

NGO Statement on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) for the Fourth Article  
XIV Conference on Accelerating Entry-Into-Force

*To be delivered by the Arms Control Association 22 September 2005*

Mr. Chairperson, Distinguished Delegates, and Colleagues,

1. The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty has been a centerpiece of the international disarmament and non-proliferation agenda since the 1950s. It is essential to recall that the 1996 CTBT is largely the product of decades of hard work, dedication, and advocacy by NGOs, scientific experts, and millions of ordinary people around the world. They have long understood that ending nuclear testing is essential for three powerful reasons: to impede the development of *new* types of nuclear warheads and reduce dangerous nuclear arms competition; to obstruct the emergence of new nuclear powers; and to prevent further devastation of human health and the global environment.

2. Nine years ago, states gathered here at the United Nations to endorse and open the treaty for signature. In light of ongoing tensions between nuclear weapons states and would-be nuclear weapons states, illicit nuclear trading, and efforts by the nuclear weapon states to improve their nuclear weapon capabilities, the CTBT is more important than ever. Its entry into force is *overdue*.

3. Over the past several years, CTBT member states have made significant strides in moving closer to fulfilling the treaty's difficult entry into force requirements and the CTBTO Preparatory Commission is well on its way to completing the sophisticated and ambitious monitoring system that will *verify* compliance. Despite such progress and widespread public support for the treaty, inaction and opposition by a few states have delayed its full implementation. There remains much to be *done* at this conference and beyond to ensure that the CTBT is not tossed aside at the whim of a few states.

4. We, the NGOs attending this fourth Article XIV Conference, represent millions of people around the world who continue to support a permanent, complete, and verifiable ban on nuclear weapons lest explosions. We call upon each of the CTBT Ratifying States in attendance to step up their efforts to win the necessary signatures and ratifications for entry into force of the treaty. In particular, we urge the eleven remaining Annex II states that have *either* not signed or ratified the treaty to do so without further delay. We also urge you to: a) support efforts to ensure the continuation of the global nuclear test moratorium; b) help advance the completion and augmentation of the treaty's monitoring and verification system; and c) seek changes to nuclear weapons policies that threaten to undermine the norm against testing.

5a. We welcome the steady support for the CTBT as demonstrated by numerous statements made by individual governments and regional groupings at this conference, at the 2000 and 2005 NPT *Review* Conferences, the United Nations General Assembly, and elsewhere. The ratification of the treaty by three nuclear weapon states — France, Russia, and the United Kingdom — is especially important. We also note the strong support for the treaty expressed by the European Union, the Non-Aligned Movement, and the Organization of American States (despite objections raised by the United States).

5b. We also welcome the statement issued in September of 2004, by over 40 Foreign Ministers in support of the Treaty, as well as recent statements from Japanese Prime Minister Koizumi and the Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on the 60th anniversary of the first atomic bombings, which call for CTBT entry into force. Such statements are essential to the maintenance of the test ban norm and pressure on hold-out states to sign and/or ratify the treaty.

5c. Although these statements and activities are important, they are not sufficient. Some states that express their support for the CTBT—such as China, Colombia, Egypt, and Indonesia — have themselves not yet ratified the treaty. Unfortunately, top leaders from other states committed to the CTBT also often fail to press their counterparts in the eleven CTBT hold-out states to reconsider their opposition to the treaty or move forward with ratification. We urge such states to exercise much more consistent, top-level diplomacy in support of CTBT entry into force.

6. You must be sure to communicate that entry into force is not simply needed for the treaty's sake. Rather, the CTBT is vital because it directly contributes to national and international security.

6a. As has been noted at this conference, the *CTBT* is a critical building block in the architecture of the global nuclear nonproliferation system. The *de facto* global nuclear test moratorium and *CTBT's* entry into force are crucial barriers to help prevent the spread of nuclear weapons to additional states and are essential to the future viability of the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT). They are the first two of the 13 practical steps for systematic and progressive nuclear disarmament that were unanimously adopted in the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference. In fact, the nuclear weapon states' commitment to the CTBT was vital in securing the indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995.

6b. We urge states to consider how the *CTBT* might contribute to nuclear risk reduction in regions of tension. Recently, concerns have been expressed that North Korea might conduct a nuclear test explosion to demonstrate its claims of a nuclear weapon capability. There are doubts about Iran's claim that its nuclear program is entirely for peaceful purposes. Though the government of Israel does not acknowledge that it possesses nuclear weapons, it is widely known that it does. And despite recent peace talks, the India-Pakistan nuclear rivalry continues. If all or some of these states were to formally join the *CTBT*, it would contribute to the credibility of their peaceful intentions and build confidence and reduce tensions with their neighbors.

