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## ARGENTINA'S INTERVENTION AT THE HIGH-LEVEL EVENT ON THE COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN TREATY

The complete and effective prohibition of nuclear tests features prominently among the efforts that the international community can undertake to accelerate and facilitate the urgent implementation of a total and complete nuclear disarmament.

The adoption of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) was, at the time, a very important step. However, as long as the CTBT remains in legal limbo, there will be no legally binding instrument prohibiting these tests.

Nuclear tests must be prohibited. This would contribute to limiting the production and upgrading of existing nuclear weapons, as well as the development of new types.

The entry into force of the CTBT would fill one of the major gaps in non-proliferation and disarmament, making it possible to limit both vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons.

For these reasons, Argentina has historically been part of the group of countries that have promoted, in different fora, the ban on nuclear tests, which led to the creation of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, subscribed by Argentina on the first day it was opened for signature, on 24 September 1996.

Furthermore, the entry into force of the CTBT is important for preserving the credibility of the non-proliferation regime, which is already in jeopardy. The nature of the CTBT would make it equally applicable in all States, and it would contribute to balancing the asymmetries of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The impossibility for some States to ratify the CTBT delays its entry into force and reinforces the argument that the non-proliferation regime is implemented with a double standard.

In this respect, and without prejudice to the positive impact it has had on the humanitarian and environmental protection fields, the CTBT is essentially a treaty on security. Consequently, its ultimate goal will only be achieved through its effective and universal entry into force.

The moratorium on nuclear tests adopted by the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council is not enough.

Although it was a positive step at the time, this moratorium is based on political statements that can be changed at any time, which is why it cannot be considered an acceptable substitute for the permanent and legally binding entry into force of the Treaty.

Moreover, the longer it takes for the Treaty to enter into force, the higher the risk of resumption of the tests.

It is worth noting that the efficiency of the International Monitoring System and the International Data Centre, established by the Treaty and currently applied provisionally, has already been demonstrated by the measurement of data as a result of the crisis triggered by the tsunami that hit Japan and affected the Fukushima nuclear plant.

Argentina collaborates with this provisional monitoring system and values the important progress achieved by these Treaty tools. There is no doubt that these technical advances contribute to the promotion of the entry into force of the Treaty.

Argentina firmly supports the goal of achieving universal adherence to the CTBT, and urges the countries that still have not done so to take the necessary steps to sign, ratify or accede to the Treaty without further delay.

The universality of the CTBT remains an essential path towards the establishment of a certain and stable international framework that contributes to peace and security.

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