

Excellencies,
Distinguished Participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to welcome you all to Istanbul and thank you for your participation in this workshop on the role of the CTBT in regional and global security, jointly organized by the Government of Turkey and the CTBTO under the auspices of Prof Dr Ahmet Davutoğlu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey. I am honored to join you today to represent Minister Davutoğlu who has asked me to apologize on his behalf for not being able to attend this meeting due to instructions from the President to join him in his official visit to Morocco.

On behalf of Minister Davutoğlu, allow me to first of all thank the CTBTO Secretariat for their excellent cooperation in organizing this event. We are also grateful to the Bosphorus University Kandilli Observatory for contributing their time and expertise to this important initiative.

I will now deliver my Minister's statement.

“Mr. Executive Secretary,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the dramatically changed global security environment of the 21st Century, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction has emerged as one of the leading challenges. Its transnational character is manifest not only in terms of proliferation by nuclear smuggling clans to irresponsible regimes, but perhaps more sinister and dangerous by irresponsible regimes to terrorist groups. As such it does not recognize borders. The only fail-safe guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is their total elimination. Creating conditions for a world without nuclear weapons, therefore, is a major investment towards a safer world and undiminished security for all. Pursuing this goal with vigour and determination is in our collective interest. However, all but the most optimistic among us will, I am sure, acknowledge that we are far distanced from this elusive goal. Yet the onus is upon all of us in the international community to work consciously towards this goal, thereby reducing the risk of proliferation to the extent possible.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), based on its three mutually reinforcing pillars of non-proliferation, disarmament and peaceful uses of nuclear energy, is the backbone of the global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), along with the NPT, and a future Treaty Banning the Production of Fissile Material for Nuclear Weapons and Other Nuclear Explosive Devices (FMCT), forms an essential part of this framework. We all know that in any chain of security the system is only as strong as its weakest link. It is for this reason that Turkey is a strong advocate of strengthening all pillars of this multitudinous system, through, in the first place contributing to the universalization of the CTBT and the early commencement of negotiations on concluding a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty.

Distinguished Participants,

The CTBT was characterized as the “longest sought, hardest fought prize in the history of arms control negotiations.” It took half a century of advocacy for a verified, permanent, global ban on all types of nuclear explosive tests and a lot of hard work before the CTBT was

opened for signature on 24 September 1996 in the United Nations Headquarters in New York. My country was among the first signatories of the Treaty.

Fifteen years after its opening for signature we have reason – and rightfully so - to cheer the considerable progress achieved. Despite the fact that the Treaty is not yet in force, the CTBT enjoys today a near universal status with 182 signatures and 155 ratifications. The strong moral standard it has already set is unquestionable. Indeed, before its entry into force, the Treaty has a remarkable record of accomplishments, for which we owe its Executive Director Mr Tibor Toth and the professionalism of the Provisional Technical Secretariat a debt of gratitude.

Article XIV Conferences to facilitate the entry into force of the CTBT have no doubt played an important role in gathering political and practical support, both for the universalization of the Treaty and the credibility of its verification system. The impressive level of participation and strong interest displayed at the last Article XIV Conference in New York on the margins of the UN General Assembly speaks for itself. I would like to take this opportunity to once again congratulate the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mexico and Secretary of State of Sweden for assuming the Co-Chairmanship of the Article XIV Conference. They can count on Turkey's full support. I am thankful to the Co-Chair's who have kindly agreed to send their representatives to address this forum and share their perspectives with us.

Regular meetings of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization equally help keep momentum behind the political objectives of the CTBT alive and provide guidance for their implementation at technical level. The work carried out by the Provisional Technical Secretariat, which over the years, has grown into an efficient and well managed institution is impressive and commendable.

The international monitoring system and inspection regime are being built up robustly. The importance and relevance of a credible and operational verification system was demonstrated with the successful work conducted by the Provisional Technical Secretariat following the nuclear tests conducted by the DPRK in 2006 and 2009. The system's value has also proven itself, most recently, during and after the tragic earthquake and tsunami in Japan.

We, in Turkey, also host a certified and operational primary seismic station. The operator, namely the Kandilli Observatory and Earthquake Research Institution of the Bosphorus University, contributes its knowledge and expertise to the operations of this station while benefiting from the unique infrastructure and know-how of the International Monitoring System. I understand that you will have an opportunity to see how this station operates, first hand, when you visit its facilities tomorrow. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Director of the Kandilli Observatory and Earthquake Research Institution, Mr Mustafa Özder Erdik and his staff for their kind invitation and for facilitating this visit.

Distinguished Participants,

This year marks the fifteenth anniversary of the opening for signature of the CTBT. Our accomplishments throughout all these years, I fervently believe, are irreversible. Regrettably, however, despite all the progress achieved both at the political and technical levels, the Treaty has not yet entered into force. We still need the instrument of ratification of 9 remaining Article II countries to be deposited, in order for the Treaty to enter into force. A small number, yet a challenging task. We all know the difficulties and the obstacles involved. Nevertheless, we cannot and must not give up. We must take every opportunity, including

events such as this, to remind those States that our expectation from them is great and that they are under a unique moral obligation, at the heart of which lies global security and stability. A world free from the menace of nuclear Armageddon.

I can confidently say that a strong political will to pursue the objectives and implement the provisions of the CTBT has been generated by the states Parties over the years. What we now need is a final determined collective push to work towards the earliest entry into force of the Treaty. It is now high time to turn the moratoria on nuclear test explosions into a binding norm and relegate nuclear testing to the annals of history. We are hopeful that the discernible signs of renewed political will on the part of some Annex 2 States to pursue ratification will give new impetus to our efforts in this direction and will encourage the remaining States to follow suit.

Therefore, I would like to take this opportunity to call once again upon all States present today to work together to achieve rapid entry into force of the CTBT, thereby contributing to the future of our children in a world free of nuclear weapons.

I wish you fruitful deliberations and a pleasant stay in Istanbul.”