

Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force
of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
Vienna, 3-5 September 2003

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STATEMENT

by H.E. Mr. Ivo Petrov, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Bulgaria to the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization

Thank you, Mr. President,

At the outset may I take this opportunity to congratulate you on your assumption of the Conference Presidency. We look forward to working with you for a successful outcome of this Conference in order to enhance the CTBT's prospects for entry into force.

I would also like to express our recognition for the work done by the Executive Secretary of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission, Ambassador Wolfgang Hoffmann.

Bulgaria associates itself with the statement made by Italy on behalf of the European Union. Taking the floor in my national capacity serves the purpose to underline the great concern of my country in view of the fact that the CTBT – 7 years after its adoption and opening for signature – has not yet entered into force.

The promotion of the entry into force of the CTBT at the earliest possible date is a priority task. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Solomon Passy, was among the signatories of the Joint Ministerial Statement on the CTBT of September 2002, which was supported by the majority of the ratifiers of the Treaty.

The prevention of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is among the most important challenges facing our world today. Currently, we are witnessing some alarming developments in the field of nuclear non-proliferation that make the need of urgent counter measures more evident than ever. The CTBT has an essential role to play in strengthening global peace and security.

By prohibiting all nuclear test explosions, the Treaty prevents the development of new nuclear weapons, as well as the improvement of existing weapons. Thus the Treaty provides a significant support for the aims and obligations of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The CTBT and the NPT are major pillars of the global security architecture and mutually reinforcing instruments. Together they provide a solid basis

the international community needs to counter nuclear proliferation. We believe that resumed nuclear testing would open a Pandora box. It would feed up a new arms race. It would encourage states with nuclear aspirations to pursue the nuclear option. In the long run it would considerably increase the risk of nuclear weapons falling into the wrong hands. We consider the entry into force of the CTBT as a crucial element in enhancing the nuclear non-proliferation.

The CTBT verification system is unprecedented in its global reach. In addition to its primary function, it will bring scientific and civil benefits, particularly to developing countries, through technology transfer and exchange of scientific know-how. It is vital to maintain momentum in building the verification regime of the CTBT, so that it can guarantee compliance with the Treaty and thereby ensure confidence that States are observing the Treaty provisions. The IMS plays a decisive role for the functioning of the Treaty.

The work of the Preparatory Commission, the Provisional Technical Secretariat and its Executive Secretary are vital to carrying out the necessary practical steps, and we are supporting it fully.

A significant element in supporting the Treaty is the involvement and contribution of civil society in rising awareness for its objectives. Work with non-governmental organizations and other representatives of civil society is also essential to this end.

Bulgaria supports the Final Declaration and the Measures to promote the entry into force of the CTBT. We have been appealing, both individually as well as collectively, together with the European Union, to all states that have not done so to sign and ratify the Treaty as soon as possible and without conditions, in particular the states whose ratification is needed for its entry into force. And may I assure you, Mr. President, of our support for your work and for the aims of this Conference.

Thank you.