



**Statement at the United Nations General Assembly's informal meeting to observe the
International Day against Nuclear Tests**

**Dr Lassina Zerbo, Executive Secretary,
Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty Organization**

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Ambassador Dina Kavar from Jordan, thank you for the leadership of your country in helping the CTBT achieve the finalisation of its verification regime. We organised last year a major exercise for our on-site inspection capability in Jordan and I want to thank you personally for that. Kim Won-soo, my friend, thank you for being here with us and thank you for your cooperation. Angela Kane, your predecessor, a friend and a member of the CTBT Group of Eminent Persons, thanks for being here.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am particularly honoured to take part in today's informal meeting, the 2015 Observance of the International Day against Nuclear Tests. I want to first thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon personally for his unyielding commitment to end nuclear testing by bringing the CTBT into force. Let's remember that Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon was one of the first chairpersons of the CTBTO PrepCom when he was Ambassador in Vienna. So my gratitude also goes to Ambassador Sam Kutesa, President of the General Assembly, as well as my dear friend Ambassador Kairat Abdrakhmanov, Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan, and his country for organizing this event and supporting the CTBT so strongly.

The International Day against Nuclear Tests serves as a stark reminder that although we have made a lot of progress, the job is still unfinished. Let me touch upon anniversaries and their meanings: Last month, Mr Kim and I were in Hiroshima for the 70th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I personally met Makoto Takahara who was 17 when his city of Hiroshima was bombed. The reason I am mentioning this is that abstraction remains the last refuge for nuclear weapons, with concepts such as deterrence used to rationalize their continuous existence. But nuclear weapons become unavoidably real in Mr Takahara's presence.

The first nuclear test happened on 16 July 1945, and one month later, Hiroshima and Nagasaki were bombed. Unfortunately those were not the last blasts because nuclear testing continued ferociously without concern for public health or the environment. And Kazakhstan is an example for that. As a reminder, let me point out that, taken together, the yields of nuclear tests conducted by the United

States, Soviet Union, United Kingdom, China, and France between 1945 and 1980 are equal to a Hiroshima-sized bomb of 15 kilotons exploding every 11 hours during this period of 35 years. This gives you an idea of what nuclear test explosions have done to this world. But half a century passed between the first use of the atom for military purpose and the first comprehensive effort to constrain and eventually eliminate that use - the ban on nuclear test explosions everywhere, by everyone, and forever.

Next year -- since we talk about anniversaries -- will mark 20 years since the CTBT was put for signature: two decades in pursuit of the goal of banning nuclear test explosions. So now, what do we do for anniversaries? We ask ourselves the question: Has success moved us closer or does it remain increasingly out of reach? That's the question we should ask ourselves with regard to the CTBT and its entry into force. Another question is: Why do banning and detecting nuclear test explosions matter today? You will want to know about the one billion dollar and 180+ countries' investment in global security. This is what you should know to understand why it matters today: It matters because it stops and constrains those who have nuclear weapons from making significant -- and I insist on this word -- significant enhancements to their arsenals. For those who have not, it basically prevents them from emerging as new nuclear-weapon States. And that's why the CTBT is important.

So why is all of this needed, and why is it so relevant? The implications for nuclear arms race, proliferation, disarmament, environment, public health? And now, for all of the above plus national, regional and international security? And for the future, all of the above plus capacity-building, especially concerning national technical means and talents for non-nuclear-weapon States to contribute to tasks related to verifying a nuclear-weapon free world. And this is why the CTBT is important: in helping other, smaller countries to build capacity to be able to verify what will become a nuclear-weapon free world.

So what is special about the CTBT and its International Monitoring System? Here is a mechanism, a system to make sure that everyone abides by the same rules. It is already built and performing before the rules bind everyone. And this is the issue: We have a system that works, that operates, or provisionally operates, and that has shown its worth. And now we are waiting for you, Member States, State Signatories, for you, the international community, to make a decision, to tell us what you want to do with this investment. If you are getting a good return on your investment, so why wait 20 years? Do you want to wait another 20 years? I don't think so. We have a proof of concept that shows what international team work is about scientifically, and this is what the CTBT and its verification regime have proved to the international community.

It also provides real security today; it is not a theoretical exercise, but it has surpassed any expectation and proven that you indeed have a return on the investment. When the network was designed, we were talking about a detection threshold of one kiloton, but we are going far beyond that today, even better, and this is what we have proven with this wonderful network we are so proud of.

In conclusion, let me say that the threat of nuclear weapons is not as abstract and neither are the proven and existing mechanisms for curbing or limiting and eliminating nuclear weapons, such as the global nuclear test ban and its monitoring network that I have mentioned earlier. The people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki live with history in the present. And so do all the people from places where they suffered nuclear test explosions. To forestall this past becoming anyone else's future, this is what this reminder is all about. In the words of a Nagasaki youth delegate, who said last month: "Those who know have a responsibility to share, those who don't must learn." So before the next anniversary, let us share, let us learn, and let us act to secure the future. That is all what we need today.

Thank you.