

Statement
Minister of State at the
Federal Foreign Office of the
Federal Republic of Germany
Dr. Tobias Lindner

13th CTBT Art. XIV Conference
New York, 22 September 2023

Distinguished Co-Presidents,

Excellencies,

Colleagues,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Since the beginning of the nuclear age more than 2000 nuclear tests have taken place.

Thirty years ago, negotiations for a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty began and were successfully concluded in 1996. The treaty now counts 178 ratifications and 187 signatures. We commend the Solomon Islands and Sri Lanka for recently completing ratification and Somalia for recently signing the CTBT.

The CTBT presents a milestone of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. Because the way to a world without nuclear weapons is through a world without nuclear testing.

Ending nuclear testing once and for all will constrain both the proliferation and the development of nuclear weapons. It will strengthen responsibility in nuclear affairs and facilitate nuclear disarmament.

In our present time, when international law is blatantly violated by Russia and the arms control architecture severely damaged, it is more than ever challenging to advance nuclear arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. There are no low-hanging fruits.

The current bleak situation also makes it very clear why the CTBT is so important and dear to us. In a time, where arms control treaties are undermined, terminated or violated, where trust is at a historical

low, this treaty which is regrettably not yet in force, already makes a concrete difference that directly contributes to a safer world for all of us.

Since the beginning of the millennium, the only country who has tested nuclear weapons is North Korea. These tests were categorically, consistently and rightfully condemned by the international community and detected by the CTBTO's monitoring stations

Clearly, the universal norm against nuclear testing is in the making. For this process to become irreversible the CTBT must eventually enter into force – a long overdue step to be taken.

It is important that this Article XIV conference consistently underlines this goal.

Germany calls on all countries that have yet to sign and/or to ratify the CTBT to do so without preconditions or delay. We call on China, on the DPRK, on Egypt, on India, on Iran, on Israel, on Pakistan and on the United States of America to allow the CTBT to eventually enter into force.

Pending the treaty's entry into force let me reiterate Germany's wholehearted support to the CTBTO – an outstanding example of multilateralism in practice – and to its executive secretary Robert Floyd. With its network of more than 300 monitoring stations in 90 countries the CTBTO ensures that clandestine nuclear testing is no longer an option for any country in the world.

In the decades-long struggle against nuclear testing the role of civil society can hardly be overrated indeed.

Physicists and physicians have made us understand better and better the effects of nuclear testing on human life. The Hibakusha, the survivors of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, remind us of the unspeakable horror that any use of nuclear weapons would wreak. Victims of nuclear testing in different regions of our world, think tanks and NGOs, mayors and parliamentarians have amplified the cause against nuclear testing.

It is high time for political leaders to accomplish that mission and bring the CTBT into force.

Thank you.