7. The *CTBT* is also an essential step towards nuclear disarmament because it helps to discourage dangerous nuclear competition and block new nuclear threats from emerging. However, it must be recognised that technological advances in nuclear weapons research and development mean that a ban on nuclear test explosions by itself cannot prevent qualitative improvements of existing nuclear arsenals. Efforts to improve nuclear arsenals and to make nuclear weapons more useable in warfare will jeopardise the test ban and non-proliferation regimes. We call on all states possessing nuclear weapons to halt all qualitative improvements in their nuclear armaments, whether or not these improvements require test explosions.

7a. In this context, we are deeply concerned that the current U.S. administration is seeking funding for a controversial program of research on a new generation of high-yield earth-penetrating nuclear warheads, as well as new types of so-called "replacement" warheads. While the current U.S. administration claims that these efforts will not lead to the resumption of nuclear weapons testing, it is possible that if the warheads are extensively reworked, technical uncertainties may arise that lead some in the U.S. nuclear, military, or political establishment to press for the resumption of nuclear testing. Furthermore, the development, production, or testing of such weapons by the United States or any state is likely to lead to a dangerous nuclear action-reaction cycle that would not only undermine the test ban, but international security as a whole, likely serving as a catalyst for a new nuclear arms race.

8. The *CTBT* also reduces uncertainties in an increasingly uncertain world. The *CTBT* establishes a far-reaching global monitoring, verification, and compliance system that has already and will continue to build confidence that no state can defy the non-testing norm and escape detection. A series of independent studies, including a 2002 U.S. National Academy of Sciences report, have all concluded that the system is capable of detecting nuclear explosions in all environments with a high *degree of* confidence, thereby deterring potential *treaty* violators. We commend the PrepCom and Provisional Technical Secretariat for their work in establishing the International Monitoring System and International Data Centre, which are already proving their capabilities beyond expectations. We support efforts to promote the civil and scientific applications of the CTBT verification technology as a means of recouping costs and expanding the range of CTBT stakeholders.

8a. We are deeply troubled that some states continue to delay full construction of the CTBT's verification system and the finalization of the on-site inspection (OSI) arrangements for the Treaty by not paying their dues, not participating in relevant discussions, or by adopting unreasonable positions in those negotiations. We call on all Signatory States to provide the political, financial, and technical support necessary for the earliest feasible implementation of all elements of the CTBT's verification system.

8b. Until the treaty enters into force, nuclear weapon states should implement confidence-building processes, including transparency measures at their sites, to build confidence that they are not

currently engaged in prohibited activities. We urge the United States and Russia in particular to reinvigorate discussion on mutual confidence-building measures at their respective test sites. We also call on China, India, Pakistan, Russia and the United States to pursue initiatives to increase transparency at their test sites to dispel any concerns about ongoing activities at those sites, including subcritical tests.

9. On this 60th anniversary year of the first nuclear test explosion, it is important to recall the devastating effects of nuclear weapons testing on human health and the environment and the importance of the CTBT in preventing such damage in the future.

9a. Since 1945, seven countries have conducted 2,051 nuclear test explosions. Most of these tests were conducted at U.S. test sites in Nevada and the Marshall Islands, the Soviet Union's test sites in Kazakhstan and Novaya Zemlya, France's test site on the Polynesian atolls of Fangataufa and Moruroa, China's Lop Nor test site, and in Algeria and Australia. Most of the test sites are in the lands of indigenous peoples and far from the capitals of the testing governments. The 528 atmospheric tests delivered radioactive materials that produced approximately 430,000 additional cancer fatalities by the year 2000, according to a 1990 report by the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War. The U.S. National Cancer Institute estimated in a 1997 report that the 90 dirtiest U.S. tests could cause 7,500-75,000 additional cases of thyroid cancer.

9b. While underground nuclear blasts pose a smaller radioactive hazard than atmospheric tests, there has been widespread venting from underground explosions, especially at the Semipalatinsk test site in Kazakhstan. The United States has acknowledged that 433 of its 824 underground tests released radioactive material into the atmosphere. In addition, underground nuclear blasts leave a legacy of radioactive contamination, which eventually might leak into the surrounding environment.

