

*Vienna Declaration of the Group of Eminent Persons for
Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)*

14 June 2016

The Group of Eminent Persons (GEM) met in Vienna on the margins of the CTBT Twentieth Anniversary Events from 13-14 June 2016. The Group considered the status of the CTBT as well as concrete actions and new initiatives that could be explored to accelerate its entry into force nearly twenty years after its opening for signature in September 1996.

The GEM adopted the *Vienna Declaration*:

Gathered here in Vienna, a centre of nuclear diplomacy and the headquarters of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO),

Reaffirming that the CTBT is one of the effective instruments of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament in all its aspects, and is a logical and essential step on the path to a world free of nuclear weapons,

Noting that entry into force would enhance the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime and strengthen the role of multilateralism in arms control and international security,

Recognizing the on-going efforts in the context of Article XIV conferences and the Friends of the CTBT- towards universalization of the Treaty and its entry into force,

Affirming our conviction that a nuclear test explosion conducted for any reason would constitute a clear threat to international peace and security in the 21st century,

Affirming the need for urgent multilateral efforts to achieve effective measures of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, including measures against nuclear testing,

Convinced that the twentieth anniversary of the opening for signature of the CTBT must serve as a call to action for the international community to accelerate the Treaty's entry into force and universalization, the GEM:

1. *Urges* the remaining eight Annex 2 States whose ratifications are necessary for the entry into force of the CTBT to sign and/or ratify the Treaty without further delay, taking into consideration that the Treaty was opened for signature almost twenty years ago;
2. *Notes* the damaging environmental and health legacy of nuclear weapons testing around the globe since 1945, which has led to a large number of deaths and illnesses directly related to the radioactive fallout;
3. *Calls* upon all states to actively pursue measures, beginning with the fall sessions of the UN Security Council and UN General Assembly and in conjunction with the 20th anniversary of the opening for signature of the CTBT that would reinforce the de facto global norm against nuclear weapon test explosions;

4. *Notes* that any further nuclear test explosion would defeat the object and purpose of the CTBT, and underscores the value of maintaining continuous, real-time global nuclear test monitoring to detect, identify, and locate nuclear test explosions whenever they may occur;
5. *Reiterates* that individual initiatives to sign and/or ratify the Treaty by any of the remaining Annex 2 States without waiting for other States to do so first would positively impact the prospects for signatures and ratifications by the other Annex 2 States;
6. *Emphasizes* that the voluntary moratoria on nuclear testing are welcome as an interim measure and have to be maintained as long as the CTBT entry into force is delayed;
7. *Acknowledges* the progress that has been achieved in preparing for the effective implementation of the CTBT, and *underscores* the vital need for continued support for the full development and operationalization of the Treaty's verification regime;
8. *Recalls* that the United Nations Security Council continues to be engaged on nuclear testing since 1996, including through Resolution 1172 (1998),
9. *Recalls* United Nations Security Council Resolution 2270 (2016), which condemned the latest and most serious nuclear test on 6 January 2016 by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), and *urges* the DPRK to observe a moratorium on nuclear testing that would serve as a first step towards joining the CTBT as well as showing its seriousness for the 6-Party Talks on the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula;
10. *Calls* for new thinking and further engagement with the leadership of the remaining eight Annex 2 States with the aim of facilitating their respective ratification processes;
11. *Reiterates* the importance of engagement with civil society, particularly among the next generation, and to employ new technologies and innovative thinking in order to raise awareness of the role of the CTBT in enhancing international peace and security, as well as the role of the verification regime and its civil and scientific benefits;
12. *Declares* its unwavering commitment to pursue all avenues available and utilize all means at its disposal to support and complement international efforts to advance the entry into force of the CTBT.