



General Assembly
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Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the
Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (Article XIV)

Mr. Espen Barth Eide
Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs

Mr Secretary-General, Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen,

A world free of nuclear weapons is a longstanding objective of Norway's foreign policy – and a comprehensive ban on the testing of nuclear weapons is imperative in order to prevent further proliferation and the development of new generations of nuclear weapons.

Today, there is growing recognition all over the world among politicians and the public alike that global security would be enhanced by the elimination of nuclear arms – and by a comprehensive ban on the testing of nuclear weapons.

There is also a growing momentum, created by the NPT Review Conference last May, the Nuclear Security Summit and by the entry into force of the new START Treaty between the Russian Federation and the United States. We finally see real – and very welcome – progress in the field of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

Norway is pleased to note that four more states have ratified the CTBT since the last Article XIV conference in 2009. We also welcome the decision by Indonesia to start the ratification process as well as the announcement by the US (and other countries) of its intention to ratify.

This is evidence of the near universality of the Treaty. It should be noted that, although the CTBT has not formally entered into force, it has already established a fundamental norm of non-testing. Yet, this norm is also under pressure, and a testing moratorium can never be a substitute for a comprehensive, universally binding legal agreement.

(Check against delivery)

Mr Secretary-General,

It is indeed a paradox that an international treaty that has more than 150 States Parties is unable to enter into force, and that we are gathered together at an Article XIV conference yet again – for the seventh time in fact – 15 years after the Treaty was opened for signature, to secure its entry into force. Norway urges those States that have not yet signed or ratified the Treaty to do so without further delay, in particular the nine remaining States listed in Annex 2 to the CTBT.

Mr Secretary-General,

As we wait impatiently for the Treaty to enter into force, we must ensure that the CTBT verification regime is completed. The planned global network of monitoring stations and data centres is already in place for the most part, inspiring strong confidence in the Treaty's verifiability - as the immediate detection of the DPRK's nuclear tests in 2006 and 2009 clearly demonstrated. The monitoring system also provides the States with scientific and civil benefits, including tsunami warnings and other disaster alert systems, as well as valuable data necessary to analyse and assess accidents - like the one in Fukushima. The system works, it's valuable, and we must ensure momentum in this regard as well.

Norway therefore calls on all State Signatories to provide political and financial support to the Provisional Technical Secretariat so that it can complete the verification regime. All outstanding obstacles to the installation, certification, operation and maintenance of the facilities must be addressed. In this regard, Norway greatly appreciates the work done by the Provisional Technical Secretariat, ably led by Ambassador Tibor Toth, in preparing for the implementation of the Treaty.

Mr Secretary-General,

Norway continues to support disarmament and the development of multilateral verification also in other venues. As presented at the NPT 2010 Review Conference, the Government of Norway together with the United Kingdom continue to develop methods and technologies that will be required to ensure compliance with future nuclear disarmament treaties. Several countries have expressed strong interest in this work. In early December 2011, the United Kingdom and Norway governments will host an expert workshop in London to share our progress so far with other interested countries and to discuss options for future work.

Mr Secretary-General,

Just a few weeks ago, we marked the second International Day Against Nuclear Testing. The message from the world community then was loud and clear, as it is today: we are determined to achieve a world in which no nuclear explosions are permitted, and we are determined to achieve the entry into force of the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty.

Thank you.