



**EU Statement on the occasion of the eighth Article XIV Conference
in support of the Entry-into-Force of the CTBT**

Delivered on behalf of the European Union by

H.E. Mr. Linas Linkevičius

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Distinguished Co-Presidents,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Candidate Countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Iceland† and Serbia*, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

The European Union would like to congratulate you, Mr Co-Presidents, on your assumption of the Presidency of the eighth session of the Article XIV Conference. Let me assure you of the European Union's full support in fulfilment of your important mandate. We would also like to express our great appreciation for the work carried out by Mexico and Sweden as previous Article XIV coordinators. Furthermore, the European Union expresses its gratitude to you, Mr Secretary General, for convening this Conference and thanks all the Ministers for being present here today. We would also like to seize this opportunity to welcome Dr. Lassina Zerbo in his new capacity as Executive Secretary of the CTBTO and wish him all the best in carrying out his important mandate.

Excellency, Mr Secretary-General,
Distinguished Co-Presidents,
Honourable Ministers,
Ambassadors,
Distinguished Guests,

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) plays an essential role in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and is an effective measure in support of those international priorities. The current relevance and the importance of the Treaty's entry into force were clearly demonstrated following the nuclear test carried out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 12 February 2013, which was strongly condemned by the international community.

Since its opening for signature 17 years ago, 183 countries have signed and 159 have ratified the CTBT, underlining the strong on-going international support for this Treaty and its goals. The European Union welcomes the signing of the CTBT by Niue and ratifications by Indonesia, an Annex II State, Guatemala, Brunei Darussalam and Chad since the last session of the Article XIV Conference in 2011. The EU continues and will continue to offer its strong political and practical support for both: the universalisation of the CTBT and the credibility of its verification regime.

The CTBT's entry into force will greatly strengthen the international nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. The cessation of all nuclear weapon test explosions and all other nuclear explosions, by constraining the development and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and ending the development of advanced new types of nuclear weapons, constitutes indeed an effective measure of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects. In this context, the EU reaffirms the vital importance of the entry into force of the CTBT, and calls on all those States who have not yet done so, to sign and ratify the Treaty without any condition and delay, in particular the remaining 8 Annex II States, whose ratification is essential for the Treaty's entry into force.

* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

† Iceland continues to be a member of EFTA and the European Economic Area.

In order to promote the universalisation of the Treaty, the European Union has carried out a number of demarches in those States whose signing and ratification are indispensable for the entry into force of the Treaty. We have supported the aims of the CTBT by providing substantial voluntary contributions to the activities of the Preparatory Commission of the CTBTO and its Provisional Technical Secretariat through five EU Council Decisions worth of over 15 Million Euros. The latest Council Decision, adopted in November 2012, contributes to these activities 5.2 Million Euros for a period of 24 months. The implementation of this Council Decision is under way.

Mr Co-Presidents,

Pending the entry into force of the CTBT, which remains our ultimate goal, the voluntary moratoria on nuclear weapon test explosions represent a de facto international norm. The EU calls upon all States to respect this norm and to refrain from any action that would undermine the objectives and purposes of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

A crucial element of the CTBT is its provision for an International Monitoring System, which supports an effective, reliable, participatory and non-discriminatory verification regime with global reach. An effective verification regime can provide assurances of compliance with the Treaty. We strongly commend the progress achieved in the build-up of the verification regime and encourage the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) to continue working towards this end. In this regard, we stress that the Integrated Field Exercise to be held next year in Jordan will be an essential milestone in the assessment and evaluation of the effectiveness of the CTBTO verification regime and some of its components.

The system's value is not only in meeting the mandate of the CTBTO to ensure effective verification of compliance with the Treaty, but also in providing beneficial civilian applications, such as in support of tsunami warning or to monitor emissions from radiological accidents.

The international scientific and technological community working in the field of CTBT and its applications is an important partner in promoting the Treaty's goals and objectives. The involvement of this community, supported by the EU Council Decisions, allows us all to take advantage of existing incentives which could encourage the entry into force of the Treaty and the universalisation of the CTBT.

Distinguished Co-Presidents,

Now is a critical time for the Treaty. We need to keep acting collectively in support of the CTBT's entry into force. The EU, therefore, calls on all States Signatories to the Treaty to actively support the Article XIV Conference of the CTBT and its goals at the highest level, and seek to promote the CTBT's entry into force and implementation nationally, regionally and globally.

Thank you, Mr Co-Presidents.