



SLOVAKIA

STATEMENT BY

H.E. EDUARD KUKAN

MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

HEAD OF THE DELEGATION

**IN THE GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS
OF THE CONFERENCE ON FACILITATING THE ENTRY INTO FORCE
OF THE COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN TREATY**

VIENNA, 3 SEPTEMBER 2003

- Check against delivery -

Unfortunately, the relations in international politics are still not free from the concept of deterrent power of nuclear weapons. Taking into account the historical experience, I can regrettably note that even the possession of these weapons represents a potential source of regional and global instability. In this context I note with satisfaction that since the last Conference in 2001 the moratorium on nuclear explosions has not been violated.

Mr. President,

Slovakia actively participated in the preparation of the previous CTBT Conference two years ago serving as its Vice-President. We have continuously supported the work of the Preparatory Commission and its Provisional Technical Secretariat that paves the way for the future CTBTO and which are necessary for successful building of the effective verification regime, including International Monitoring System. In 2001 Slovakia hosted the second On-Site Inspection (OSI) field experiment and equipment test.

Recognising the important role of the verification regime of the CTBT and in particular the On-Site Inspections (OSI), Slovakia is ready to offer its experience and capacities and is prepared to co-operate with the Preparatory Commission in this field also in the future. In this regard, Slovakia is ready to host the Field Exercise in 2004.

To conclude, let me express our hope, Mr. President, that the CTBT will soon enter into force with all its necessary instruments, thus providing for the efficient verification regime. This hope could only come true through our common resolve and determination to act in this regard.

Thank you.

Mr. President,

At the outset let me congratulate you on the assumption of this highly demanding post and assure you of the Slovak delegation's full support in fulfilling your responsible task. I wish to extend my congratulations to the Government of Austria for hosting this exceptional event and express our thanks and gratitude to Ambassador Wolfgang Hoffmann, Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission and Secretary of the Conference, for his systematic effort and personal contribution to the process of promoting entry of the Treaty into force.

To start, allow me to refer to the statement delivered by the distinguished Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Italy on behalf of the European Union with which Slovakia, as an acceding country to the European Union, fully aligns herself. My comments will therefore focus on some additional issues.

Slovakia is strongly convinced of the importance of the CTBT and considers it together with the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as exceptional multilateral instruments available to the international community and as a cornerstone of global nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament regime. Therefore I take this opportunity and call upon all States that have not yet signed and ratified the Treaty to keep the political momentum of the process and strengthen overall efforts aimed at promoting its entry into force at the earliest possible date.

The fact that not all declared nuclear-weapons States have yet ratified the CTBT is the cause of disappointment and concern.