



ITALY

**CONFERENCE ON FACILITATING THE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE
COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN TREATY (ARTICLE XIV)**

**STATEMENT BY
VICE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF ITALY
HON. LAPO PISTELLI**

(NEW YORK, 27 SEPTEMBER 2013)

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Mr Co-Presidents,

At the outset, let me congratulate you on your election and confirm you the full support of Italy in your work. We align ourselves with the statement delivered earlier by the European Union and with the Final Declaration we have just endorsed. I would like to offer some remarks on a national basis.

Once again, this Conference gives us the opportunity to raise the attention of the international community towards the main goal of nuclear disarmament and to reiterate our strong support to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which we see as a major building block of the multilateral disarmament agenda, as well as a strategic priority for Italy and the EU.

As President Obama recalled in his speech in Berlin last June, pursuing the elimination of nuclear weapons is a way to pursue a stronger security. And the complete ban on nuclear tests is a crucial step in this direction. In this regard we commend the progress made in the universalization of the Treaty since the last Art. XIV Conference in 2011, with 4 new Ratifying States (Guatemala and Indonesia in 2012 and Brunei and Chad in 2013).

However, more needs to be done. Thirteen States did not even sign the Treaty and eight Annex-2 States are still missing the chance to make the difference in the future of disarmament. Italy calls for a prompt ratification of the CTBT by those States that have not done so, thus allowing the Treaty to enter into force.

Voluntary moratoria on nuclear tests, although commendable as a helpful confidence-building measure, are only an intermediate goal and cannot be considered as an alternative to ratification. Instead, they should be a first step towards the accession to the Treaty. Pending the entry into force of the Treaty, Italy believes that these moratoria must be maintained, and we urge all States concerned to observe a moratorium on nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions. Moreover, we call on all States to refrain from any action that would defeat the object and the purpose of the CTBT awaiting its entry into force.

Mr. Co-Presidents,

The importance of reaching soon the entry into force of the Treaty was restated on a number of occasions in the past. We do hope that concrete progress can be achieved in the near future, so as to see enforced an effective and reliable verification system, which is participatory and non-discriminatory.

Thanks to the hard work of the Preparatory Commission of the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty Organisation, and pending the entry into force of the Treaty, the setting up of the International

Monitoring System has continued and the International Data Centre is functioning. I would thus like to take the opportunity to commend the excellent work of former Executive Secretary Ambassador Tibor Toth and address my best wishes to the new Executive Secretary, Dr Lassina Zerbo, who will offer his long-term experience as Director of International Data Centre to the goals of the CTBT.

We welcome the initiative recently undertaken by the New Executive Secretary to establish a "Group of Eminent Persons" to help Member States to facilitate the CTBT's entry into force and composed of prominent personalities from different Member States. We are particularly pleased that Italy is represented in this group by MP Federica Mogherini. It is another sign of our commitment to the goal of the entry into force of the Treaty.

The CTBT, with its effective, credible and non discriminatory verification regime, will contribute to strengthen the architecture of international security. On a national level, we are committed to the full implementation of its provisions and we concretely participate to the establishment of the International Monitoring System. Despite the cuts to public spending, in 2013 Italy contributed to the CTBTO with more than € 4.9 million. This is a clear sign of our strong political commitment to the universalization of the Treaty.

Mr. Co-Presidents,

Together with our EU and G8 Partners, Italy has strongly supported the CTBT. We reiterate our full commitment to the promotion of further actions aimed at facilitating its entry into force.

We are aware of the difficulties and we understand the reasons still prevailing in some countries and certain areas, but we remain convinced that through a genuine dialogue and the adoption of confidence-building measures we can create the necessary conditions for overcoming the present obstacles.

Thank you, Mr. Co-Presidents.
