



Statement
delivered by Ambassador Vaqif Sadiqov
at the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT,
September 5, 2003, Vienna

Mr. President,

Let me associate myself with the previous speakers and congratulate you on the occasion of your election to this responsible post. Taking this opportunity, I would like to thank the Government and people of Austria for hosting this Conference.

The Republic of Azerbaijan is committed to the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and stands for reduction of nuclear arsenals, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, means of their delivery, appropriate technologies. The nuclear disarmament process has to ultimately lead to complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

The CTBT represents a milestone in the decades-long international effort to stop the qualitative improvement of nuclear stockpiles. Its implementation will mean the end to nuclear tests for all time globally and will strengthen the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Despite the aspiration to achieve early entry into force of the Treaty that has been so clearly expressed by the international community on numerous occasions, today it is obvious that vigorous efforts are still needed to provide for the universality of the CTBT, designed to ensure worldwide nuclear security. The delay in this process prevents full use of the Treaty's international verification system.

Having this in mind, Azerbaijan calls the States that have not yet signed or ratified the Treaty to do so as soon as possible and welcomes those States that recently have done it.

Mr. President,

Sharing the concerns of international community over the issues of nuclear security, in particular the proliferation of nuclear weapons, Azerbaijan signed the Treaty on July 28, 1997. Having ratified the Treaty on December 1, 1998, my country deposited its instrument of ratification with the Secretary-General of the United Nations on February 1, 1999.

Since joining the CTBT Azerbaijan in accordance with the requirements of the Treaty has been steadily taking all possible steps to comply with its obligations, to establish closer cooperation with the States Signatories and the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the Preparatory Commission, to promote international cooperation aimed at the early entry into force of the Treaty. Among the steps taken I would like to highlight some recent ones.

With the aim to identify ways of further strengthening national capacities of Azerbaijan, to implement the Treaty commitments, to explore new areas for expanding cooperation under the Treaty and to discuss verification technology opportunities for scientific and research development a National Seminar on the CTBT was organized in Baku, Azerbaijan on June 4–6, 2002.

The Workshop on CTBTO international cooperation for States from Central Asia and the Caucasus hosted jointly by the Government of Azerbaijan and the CTBTO Preparatory Commission was held on March 25-27, 2003 in Baku, Azerbaijan. The workshop provided an overview of the work of the Preparatory Commission and the technologies of the Treaty's global verification regime and encouraged cooperation among States in the region. A number of constructive proposals in the sphere of implementation of the Treaty, establishment of the verification regime, possible use of benefits of verification technologies for scientific and civil purposes and exploration of ways and means to promote CTBT cooperation in the region were raised and discussed during the workshop. With the further joint efforts by the States Signatories involved, we expect in the future to achieve desired practical results of the Baku workshop.

The Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the CTBTO Ambassador Wolfgang Hoffmann in March this year during his visit to Azerbaijan was received by President Heydar Aliyev, Minister for Foreign Affairs Vilayat Quliyev and the President of the National Academy of Sciences Mahmud Karimov. Having discussed political, technical and scientific aspects of the CTBT the Government of Azerbaijan once again expressed its full support for the Treaty.

Thanks to close co-operation with and support from the Provisional Technical Secretariat the National Data Center was established in the Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan and has recently become operational. My country is genuinely interested in benefiting from scientific and civil application of data and products of the CTBT verification technologies.

Mr President,

Taking this opportunity I would like to express our appreciation to the Executive Secretary and the Provisional Technical Secretariat for the work carried out since the establishment of the Preparatory Commission, and to support their

ongoing efforts in fulfilling the mandate ensuring the effectiveness and efficiency of the CTBTO activities.

In conclusion, allow me once again to welcome the convening of the Article XIV Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT. Azerbaijan considers it as another opportunity for the Member States to recognize the significance of the CTBT as a key instrument of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament and to deepen understanding of its role in enhancing international peace and security.

With adoption of the Declaration of the Conference we will identify the ways and specific measures to achieve a universal character of the CTBT as well as address the ways of strengthening international cooperation in the field of global nuclear security. There is no doubt that the present Conference will promote the increase of worldwide awareness of the Treaty and will yield a positive outcome for facilitating the early entry into force of the Treaty.

Thank you.