

Statement to the 2019 Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (Art. XIV Conference)

Delivered by State Secretary Mr Jens Frølich Holte, Norway

Mr Secretary-General, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) has been a centrepiece of the global arms control and non-proliferation regime since its adoption here by the General Assembly, more than 20 years ago. Although the Treaty has still not entered into force, it has established an important norm against nuclear tests.

Today, more than ever, we need to stand up for the international laws, norms and standards that are essential for ensuring a stable and peaceful world.

However, a norm or a self-imposed moratorium on nuclear testing can never be a substitute for a comprehensive, universally binding, legal agreement. We urge the states listed in Annex 2 to ratify the Treaty without further delay. At the same time, we should look into ways of making the CTBT fully legally binding, irrespective of the progress made on securing the remaining ratifications.

Mr Secretary-General,

We urge the DPRK to live up to its expressed willingness to work towards the denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula by abandoning all mass destruction and ballistic missile programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, as required by several UN Security Council resolutions. Furthermore, Norway recognises that this issue needs to be resolved by political and diplomatic means.

Mr Secretary-General,

Norway has fulfilled its responsibilities under the International Monitoring System (IMS). There are six monitoring stations on Norwegian territory, all of which have been certified to comply with all technical requirements and specifications. These stations are transmitting their data continuously to the International Data Centre of the CTBTO in Vienna.

Norway appreciates the current efforts of the CTBTO secretariat to re-engineer the software of the International Data Centre (IDC). We will support continued actions by the secretariat needed to complete the re-engineering effort in an efficient and timely manner. Norway considers this modernisation effort to be an important element for maintaining the sustainability and credibility of the verification regime of the CTBT.

Norway has also contributed financially to CTBT capacity-building, including training courses for developing countries.

Mr Secretary-General,

The IMS and IDC of the CTBT verification regime have demonstrated their utility in bringing tangible scientific and civil benefits. We should continue to consider ways to ensure that these benefits can be broadly shared by the international community in conformity with the Treaty and under the guidance of the Preparatory Commission.

Norway will continue to work hard to strengthen established non-proliferation regimes and uphold international norms and laws. We will continue to take initiatives that deliver concrete results and that lead to further disarmament, and ultimately to our common goal of a world without nuclear weapons. Ensuring that the CTBT enters into force would be a significant step towards achieving that goal.

Thank you