



The importance of CTBT universalization

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Being the High Representative for the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy, I am particularly proud that all European Union (EU) Member States have signed and

ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). All other European countries are now also party to the Treaty, with Moldova being the latest country in the region to have ratified. This represents a major milestone towards universalization of the CTBT, a key disarmament and non-proliferation instrument.

The CTBT aims to be universal. It is an egalitarian Treaty from the viewpoint of obligations and rights: All States have to comply with the same obligations and all have access, in the same way, to the most extensive global verification regime ever built. While being egalitarian in terms of rights and obligations, the Treaty rightly requires the ratification by those countries, which possess significant nuclear activities, for its entry into force. This is not discrimination but a rather logical provision aimed at ensuring the credibility of the Treaty. Although 177 States have already signed the Treaty and 138 have deposited their ratification, the CTBT is still not nearing its entry into force. This is due to the fact that only 34 of the 44 States whose ratification is required for entry into have so far ratified the Treaty. There are ten so called 'hold-out'-States, among them two permanent Members of the United Nations Security Council.

Since the opening for signature of the CTBT ten years ago, the EU has been a strong supporter of the CTBT. The EU Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons

of Mass Destruction, adopted by our Heads of State and Government in December 2003, defines the EU policy as follows: "...to pursue the implementation and universalisation of the existing disarmament and non-proliferation norms ... and the early entry into force of the CTBT". Under this strategy, the EU has committed itself to make the best use of the existing multilateral verification systems and seek improvements where possible. This is why we have adopted a Joint Action providing financial support to the CTBTO in the area of training and capacity building in order to enhance the verification system. We are now in the process of preparing future activities for the implementation of the strategy and, among the projects envisaged, there are also new initiatives in support of the CTBT.

On 9 October 2006, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) tested a nuclear explosive device, in disregard of appeals from the international community not to do so. This event underscores how

important and urgent it is to bring the Treaty into force and to complete the build-up of the verification system. I hope that the event will facilitate a reconsideration of the ratification of the Treaty by those major States, which so far have stayed outside the regime.

I call on all States, particularly the ones whose signature and/or ratification is necessary for entry into force of the CTBT, to sign and ratify the Treaty without further delay. The CTBT, together with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the IAEA safeguards system and the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540, in particular with regard to export controls, can make a real difference in reducing the risks of nuclear proliferation. The entry into force of the CTBT will also constitute the fulfilment of one of the fundamental steps towards nuclear disarmament that were agreed at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference and again at the 2000 NPT Review Conference and it will testify that we are fully committed to all obligations of the NPT. ■



“It is now as important as ever to work towards the early entry-into-force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and achieving the international community's longstanding goal of outlawing all nuclear tests, thereby advancing both nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The claim by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that it conducted the test of a nuclear weapon on 9 October 2006 is a direct challenge to the nuclear non-proliferation regime and has increased tension in the region and beyond. I urge all States to refrain from acts that would defeat the object and purpose of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty pending its entry-into-force.”

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for CTBTO Spectrum