

**Remarks by the Executive Secretary  
of the Preparatory Commission for the  
Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization**

**Mr. Tibor Tóth**

**on**

**International Women's Day 8 March 2012**

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I'm not sure how many of you are aware that beneath our feet is a computer server warehouse that receives 10 gigabytes of information that our monitoring stations send each day. And at the end of this hall, a top notch team of CTBTO analysts scrutinizes that data. Almost forty percent of them are women. They are specialists in understanding the waveform --mainly seismic -- and radionuclide information that is detected. These analysts are on the frontline to help inform the world of any nuclear explosions.

But we need to train more people, especially more women, to understand and use our data. Not simply so we can attract the best and brightest to work with us. But because the potential for its use for humanity, for stopping nuclear testing, as well as to understand the world we live in, is boundless.

It's especially important that we reach out to women and those in developing countries. Education, particularly for women, is a force for social and economic development. We know that the educational achievements of women can have ripple effects within the family, and indeed, across generations.

Hydroacoustic scientists like Flore Samaran, are using our data in completely different and unexpected ways -- to enhance scientific understanding. While we use our hydroacoustic stations to monitor the oceans for underwater nuclear tests -- Flore used the data to study the migration habits of whales. Their low frequency calls propagate over many hundreds of kilometres and are recorded by our system.

The CTBTO data holds a treasure trove of information about the planet. It is actively used for disaster mitigation. We want to make sure that more scientists and researchers like Flore can unlock its benefits. The civil potential is huge.

To that end, the CTBTO is embarking on an unprecedented, mass educational collaboration. Our quest is to expand the current and next generation of CTBT experts. I'm not just talking about scientists. But of expanding the pool of experts on the political, legal and technical aspects of the Treaty. And in this we are particularly targeting women.

I cannot speak on International Women's Day without a closer inspection of our own house. We are closing the gender gap somewhat: Forty percent of CTBTO Directors are now women. But we fall short across the board with women holding only 30% of professional posts. And only 25% of senior management positions (P5 and D1 combined).

These are critical times for us. The Treaty is not yet in force, and until it is, the threat of renewed testing remains. Igniting understanding, passion and commitment in our youth to stop testing, is paramount. We want women to fully participate in these efforts.

But we cannot do this alone. We need the support of our partners. Already we've teamed up with universities, research institutes and Member States to offer educational and training activities based on modern, innovative methods. We call it the Capacity Development Initiative. It includes a free Vienna-based training programme that is also available online, in real time. Women want access to education and the opportunity to use it. This initiative offers both.

Hundreds of women and men have already received training since we started the programme at the end of last year. But it is not enough. I want to increase the number of participants from hundreds to thousands. My pledge is to train as many women in 2012 as we have working in the whole organization. I call on the other heads of international organizations to match the CTBTO in this effort.

Together, through mass education, we can energise and empower the next generation to fight for non-proliferation. To fight for disarmament. To fight for a safer world, free of nuclear testing. That fight demands the skills of both men and women. We are committed to making that a reality. But need we need you to join us.