

Chairpersons, Mr. Secretary General,

Let me at the outset thank you, Mr. Secretary General, for convening this conference, and congratulate Italy and South Africa for taking over as Article XIV coordinators. I would also like to thank the outgoing coordinators Algeria and Germany for their tireless efforts in promoting the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

Sweden aligns itself with the statement made by Slovenia on behalf of the European Union. I will now add some brief points in my national capacity.

Chairpersons,

Nuclear disarmament is a key priority for Sweden. We are deeply concerned about mounting challenges to both horizontal and vertical nuclear non-proliferation and the erosion of the global treaty structure in recent years. To help reverse this trend, and to promote concrete steps towards nuclear disarmament ahead of the next Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, Sweden in 2019 launched the Stockholm Initiative for Nuclear Disarmament together with 15 other constructively engaged Non-Nuclear Weapon States. Enhancing efforts towards the entry into force of the CTBT figure among the proposals of the Initiative.

The CTBT is a crucial part of the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime. This year is also a milestone for the Treaty, as it was opened for signature twentyfive years ago, on 24 September 1996. The CTBT contributes to constraining the development of new nuclear weapons and fosters international

peace and security. The urgency of its entry into force has been agreed upon, within the NPT framework as well as the UN Security Council and UN General Assembly.

Sweden urges all Annex 2 States to take concrete steps towards ratification, including those that have not yet signed the Treaty. At the same time, all must continue to act in accordance with the object and purpose of the Treaty.

Chairpersons,

The operational effectiveness of the International Monitoring System is well proven. However, only the entry into force of the treaty will allow for the full use of the verification regime.

Sweden is proud to have contributed tangibly to the verification of the Treaty through development of the SAUNA system for noble gas detection.

Sweden's political and technical engagement against nuclear testing will remain steadfast. Our goal remains a world free of nuclear weapons.

Thank you.