

Seoul Declaration

The Group of Eminent Persons (GEM), established in 2013 to support and complement efforts for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), met in Seoul on 25-26 June 2015, at the invitation of Yun Byung-se, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea.

The GEM considered the current status of the CTBT, discussed ways to advance the Treaty's entry into force and assessed international developments, particularly the situation in the Korean Peninsula and the implications for disarmament, regional peace and security.

The GEM¹ adopted the Seoul Declaration:

Bearing in mind that any use of nuclear weapons would be catastrophic to our human society,

Stressing the duty of all states to cooperate to solve controversies peacefully,

Further stressing the need to reverse present trends to rearmament and to respond to universal ever stronger demands for a world free from nuclear weapons,

Deeply concerned that the CTBT has not entered into force two decades after its opening for signature despite being signed by 183 and ratified by 164 states constituting the vast majority of the world,

Recognizing that despite the fact that it has yet to enter into force, the CTBT has become the de facto global norm,

Commending the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test- Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) for the great progress that has been achieved in the build-up, testing and successful operationalization of the Treaty's verification regime: The International Monitoring System (IMS), the International Data Centre (IDC) and On-Site Inspections (OSI),

¹ The following members of the Group of Eminent Persons were in attendance at the Seoul GEM Meeting: Hans Blix, former Director General of the IAEA; Des Browne, Vice-Chair, Nuclear Threat Initiative; Rachmat Budiman, Ambassador of Indonesia to the CTBTO, Ambassador Gabor Csaba, Ambassador of Hungary to the Republic of Korea, Cristian Diaconescu, Former Chief of Staff and Adviser to the President of Romania; Sérgio de Queiroz Duarte, former UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs; Wolfgang Hoffmann, Executive Secretary Emeritus of the Preparatory Commission for the CTBTO; Angela Kane, former UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs; Ho-jin Lee, Principal Vice-President of the United Nations Association of the Republic of Korea; Sha Zukang, former UN Under Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs; and, Lassina Zerbo, Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the CTBTO.

Recognizing the need to make these accomplishments more widely known,

Noting the unequivocal support expressed at the recent 2015 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons by States Parties to the CTBT and its entry into force,

And recognizing the ever present risk of backsliding by states parties to the CTBT in response to the delay in the entry into force of the CTBT,

The GEM declares:

1. It is in the interest of all States that no further nuclear tests occur. Such tests may trigger other tests, exacerbate tensions and pose dangers to peace and stability at the regional and international levels.
2. The CTBT is the central legal instrument through which all states can and should manifest their commitment to refrain from nuclear testing, and thereby help strengthen non-proliferation and the process of disarmament and international peace and security.
3. In order to bring the CTBT into force, to achieve a reliable end to all nuclear testing and to raise much needed new hope for disarmament and the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons, all Annex 2 States that have not yet done so should sign and ratify the Treaty without delay. Whatever benefit any one of them may perceive in not being legally bound by the Treaty, is greatly outweighed by the risk that other states could use the absence of a legally-binding test-ban to undertake a test.
4. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) is the only Annex 2 State to have violated the non-testing norm in the twenty first century, having conducted nuclear tests in 2006, 2009 and 2013. Most recently, the nuclear test conducted on 12 February 2013 caused great international concern as expressed by the United Nations Security Council in Res. 2094 (2013). In order to avoid further endangering peace in Northeast Asia, the DPRK is urged to sign and ratify the Treaty and refrain from undertaking any further tests.
5. Pending the entry into force of the CTBT, the GEM calls on all States to maintain the voluntary moratorium on nuclear test

explosions and refrain from any action that would defeat the objective and purpose of the Treaty.

6. The Group of Eminent Persons renews its resolve to promote the entry into force of the CTBT at the national, regional and global levels.