

**Address by Mr Lassina Zerbo  
Executive Secretary**

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

**Delivered on his behalf by Mr Genxin Li,  
Director, Legal and External Relations Division**

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Mr President,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to express my congratulations on your election, Mr President, and wish you and the IAEA Member States and Secretariat a fruitful conference. I am honoured to speak at this prestigious forum on behalf of Dr Lassina Zerbo, Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO).

Since last year's General Conference, we have seen progress on many fronts. But we have also been reminded several times that the job is still unfinished.

The commemoration of the seventieth anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, last month, served as a stark reminder of the threat posed by nuclear weapons and nuclear testing. The latter, in fact, is so multifaceted in the damage that it causes that it is not surprising that the nuclear test-ban has been referred to as the most sought after arms control agreement in its field. I need not mention the political and strategic consequences – horizontal and vertical proliferation, significant enhancements to arsenals, reliance on deterrence –, as well as the long-lasting impact on public health and the environment.

This year's observance of the International Day against Nuclear Tests also reminded us of the horrors of the atomic bombings and the harm caused by nearly seventy years of nuclear testing. But it also served to once again highlight the level of commitment of the international community when it comes to banning nuclear test explosions – the same commitment that has underpinned the CTBT since its opening for signature in 1996.

Next year will thus mark the twentieth anniversary of the Treaty. With 183 States Signatories and 164 ratifying States, the CTBT is close to universality. Its verification regime has been further strengthened with over 90 per cent of International Monitoring System facilities installed. The Integrated Field Exercise (IFE14) held in Jordan in November and December 2014 further underlined the readiness of the verification regime. These are significant and welcome developments. But they should not be a cause for celebration. