



IRELAND

Statement by

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at the

Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Article XIV Conference

New York, 23 September 2011

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Joint Presidents of the Conference,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very pleased to address this Seventh Article XIV Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. May I congratulate you both on your election as Joint Presidents of the Conference and offer our support for your work over the next two years. I would also like to associate Ireland fully with the statement delivered by Poland on behalf of the European Union.

Joint Presidents,

This week we mark 15 years from the opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. The time has long come for the Treaty to enter into force. By ending 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, the CTBT constitutes a vital instrument for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects, a key foreign policy priority for my Government. Only through this Treaty can the global community achieve a permanent and legally binding commitment to end nuclear testing.

By standing together here today we demonstrate our collective determination that this Treaty must enter into force. The world simply cannot wait much longer. The provocative nuclear tests conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in 2006 and 2009 clearly demonstrate the urgent need to have a test ban treaty. Until we achieve this, the undeniable risks to peace and security which are associated with the development and spread of new and more advanced nuclear weapons remain with us.

While not yet in force, this Treaty, which **182** countries have signed and **153** have ratified, acts as a strong international norm against nuclear test explosions. In line with the object and purpose of the Treaty, and its strong global support, my country is firmly convinced that there are no circumstances which justify a State conducting nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions, and expects the international community to react firmly in response to any such action.

I call on all those States who have yet to do so to sign and ratify the CTBT with the utmost expediency, in particular the remaining 9 Annex 2 States, whose ratification is essential for the Treaty's entry into force.

Joint Presidents,

There are a number of infamous anniversaries in the history of nuclear weapons testing, but today let us note a different kind of anniversary. Today, September 23rd, is the 19th anniversary of the last ever nuclear test by the United States. One week later, on October 1st 1992, the U.S. declared a moratorium on testing.

The US continues to have an important leadership role to play in encouraging the entry into force and universalisation of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. In this respect, we welcome the pledges by President Obama and his administration to pursue this objective. As one of the remaining Annex 2 States yet to ratify, ratification by the United States would encourage ratifications by others.

A crucial element of the CTBT is its provision for an international monitoring system, which serves as an effective, reliable, participatory and non-discriminatory verification system with global reach, which will provide credible assurances of compliance with the Treaty. We strongly commend the progress achieved in the build-up of this verification regime, and stress the need to continue working towards its early completion. This system has not only shown its value in meeting its mandate to ensure effective verification of compliance with the Treaty, but also its beneficial civil applications, demonstrated during the tragic nuclear accident in Fukushima earlier this year, in seismic and tsunami warning, and tracking radionuclides expelled into the atmosphere.

As I conclude, I would like to express my country's appreciation for the stalwart work by Ambassador Tibor Tóth and the staff of the Preparatory Commission for the CTBTO in preparing for the implementation of the Treaty.

I wish to assure you of Ireland's continuing strong political and practical support for the entry into force and universalisation of this vital Treaty and achievement of its objectives.