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**Constraining the spread, use and development of nuclear
weapons: our steadfast goal**

Statement of the Republic of the Philippines
Third Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the
Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty

Mr. President,

Let me, at the outset, Your Excellency Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja, congratulate you on your election as President of our third Article XIV Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. At this seeming crossroads for the CTBT, your leadership skills, fortitude and determination will help guide us towards achieving our aim of promoting the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. I wish to assure you of my delegation's full cooperation and support for your efforts in achieving tangible results at the end of our conference. I also wish to thank United Nations Undersecretary General Antonio Maria Costa for his encouraging remarks this morning.

At this juncture, my delegation also wishes to take this opportunity to express its deep sorrow over the demise of UN personnel in Baghdad

led by the Special Representative of the Secretary General, Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello. Two Filipino UN personnel also died in the attack strongly condemn these atrocities and express our deepest condolences to the bereaved families of those who gave their lives for the cause of peace.

Mr. President, my delegation wishes to congratulate Ambassador Tom Grönberg of Finland for his excellent work in steering the consultations that yielded the draft Final Declaration which we will eventually adopt at this conference.

Mr. President, we are gathered here today to promote the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty, whose noble objectives are fully supported by the Philippines. As a ratifying state, the Philippines reaffirms its commitment to the basic obligations to the Treaty as stated in Article 1, that is, to “undertake not to carry out any nuclear weapon test explosion or any other nuclear explosion, and to prohibit and prevent any such nuclear explosion at any place under its jurisdiction or control.” We believe that the Treaty has an essential role in stopping the qualitative and quantitative development of nuclear weapons

We are also here to call upon all States that have not yet done so to sign and/or ratify the Treaty without delay. For those countries in particular whose ratification is needed for its entry into force, we call upon them to accelerate their ratification process with a view to its early successful conclusion. As a state party to the NPT, we believe that once the CTBT enters into force, the testing moratorium adhered to by the five nuclear weapons states will go beyond a merely political commitment. It will become legally binding. We believe that the five nuclear-weapons States have a special responsibility to see that the Treaty comes into force. We call upon the five nuclear weapons states to provide the leadership in making the ban on nuclear weapons tests a permanent reality. In this regard, we wish to identify ourselves with the statement delivered this morning by the distinguished Ambassador of Malaysia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement chapter in Vienna.

Mr. President, significant progress has been achieved since the last 2001 Article XIV Conference, meeting under the shadows of September 11 in New York. There are now thirty-two (32) Annex II states that have ratified the CTBT, and this is certainly a cause for optimism. Since the second Article XIV Conference in New York in 2001, a total of seven (7) states have signed the Treaty, and nineteen

(19) states have ratified it, one (Algeria) being an Annex II state¹. As of today, 168 states, or 87% of the world's states, have signed the Treaty. A total of 104 states have ratified the Treaty. We call upon the remaining 12 Annex II states to sign and/or ratify the Treaty without delay.

With each new signature and ratification, we come closer to a more secure and better world. With each new signature and ratification, come closer to reaching a situation where weapons of mass destruction will no longer threaten humanity. The development of a new generation of nuclear weapons will be no longer necessary.

Mr. President,

The Philippines was among the countries whose foreign ministers signed a Joint Ministerial Meeting in New York in September 2002 expressing concern over the delay in the entry into force of the CTBT. In the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), four (4) states including the Philippines have signed and ratified the Treaty, and the ratification processes in six (6) member states have begun in earnest.

23-24 July, 2003 in Bali, Indonesia, the Philippine Secretary of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Blas F. Ople, joined the ASEM Foreign Ministers in

stressing the urgency of signatures and ratifications to achieve the earliest entry into force of the Treaty, as well as the importance on the moratorium on nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions pending the entry into force of the Treaty. In an effort to contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the CTBT and the process of nuclear disarmament, the ASEAN countries have been calling for the establishment of the Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapons Free Zone. The ASEAN countries are hopeful that this new zone will soon become a reality.

Mr. President,

The Philippines is fully committed in the efforts of the international community to bring about a nuclear weapons-free world. Closely following on the heels of the Second Preparatory Committee meeting of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), we hope our conference will be a political, not just a diplomatic, success. We are simply against the idea of seeing nuclear disarmament, in the words of one prominent academic, “consigned once again to the periphery, as a distant, rhetorical objective that does not really impinge on the privileges of the ‘already haves’.”

We do not want the CTBT to become irrelevant. Thus, we are concerned that despite the progress made and strong support for the Treaty by the international community, the CTBT has not entered into force seven years after its opening for signature.

As has been said, the longer entry into force is delayed, the more likely it is that certain countries will move irrevocably to acquire nuclear weapons or significantly improve their nuclear arsenal, and the less likely it is that we will be able to mobilize a strong international coalition against such activities.

We have heard time and again during the run-up to conference, how we should avoid a “business as usual” kind of outcome. We are glad that under your leadership, we will, therefore, be able to adopt a strong Final Declaration with measurable goals. The Philippines is committed to the attainment of these goals, and we will do our part in promoting universal adherence to the Treaty.

Mr. President,

We would like to commend the utmost professionalism dedication of the CTBTO PrepCom Provisional Technical Secretariat, for doggedly pursuing the continuing work of establishing the verification

regime all over the world. We likewise commend the leadership of Executive Secretary Mr. Wolfgang Hoffmann for faithfully discharging the trust and confidence we have bestowed on him in leading the Provisional Technical Secretariat.

Mr. President,

In closing, the Philippines believes we must fulfill the promise of 1996, when the CTBT was opened for signature in New York. It is our view that the early entry into force of the CTBT will be a great leap towards our common enterprise of ushering in a safer and more secure world. Allow us also to thank our gracious host, the Republic of Austria, for welcoming us a second time to Vienna.

Thank you, Mr. President.