10. For all of these reasons, the states participating at this conference must train their attention and future efforts on achieving the signatures and ratification of those states that are required by Article XIV to effect entry into force. Despite overwhelming international support for the CTBT and the many ways it contributes to our security, eleven key states *have* not yet signed and/or ratified.

10a. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea, India, and Pakistan must sign and ratify the CTBT. China, Colombia, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, the United States, and Viet Nam should ratify, without further delay. The longer these states wait to join the Treaty, the greater the chance that some nation may begin testing and set off a dangerous international action-reaction cycle of military and nuclear confrontation.

10b. We are particularly dismayed with the policies of the Bush administration, which is not even seeking Senate approval for ratification, and that of China, which to our knowledge — has failed to take any further action toward ratification since the last Article XIV conference.

First, although the U.S. remains a signatory, the current U.S. administration has actively opposed endorsement of CTBT entry into force by other states at the UNGA, the NPT Review Conference, the Organization of American States, and the recently concluded Millennium + Five Summit. The Bush administration has also unilaterally declared its intent not to contribute financially or to participate in non-IMS activities of the Preparatory Commission of the CTBTO, including preparations for on-site inspections.

Delegates at this conference must realize that while the Bush administration's active opposition to the treaty is damaging to the prospects for entry into force, it is not for the Bush administration alone to decide the fate of the treaty, which remains on the calendar of the U.S. Senate and which may be reconsidered by the next U.S. administration. We therefore urge the governments represented at this conference to actively urge -- at the highest level -- the U.S. administration to join the list of responsible and civilized states and reconsider its opposition to the treaty.

10c. Second, we are disappointed that progress on ratification in China has ground to a halt. There does not appear to be any domestic political obstacle in the way, and we therefore respectfully urge China to complete ratification before the end of this year. In the absence of such action, China owes the other CTBT member states a detailed explanation for its continued delay and a timetable for its ratification process.

10d. Given the series of crises with grave nuclear overtones that have shaken the South Asian sub-continent since the 1998 nuclear explosions, it should be self-evident that another round of tit-for-tat testing would adversely affect regional and international security. More so than any other region in the world, South Asia needs a nuclear-test-ban. We urge leaders in India and Pakistan to embrace the CTBT as a sign of their mutual desire to move back from the brink and to cultivate peaceful relations.

10e. We welcome the bilateral statements that express both nation's continued support for their voluntary nuclear test moratoria and Indian Prime Minister Singh's comments that India seeks to live up to the same nonproliferation standards that the five original nuclear weapon states are expected to observe. We would note that this implies that India should, in the *very* least, sign the CTBT, along with Pakistan.

11. Entry-into-force of the CTBT is within reach. But as a result of the actions of a few of states, the viability of a verifiable, comprehensive ban on nuclear tests — and the future of the NPT itself — is in jeopardy. No single government should be allowed to stand in the way of the historical opportunity to permanently end the scourge of nuclear testing, an indispensable step towards eliminating nuclear weapon threats and preventing nuclear war.

12a. People the world over have been part of the coalition working for a comprehensive nuclear test ban and an end to the arms race. While the concerns of this statement focus on technical and political aspects of nuclear testing, there is a moral and ethical value imperative for achieving CTBT entry into force. If our generation and that of our children are to thrive in a more just, equitable, environmentally sustainable, and free society, we must seize every opportunity to halt the proliferation of the world's most deadly weapons and accelerate progress toward their elimination.

12b. We do not accept, nor should any of you in this chamber, that any state or group of states should hold the world hostage to fear and the potential for destruction with the continued capacity of nuclear weapons. While we believe that the CTBT will eventually enter into force, we are concerned that the lack of political will on the part of many governments, the arrogant opposition of the few, and the persistent illusion of the utility of nuclear weapons will delay the CTBT even longer.

13. Finally, we wish to express our gratitude for the important contributions of Ambassador Wolfgang Hoffman to the CTBT Preparatory Commission. We extend our best wishes and offer our support for Ambassador Tibor Toth, the new Executive Secretary. We also applaud the decision to appoint Ambassador Jaap Ramaker as an emissary for the treaty.

14. We, NGO supporters of the CTBT, stand ready to contribute to the effort to secure CTBT entry into force. This presentation was prepared and supported by NGOs who have worked for a comprehensive test-ban treaty for many years, in many countries, and in many ways.

Thank you.

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