



**PERMANENT MISSION OF AUSTRALIA TO THE PREPARATORY  
COMMISSION FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN  
TREATY ORGANIZATION**

**Agenda item 11; Australian statement to the Conference on  
facilitating the entry into force of the Comprehensive  
Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty; Statement by Ambassador Peter  
Shannon**

Co-President, Ministers, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

Australia has a long and proud association with the treaty which, from its conception, we have regarded as a vital pillar of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. It was the action of Australia's Foreign Minister, Mr Downer, in taking the treaty directly to the floor of the UN General Assembly, after negotiations in Geneva had faltered, which enabled the treaty's overwhelming adoption in 1996. Australia was among the first states to sign and ratify the treaty and from 2005 to 2007 was the Article XIV coordinator.

Our strong and consistent support for the treaty is firmly grounded in the belief that it represents a highly effective means to constrain the quantitative and qualitative development of nuclear weapons. In light of the nuclear test conducted by the DPRK on 9 October 2006, this objective has gained renewed urgency. We were reminded then of the terrible destructive capacity of nuclear weapons.

We were pleased that during our time as coordinator, there was further progress towards the treaty's universalisation and the development of a ban on nuclear testing as a principle of international normative behavior.

But ten years after the treaty was first opened for signature and ratification, ten of the 44 Annex II states whose ratification is required for its entry into force have still yet to ratify.

A number of excuses have been put forward as to why this situation persists. In Australia's view, the time for excuses is past. Doubts as to the treaty's verification capacity have little credibility in light of the International Monitoring System's successful detection of the DPRK nuclear test. And domestic impediments should not be allowed to hinder an instrument of such importance to the international community.

Those states yet to sign and ratify the treaty must do so if we are to succeed in strengthening and enhancing the non-proliferation regime. Australia, therefore, renews its call upon those states yet to ratify the treaty to join the growing consensus to enshrine the voluntary ban on nuclear weapon testing, as a permanent and legally binding commitment.

Although the treaty has yet to enter into force, Australia is encouraged by the continued build up of the verification regime and, in particular, the International Monitoring System. With 248 station installations completed, and nine radionuclide laboratories certified, substantial progress has been made to implement the sophisticated verification regime that lies at the heart of the treaty. With the Integrated Field Exercise to be conducted in 2008, the on-site inspection capability will also be greatly enhanced, thereby increasing the likelihood that a nuclear test will be detected.

It is essential that the build up of the verification regime continues so as to be fully effective when the treaty enters into force. As we all know, this is the mandate of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission as set out in the treaty. Speculation as to when the treaty will enter into force should not hinder the continued efforts to see that mandate fulfilled at the earliest possible date. And while we welcome the effective detection by

the IMS of the nuclear test in the DPRK, we caution against letting this success making us complacent about the build up of the IMS and the development of a verification regime capable of meeting all the verification requirements of the treaty. Australia, therefore, calls upon all states to maintain strong practical, financial, and political support for the important work of the Preparatory Commission. For its part, Australia is pleased to be hosting 21 monitoring facilities – the third largest number of any state. Australia also welcomes the considerable data that this system is now providing to national tsunami warning and disaster alert centers.

In conclusion, Australia commends the work of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission and the efforts of ratifiers to promote the entry into force of the treaty. Universalisation of the treaty remains our ultimate goal and one that we are optimistic about achieving. Let us not, however, become fatigued for there is more work to be done. We, the ratifiers, must redouble our efforts to convince, and if necessary assist, all countries which have not yet done so, to ratify the treaty. The adoption of a strong and unanimous declaration during this Conference on facilitating the entry into force of the treaty should serve as an indication of that renewed commitment.

Thank you.