



Bangladesh statement to be delivered at the Conference on Facilitating Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) to be held in New York 27 September 2013

**Conference Chairs
Excellencies
Distinguished delegates**

Mr. Chairman/Dear Co-Chairs,

Following five decades of struggle against nuclear testing, the CTBT was humanity's first silver lining towards a comprehensive globally verifiable non-proliferation regime banning any and all nuclear explosions. 30 days within its adoption, Bangladesh, an Annex 2 State, had demonstrated its full faith in the CTBT and was the first from South Asia to have signed and ratified the Treaty in 1996.

We were robustly bound by our Constitutional commitment not to rest until the ultimate guarantee and goal of a total elimination of nuclear weapons was secured. Our conscience remained shaken yet afresh by the horrors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. That nuclear weapons cannot guarantee ultimate security and peace to humanity has been our firm conviction. Then and now, we remain unmoved and convinced that nuclear weapons, nuclear deterrence or honing of nuclear weapons have no place in our national security or foreign policy architecture.

And this we vouch in spite of the reality that we had to reckon with that two years following CTBT's adoption South Asia experienced its first shocks of nuclear tests and explosions. Our Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina rushed to both our nuclear neighbours to diffuse tension in 1998 and convey on behalf of the people of Bangladesh and of all non-nuclear weapons States of the region to reverse this suicidal psyche for self-extinction without any thought of our progeny and their pervasive poverty. That Bangladesh lives in a neighborhood where the possibility of nuclear confrontation remains alive till today and continues to determine the overall regional security architecture haunts our national psyche. That we continue to remain exposed as a non-nuclear State to the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons in our region in the absence of a universal legal instrument to codify these assurances leaves us undone.

Bangladesh therefore, continues to remain a staunch advocate of immediate entry into force of the CTBT. We join the powerful voice of 185 non-nuclear weapons States and the 161 State parties to the CTBT, in urging in the name of humanity, all 13 countries which have not yet signed and 35 which have not yet ratified the CTBT, to do so without further delay. Non-ratification of the CTBT by the remaining eight Annex 2 States remain the only obstacle to the entry into force of the Treaty and to a permanent banning of nuclear tests by anyone anywhere.

To those we urge to ponder for a brief moment that more than US \$105 billion is spent each year for researching and testing new nuclear arsenals while only an average US \$50 billion per annum would be sufficient to halve poverty for nearly 5 billion people of this world and meet all eight Millennium Development Goals by 2015(Source: World Bank). While in this very premise we the non-nuclear majority, deliberate and struggle in our own prerogative for resources to sustain the planet, the people and eliminate poverty in a post-2015 world, should they as a powerful minority continue to divert valuable resources that could feed and provide decent lives to billions, for testing and creating yet more sophisticated nuclear weapons to annihilate both mankind and the planet? Bangladesh for one denounces that and urges them to stop and reverse such acts against humanity.

Distinguished Chairs,

We also firmly uphold that entry into force of the CTBT would mark a historic step for mankind towards the reduction and eventual elimination of nuclear weapons by constraining their development and qualitative improvement. It would also reinforce efforts toward our realizing our shared vision of a nuclear weapons free world. It is both an irony and a paradox that 17 years after the adoption of the CTBT and significant obstacles remaining on the path to its full implementation, the world is looking for alternate ways for pushing its entry into force evading the preconditions set in Article XIV of the Treaty. That we are examining the possibilities of application of the Vienna Convention on the Laws of Treaties whether we can apply some of the CTBT mechanisms before it has Entered into Force.

To them we advocate that the CTBT is a comprehensive and powerful instrument in preventing nuclear tests. It is heartening that the world has witnessed a relative silence of nuclear tests in the last 17 years since adoption of CTBT- 7 as compared to the 400 during the five decades preceding the CTBT. And yet we need to remember that this relative silence of nuclear tests relies on unilateral, voluntary moratoria - commitments that can be revoked at will, at any time. Therefore, the entry into force of the CTBT is the only guarantee of a legally binding non-testing regime.

Moreover, although the number of nuclear tests is substantially lower than that for the previous years, any test stands squarely in the way of our common objective, a world free of nuclear weapons.

Distinguished Chairs,

Seventeen years following the adoption of the CTBT, perhaps an international norm has now developed to perceive nuclear tests as a kind of rouge activity. The few countries that have conducted nuclear tests since 1996 have invariably faced universal condemnation and unanimously-adopted UN Security Council Sanctions. This is a success of CTBT. It is indeed a show of our moral strength and persistence that we gather at this Conference every year and make a clarion call on the hold-out States to join our folds. We want to believe that these States also share our common objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and would like to ensure the universal enforcement of the CTBT as a fundamental pillar to that regime. We must, therefore, continue to support the Article XIV process to facilitate entry into force of the CTBT. More importantly we must continue to remain engaged with the remaining Annex 2 States them for building on the near universal adherence and the critical political will and commitment that humanity deserves to save itself from one more nuclear test and a possible extinction of its genre.

At the same time, we must strengthen advances made by the CTBTO in building a strong verification regime by developing and effectively maintaining a system capable of quickly, reliably and precisely detecting nuclear explosion and suspicious events anywhere, in the air or sea or underground. Bangladesh is happy to have hosted an auxiliary seismic station and would continue to contribute to these parallel processes until the last nuclear testing is permanently stopped for the preservation of humanity and our succeeding generations. I thank you.