

Regional Conference for South East Asia, the Pacific and Far East

Jakarta, Indonesia - 19 May 2014

Keynote Address Dr. Lassina Zerbo, Executive Secretary

Your Excellency, Minister Natalegawa,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Participants,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to join you here in Jakarta as we begin this important Regional Conference on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) for countries in the South East Asia, Pacific, and Far East (SEAPFE) region. I would like to express my profound appreciation to the Government of Indonesia, which is not only graciously hosting us this week, but which has also spared no effort in working with the Provisional Technical Secretariat to devise a stimulating and action-oriented programme for the Conference.

At the outset, I wish to acknowledge the support for this Conference provided by the Government of Japan and the European Union. The commitment of both Japan and the EU to the Treaty is reflected in the presence here today of His Excellency Mr. Nobuo Kishi, Parliamentary Senior Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, and of His Excellency Mr. Jacek Bylica, EU Special Envoy for Non-proliferation and Disarmament.

I am also delighted to welcome three members of the Group of Eminent Persons (GEM), whose mission is to promote entry into force of the Treaty through high-level engagement with Annex 2 States and others: H.E. Mr. Sha Zukang, who is not only the former United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, but also served as lead negotiator for China on the CTBT; H.E. Mr. Ho-jin Lee, former Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to Finland, Hungary and at the United Nations; and H.E. Mr Nobuyasu Abe, Director of the Centre for the Promotion of Disarmament and Non-Proliferation and former UN Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs.

I am especially honoured by the presence of His Excellency Mr. Marty Natalegawa, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia. It is now a little over two years since Minister Natalegawa personally submitted his country's ratification of the CTBT to the Secretary-General of the United Nations – placing Indonesia at the vanguard of efforts towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Indonesia was the 157th country to ratify. Since then, five more have followed – the most recent, Niue, also being from the SEAPFE region. I remain convinced that your ratifications will continue to inspire other signatory and non-signatory States from the SEAPFE region that have not yet done so, to sign and or ratify expeditiously.

With 183 States Signatories and 162 ratifications, the breadth of support for this Treaty and for an end to nuclear testing is clear. Nonetheless, we have not yet reached our goal. As you know, the Treaty provides that entry into force follows only after all 44 countries listed in Annex 2 complete their respective ratification processes. Indonesia showed immense leadership by becoming the most recent Annex 2 State to ratify.

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We urgently need the last remaining eight to follow Indonesia's lead. I very purposefully use the word 'urgent' to describe the situation we are facing. The Treaty has existed for almost 18 years. As you will hear, the International Monitoring System is mostly complete and practically fully functioning. Our data products are timely and reliable. Aside from one notable outlier in this region, no country has conducted a nuclear test since the last century. It is very easy, therefore, to let complacency take over. If a nuclear test ban is virtually in effect, then why worry about the details? But therein lies the danger.

Three weeks ago I addressed the Third Preparatory Committee for next year's Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The 2015 Review Conference will mark twenty years since the decision to indefinitely extend the NPT, ensuring that it remain as the cornerstone of global disarmament and non-proliferation arrangements. A key part of the bargain in this indefinite extension was the conclusion of negotiations on a Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Five years later, the 2000 NPT Review Conference designated entry into force of the CTBT as the first of 13 practical steps to achieving nuclear disarmament.

Since then, although there have been numerous expressions of support for the CTBT within the NPT review process and other multilateral fora, the sense among some seems to be that with a global test ban 'in operation' if not 'in effect', there is no need to keep the foot on the pedal. This is a very risky approach to take.

Put quite simply, until the Treaty is legally locked in, there will always be the chance of going back to the days of nuclear testing. That in turn would have dire repercussions for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. A region that has been deeply scarred by nuclear testing in the past, SEAPFE countries can help break the spell of complacency and build the momentum needed for entry into force.

How to achieve this?

First, a strong leadership position can create momentum. We have seen how Indonesia took in ratifying the CTBT. Where the remaining Annex 2 States are concerned, one often hears that the dominoes must fall in a certain way, that it is the responsibility of one State to move first and that others will duly follow. I confess that I do not see it like that. Indeed, it is the responsibility of *each and all States, in particular the remaining 8 Annex 2 States*, to bring about the early entry-into-force and universalization of the CTBT.

Momentum can also be created by being alive to the role the Treaty can play in reducing international tensions. Signature and ratification of the CTBT go a long way towards building confidence concerning a nation's nuclear ambitions. All too often in the past few years, opportunities for promoting the Treaty in such contexts were not taken up. Looking specifically at this region, I would urge that adherence to the CTBT be seriously pursued as part of any resumed negotiations with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). In particular, I call for a moratorium on nuclear testing to be at the centre of such negotiations, paving the way for eventual signature and ratification of the Treaty. In the

meantime, where the DPRK is concerned, the CTBTO verification system is ready in the event of that country going ahead with its threat to conduct a further nuclear test.

Even in advance of ratification, engaging on technical issues can also create momentum. The recent decision by China to send data from key International Monitoring System stations can be seen in this light. Not only does the data from these Chinese stations significantly enhance our system's regional and global coverage, it also clearly demonstrates China's dedication to the CTBT.

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The aim of this Regional Conference is quite straightforward: to assist countries in overcoming bottlenecks in signing and ratifying the CTBT. Of the 32 States in the SEAPFE region, 29 have signed and 23 have ratified. I believe that, with a little push, we can move closer to universalization in this region, thereby setting an example for other regions.

The Conference comprises sessions on a range of political, legal, and technical issues concerning the CTBT. In addition to a high-level session featuring a number of key actors from the disarmament and non-proliferation spheres, you will hear from members of the Provisional Technical Secretariat, as well as from experts and counterparts from countries in the region and beyond who will provide you with their experiences on ratifying the Treaty and benefitting from its verification regime.

I will not foreshadow the technical detail at this stage, except to note that for many countries in the SEAPFE region, the verification regime confers tangible civil and scientific benefits. The four technologies in our monitoring system – seismic, infrasound, hydroacoustic and radionuclide – not only detect nuclear explosions, they can also be used for issues such as tsunami warning, climate change monitoring, and tracing the spread of radioactive material following nuclear accidents.

Take tsunami warning for example. Following the devastating tsunami that hit the north-west coast of Sumatra in December 2004, we were mandated to cooperate with the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (IOC/UNESCO) on tsunami warning. Now approximately 60 seismic and hydroacoustic stations directly contribute data to tsunami warning alert centres. More recently, we joined the Inter-Agency Committee on Radiological and Nuclear Emergencies (IACRNE).

I would also like to emphasise that the Provisional Technical Secretariat has a responsibility to build country-level capacity in the various elements of our activities – such as training and educating specialists in the operation of monitoring stations and national data centres, as well as in the use of data made available through the verification regime. During the course of the Conference you will hear more about how, through integrated capacity building, we can work with you not only in advance of signature and ratification, but also afterwards. Maintaining the verification system and keeping up with changing needs in technology and skills are of the utmost importance.

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I have spoken about the CTBT's political significance and of the Treaty's civil and scientific benefits. To build peace and safeguard the world against the threats posed by the most devastating kind of weapons, the world needs the full participation of countries in the South East Asian, Pacific and Far East region. For some countries here today, I am sure that participation in this Conference will be a decisive step forward. My staff and I stand ready to assist you.

I wish you all an informative and engaging conference and I look forward to your active discussion in the various panels.

Thank you for your attention.