

# The CTBT and its data

## A powerful instrument for peace and human security

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**Verification data provided by the CTBTO contributes to disaster prevention and mitigation and therefore serves as a useful diplomatic opportunity to convince States to sign and ratify the Treaty, writes Chile's Foreign Minister Alfredo Moreno, who also emphasizes the data's potential and encourages more civil institutions around the globe to take advantage.**

On 24 September 2012, the international community will commemorate 16 years of the opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). The Treaty, perceived as a crucial milestone in the process leading to the abolition of nuclear weapons and – in the meanwhile – a substantive confidence-building measure, was warmly received in Latin America and the Caribbean, the first densely populated region to collectively embrace the vision of a nuclear-weapon-free world through the Tlatelolco Treaty. Our countries were vocal opponents of the nuclear tests conducted in the South Pacific and have remained steadfast in

their rejection of atomic weapons and their means of delivery.

1996 was a momentous year for Chilean multilateral diplomacy: our country became a member of the Conference on Disarmament within a group of 23 States (the so-called G-23) coordinated by Ambassador Jorge Berguño, the Permanent Representative of Chile in Geneva. This move signalled an unswerving commitment to nuclear disarmament expressed ever since at every multilateral, regional and sub-regional forum and through active participation in like-minded groups, including the De-Alerting Coalition and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI), created in 2010 by Australia, Canada, Chile, Germany, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Poland, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates, to work for a thorough implementation of the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference's Plan of Action.

### THE CTBT: ONE STEP CLOSER TO UNIVERSALIZATION

2011 proved to be a good year for the CTBT: in Indonesia – an Annex 2 State with global stature – the country's parliament approved ratification of the Treaty in December, subsequently depositing the instrument of ratification with the United Nations Secretary-General on 6 February 2012. This lowered to eight the number of ratifications needed for its entry into force. In our region, 2012 began auspiciously when Guatemala ratified the Treaty on 12 January, bringing the CTBT a step closer to universalization. These significant sovereign decisions increased the pressure on key States to exercise their leadership and accelerate their ratifications.

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Furthermore, the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) has efficiently put in place most of the verification mechanisms provided for by the Treaty: the International Monitoring System (IMS) and the International Data Centre (IDC) are concrete realities, already delivering their products, as was confirmed in 2006 and 2009 on the occasion of the infamous nuclear tests by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). On-site inspections are also key to the future verification system. In this regard we are satisfied to see that work is well underway for organizing the next Integrated Field Exercise to be held in late 2014 in Jordan, which will allow an international team of inspectors monitored by observers to conduct a complete on-site inspection.

#### CTBTO DATA FOR DISASTER MITIGATION

Chile contributes to the verification system with seven IMS stations watching over a vast pelagic space in the south eastern quadrant of the Pacific Ocean. These stations comprise all the technologies available to the IMS: seismic, infrasound, hydroacoustic and radionuclide. Two of them – located on Robinson Crusoe Island in the Juan

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Fernández archipelago – were wiped away by the tsunami ensuing the 8.8 Richter scale earthquake which struck our country in the small hours of 27 February 2010 (the eighth strongest earthquake in the history of the Richter scale). But another 20 seismic and hydroacoustic stations from the monitoring network provided crucial data, shared immediately with tsunami warning centres in the Pacific. Work on the reconstruction of both stations at Robinson Crusoe Island is progressing smoothly with close support from the Chilean Government and the local community.

The cataclysmic tsunami precipitating the crisis at the Fukushima Daichii nuclear power plant provided yet more proof of the crucial IMS contribution to human security:

Japanese authorities confirmed that on 11 March 2011, real-time data provided by CTBT stations triggered public alerts within minutes of the magnitude 9.0 earthquake, allowing many people to reach safety on higher ground. In the following weeks, the IMS was able to track the dispersion of radioactive substances, enhancing a preventive response and providing expert advice to relevant organizations concerned with disaster prevention and mitigation.

Both tragedies confirmed the human security potential of the verification array created by the Treaty, which – while not its *raison d'être* – reaffirms the usefulness of an otherwise considerable investment from the CTBTO Member States. This humanitarian complement was underlined by the foreign ministers



*Damage caused by the magnitude 8.8 earthquake that struck Chile on 27 February 2010.*



Installing the underwater cable of hydroacoustic station HA03, Juan Fernandez Island, Chile, in 2003.



Juan Fernandez Island, Chile, showing the aftermath of the February 2010 tsunami. The IMS hydroacoustic station HA03 was destroyed by the tsunami.

of the NPDI in our statement at the General Assembly's High Level Segment, last September:

"We reiterate our commitment to universalizing the CTBT and promoting its early entry-into-force. While striving towards this goal, we recognize the security and civil benefits of the CTBT verification system, including the International Monitoring System. Members of the NPDI will continue to utilize diplomatic opportunities to urge states that have not done so to sign and ratify the Treaty."

The 2005 United Nations summit established that "peace and security, development and human rights are the pillars of the United Nations system and the foundations for collective security and well being. "At the same time, it recognized that "development, peace and security and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing". This imperative of interdependence should preside over every multilateral endeavour and certainly all that we do in Vienna. Thus the Chilean Delegation participating in the preparatory process of the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety convened last June

[1] Resolution A/60/1, paragraph 9.

joined the voices advocating for increased emergency cooperation between the IAEA and the CTBTO, and providing expert advice to relevant organizations concerned with disaster prevention and mitigation. We stand ready to keep working with other Member States at both organizations to adopt mandates underpinning an efficient humanitarian response.

A globalized world needs globalized mindsets. International organizations are tools for a collective response to interlinked global needs: thus we conceive them as global public goods interwoven both in nature and vocation. Old-fashioned compartmentalization will not do in times of scarcity but ever mounting challenges. Data are the lifeblood of the information society and the data gathered by the CTBTO ought to be treated as a global contribution with benefits unforeseen in 1996. For instance, to have a better understanding of a planet that, as those sitting near the Pacific Belt of Fire know rather well, refuses to stay quiet.

### PROMOTING THE USE OF MONITORING DATA

The civil and scientific applications of this monitoring system are of particular interest for developing countries. Member

States are entitled to benefit from the information gathered by the IDC but the responsibility over its national use rests upon their shoulders. CTBTO data could reach many more universities, investigation laboratories, observatories and emergency-response organizations than today – even in my own country. Accordingly, we have a global and domestic task to promote the profitable use of our own products.

We look with optimism at the potential of the CTBTO and its verification regime and we were honoured to contribute to the success of the organization from January to June 2012 when Ambassador Alfredo Labbé Villa of Chile served as Chairman of the executive body of the CTBTO, the PrepCom.

### BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

#### ALFREDO MORENO

is Minister of Foreign Affairs of Chile. He is a member of G-50, a group of 50 Latin American leaders selected by *Foreign Policy*, one of the world's leading publications on international relations in the US. Minister Moreno is also a member of the International Cabinet of the Dom Cabral Foundation in Brazil, as well as of the Global Advisory Board at the University of the Chicago Booth School of Business.