against nuclear testing. The end of nuclear testing shall curb the development of new types and designs of nuclear weapons. The Treaty is a strong national and regional confidence and security building measure that ensures that the peaceful uses of nuclear energy are indeed peaceful. The Treaty is a potential catalyst for progress in many nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament processes. It is a potential catalyst for deeper cuts in strategic nuclear weapons, for addressing sub-strategic nuclear weapons, the cut off of fissile material production for military purposes. These measures will lead to the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

The CTBT is a strong instrument for non-proliferation. It limits the ability of countries that do not have nuclear weapons to develop these weapons. The Treaty is the last legal and compliance barrier preventing the misuse of nuclear energy for military purposes. Since this last barrier is so visible, it is imperative that the norm becomes universally legally binding.

The CTBT is certainly one of the measures around which international consensus can be built. The non-proliferation regime urgently needs a booster. The Treaty is the only instrument on the horizon which is close enough to universal adherence. Entry into force shall demonstrate that the NPT regime is resilient to pressure. The CTBT has endured a decade of political hardship. So has multilateralism. Nevertheless, we managed to increase the number of ratifying states from 50 to 151. This CTBT family now includes all of Europe, and the vast majority of states in Latin America, Africa, and Asia and the Pacific.

During the same decade, the 181 members of the organization have come within sight of the fulfilment of its mandate. We are approaching the point of readiness for the entry into force of the Treaty. The Commission has built up a one billion dollar verification system. Almost 80% of the International Monitoring System's global monitoring stations are already sending operational-standard data to the headquarters in Vienna. The volume of the data transmitted from the stations to the data centre in Vienna has tripled during the last five years. A new global communications infrastructure for relaying that data has been installed. Important advances have been made in processing methods and software in all the verification technologies. The system has been tried and tested. The two DPRK test explosions in 2006 and 2009, while deplorable, have proved the detection reliability of the system. The system has also gained the trust and approval of the scientific community.

The CTBT is often called the "the longest sought, hardest fought prize in the history of arms control". As a matter of fact, the CTBT has been a promise since 1954 when Nehru proposed the idea for the first time. It took 40 years until the negotiations were finalized and it was open for signature in 1996. Today, it is within political reach. But we need determined action by the international community to go the very last mile.

It is you, the members of the IPU, who can naturally lead the way towards entry into force of the Treaty. The time has come for your swift action to fulfil the aspirations of a world that is desperate to be saved from its own folly. After all, your august institution was the first international conflict resolution and arbitration body in the world. The world today is in dire need for the strength and vision of the likes of William Randel and Fredric Passy. They established the IPU in 1889, a decade before the turn of the twentieth century which ushered in the bloodiest, most devastating wars in history. But we cannot afford that kind of folly with today's weapons of mass destruction.

The IPU had the courage and the vision to address the issue of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation on several occasions over the years. The resolution adopted in Addis Ababa in 2009 detailed in unequivocal terms the requirements for the creation of a more peaceful, safer world. The 120th Assembly of the IPU pledged to bring fuller parliamentary involvement in the disarmament process. The CTBT was recognized as one of the essential steps towards a world free of nuclear weapons. Its vital role for achieving nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament was underscored. Your Assembly urged parliaments of all states, particularly the remaining states listed in Annex 2 of the CTBT, to urge their governments to immediately sign and ratify the Treaty.

But I am afraid that my report to you today is one of mixed success. We are still nine ratifications away from entry into force. A month after your resolution was adopted in Addis

Ababa in April 2009, the DPRK conducted a nuclear test explosion which was condemned by the international community. This test was a reminder of how fragile the test ban norm is without a legally binding treaty.

Today, we are seeing the resurging belief in multilateralism as an essential conduit to dealing with our common problems. Whether in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, climate change, terrorism or drug trafficking, multilateralism is essential. But the window of opportunity for multilateralism and the entry into force of the Treaty will not be open indefinitely. Opportunities are seldom available indefinitely. They have to be seized, at the risk of losing what, in the case of the CTBT, may be the last opportunity for a long time. We look to you to help us seize this moment in history.

When it was established in 1889, the IPU was the first embodiment of multilateralism in modern history. We again look to the IPU to show its leadership through action. We need the leadership of your national parliaments. We need your leadership as individual parliamentarians.

The history of the two world wars of the twentieth century teaches us that complacency and the acceptance of the fait accompli under the guise of inevitability is catastrophic. The acceptance of the status quo and the failure to act despite the knowledge of the very high price of inaction can never be justified. We need to act. We need to act now.