
**Address by the Executive Secretary
of the Preparatory Commission for the
Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization**

**Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the
Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
(New York, 21 -23 September 2005)**

1. Thank you Mr. President. As the new Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization it is a great honour for me to address the fourth Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. I would like to thank the Secretary-General of the United Nations as convener of the Conference and Under-Secretary-General Abe for the excellent cooperation in organizing this event.
2. When the CTBT was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 10 December 1996 we were aware that the success of the Treaty would depend on two crucial factors: its universality and its verifiability. On both accounts we have made substantial progress since then.
3. Since the last Article XIV Conference in 2003, eight states have signed and 21 States have ratified the CTBT, bringing the total to 176 signatories and 125 ratifiers. These impressive numbers demonstrate the ever-growing commitment of the international community to the Treaty. Of the 44 states whose ratification is necessary for Entry into Force of the CTBT, 33 have already ratified. The vote of confidence expressed in the large number of signatures and ratifications is a major source of motivation for all of us who are working on the verification system.

4. Since 1997 the Preparatory Commission has been working on ensuring that the verification system of the CTBT is credible, functional and cost-effective. We are now entering a crucial transition phase where close to two-thirds of the system has been built. In the coming years the task of provisionally operating and maintaining the system will become more dominant. Continuous testing and evaluation of the verification system will prove to the remaining sceptics that the CTBT is equipped with a robust verification system capable of detecting nuclear test explosions and all other nuclear explosions everywhere, as mandated in the Treaty.

5. So far 217 of the 321 monitoring stations provided for in the Treaty have been installed and substantially meet the Commission's specifications. Over the last two years alone 115 new stations were installed. The building programme is continuing at a sustained pace. Data from the established stations are flowing via our Global Communications Infrastructure to the International Data Centre in Vienna. In this nerve-centre of the verification system the incoming data are collected, processed, analysed and transmitted to States for final analysis. Over three million data segments and products have been distributed to authorized users since 2000. Over the last two years alone the data traffic between the monitoring stations, the IDC and the 89 National Data Centres currently in operation has almost tripled from five to 14 gigabytes per day. This massive increase demonstrates the improving capacity as well as the growing interest of the National Data Centres to receive and use our data.

6. The unique feature of the CTBT verification system is that it empowers each State Signatory to make its own judgement about events based on the data and products provided by the organization. In this respect the CTBT enables States, regardless of their size and wealth, to fully participate in the verification work and benefit from the variety of data provided by the system. This includes civil and scientific applications whose potential is only starting to be explored. In the wake of the tsunami catastrophe of 26 December 2004 the Preparatory Commission decided to test the usefulness of the International Monitoring System data in the context of tsunami warning. The PTS is working closely with international and national tsunami warning centres through UNESCO in order to ascertain the potential contribution of our data for this humanitarian purpose.

7. I would like to use this opportunity to underline that the build-up of the verification regime would be unthinkable without the political and financial commitment of States Signatories, but also without the expertise, talent and dedication of the experts working as delegates or staff members in the Provisional Technical Secretariat and in National Data Centres.

Mr. President,

8. These activities are important accessories, but only accessories to the political will of the international community to bring about Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban-Treaty. I would like to pledge my full support for the President of the Conference and for the Special Representative, my old friend Ambassador Jaap Ramaker, whose work is crucial for the Article XIV process. It is the purpose of this meeting to strengthen this political will and create a new dynamism in pursuing our common objective. The comprehensive ban of nuclear test explosions has been a dream for many decades. The political and strategic choices of States and the scientific and technological advances have brought us very close to a universal and verifiable regime. I hope that we will get even closer in the period ahead.

Thank you