

**Statement to the 65<sup>th</sup> regular session of the  
General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency**

**Preparatory Commission for the  
Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization**

**20-24 September 2021**

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Dear Mr President,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to congratulate you on your election, your Excellency, and to wish you, the IAEA Member States and the Secretariat, a productive conference. I am honoured to speak today on behalf of Dr Robert Floyd, Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO).

This year we commemorate the **25th anniversary of the opening for signature of the CTBT**. On this landmark occasion, it is important to recap what we have collectively achieved.

I am pleased to note that great progress has been registered towards universalization of the Treaty and establishment of an international norm against nuclear testing. **The Republic of Cuba and the Union of Comoros** have recently joined the community of nations which have said never to nuclear testing. This has brought the number of **CTBT States Signatories to 185** and the number of ratifications **to 170**. We are grateful for the commitment to a nuclear-test-free world that has been shown by all ratifying States.

One of the mandates of the Organization is the establishment of a robust global verification regime that ensures adherence to the total ban on nuclear test explosions.

Over the past twenty-five years, significant investment has been made in incremental development of the verification regime, which includes the **International Monitoring System (IMS), the International Data Centre (IDC) and On-site Inspections (OSI)**. The IMS that incorporates 321 monitoring stations (and 16 laboratories) across the globe has reached a high level of maturity, robustness and resilience, with a proven record on numerous occasions. With nearly 94% of facilities certified, installed, or under construction, the IMS is drawing closer to completion.

All States Signatories benefit from equal and timely access to the data received from the stations and the products developed by the IDC.

The CTBTO has also made considerable progress in furthering its OSI capabilities.

In addition, our verification technologies provide various civil and scientific benefits, thereby contributing to disaster risk reduction or expanding our collective knowledge on climate change research. We offer a host of capacity development and training programmes to support the national institutions of our members.

The CTBTO Science and Technology (SnT) conference series held every two years, contributes to maintaining scientific excellence and to capacity building. The most recent conference **took place** from 28 June to 2 July 2021 in a hybrid format due to the COVID-19 pandemic with **over 1600 participants from 150 countries**. A particular highlight was the successful response to the COVID-19 pandemic as a stress test on the verification system and the lessons learned.

On 29 August 2021, we commemorated the International Day against Nuclear Tests at the United Nations General Assembly High-level Plenary Meeting. At this occasion that was also marking the 30th anniversary of the closure of the Semipalatinsk Test Site in Kazakhstan strong support was received for the CTBT and the work of its organization.

This year the biennial Article XIV Conference, on 23 September, coincides with the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the CTBT. It will be presided by the Foreign Ministers of South Africa and Italy and offers an opportunity for States and other stakeholders to reaffirm their commitment to the shared objective of a nuclear test free world. We invite all States Signatories to attend the conference at the high level and highlight the urgency of the entry into force of the Treaty and its universalization.

Your Excellency,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are living through a time of transformation and transition. While the current geostrategic environment is more distrustful now than it has ever been in the last two decades the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of multilateralism and demonstrated that only coordinated and inclusive responses can effectively address global issues.

Achieving the objective of a safe and secure world requires enhanced cooperation, science diplomacy, multilateral partnerships and confidence building involving all stakeholders.

In this quest the CTBTO Preparatory Commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency have always had much in common despite the distinct nature of their mandates and significantly contribute to the global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. In the spirit of multilateralism, verification and cooperation, both organizations enjoy large memberships and rely on science and technology to achieve their respective mandates.

Through strengthened cooperation and synergies, we will be able to finish what we started and leave to the next generation a world that is safe, secure and free from the threats of nuclear weapons.

Thank you.