

Speech M

Friends of the CTBT ministeriele bijeenkomst

27 september 2018

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I am honoured to be here today as one of the Friends of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

Since we last met here two years ago, the CTBT's verification regime is drawing closer to completion. A verification regime that guarantees that no nuclear weapons test goes undetected. Its capacity to detect nuclear tests carried out anywhere in the world has been proven time and again, by the immediate and accurate detection of all six of North Korea's deplorable nuclear tests. The video we just saw gives a good impression of how the system works.

The Netherlands commends the work of the CTBTO, and actively contributes to it, in particular by supporting the establishment of this world-class verification system. Verification is key to the CTBT's strength.

We continue to face serious challenges to the non-proliferation and disarmament regime centred around the NPT (*Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty*). Today, encouraging diplomatic efforts are being made. We welcome North Korea's announced suspension of nuclear and ballistic missile tests. It is a step in the right direction. The CTBT can be an important part of the diplomatic solution. Particularly when it comes to a potential role in possible verification activities. The technical capabilities are present – ready and able.

More than 20 years after the treaty's opening for signature, the CTBT has lost none of its relevance. But we need its entry into force. To put a definitive, legally binding and verifiable end to nuclear weapons testing. To prevent the further development and spread of nuclear weapons. We welcome the latest ratifications and reiterate our call upon all remaining states to join the treaty without delay. To achieve our common goal: a world free of nuclear weapons.

Thank you.