



SLOVAKIA

Statement by Mr. Milan JEŽOVICA

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Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force
of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

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Mr. (Co-) President,
Distinguished Delegates,

At the outset, let me express Slovakia's thanks and gratitude to the UN Secretary-General for convening the Seventh Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, in New York.

I would like to congratulate Mexico and Sweden on their election as Co-Presidents of this Conference. I assure you of Slovak delegation's full support in your responsible task. I also wish to express my thanks to both outgoing Article XIV coordinators, France and Morocco, for their hard work in the preceding period.

Slovakia fully subscribes to the statement delivered by the distinguished Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland on behalf of the European Union.

15 years have already passed since the Treaty was opened for signature. Since 1996, a progress has been made in the ratification process, but the Treaty has not entered into force yet. Allow me to take this opportunity and call upon all States, and especially the remaining Annex II countries that have not ratified the Treaty, to do so without delay.

My country considers the Treaty, together with the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), as crucial multilateral instruments which can successfully guide international community to a nuclear disarmament and global nuclear non-proliferation. In spite of the fact that it is a long-term concept, it must be a priority goal.

From the very beginning, Slovakia participates and is actively involved in the work of the Preparatory Commission of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (PrepCom CTBTO) and its Provisional Technical Secretariat (PTS).

Slovakia recognizes the central role of the CTBT verification regime as well as that of its various components for securing the attainment of the treaty's objectives. In this respect, we would like to bring to the attention of the Conference our continued contribution to the building of the verification regime, particularly through hosting various CTBTO exercises on our territory. Currently, we are in the process of considering conclusion of a standing arrangement between Slovakia and the CTBTO Provisional Technical Secretariat (PTS) with the aim to create optimal conditions for hosting future exercises.

Finally, I wish to express our thanks and appreciation to the Executive Secretary, Ambassador Tibor Tóth, for the effort and work that he is doing with his team at PrepCom CTBTO in Vienna.

Mr. (Co-) President,

Slovakia believes that the final declaration of the Conference should lead to a repeatedly needed fresh political impulse so that the Treaty can enter into force soon with all necessary instruments, including operational, effective and efficient verification regime.

Thank you.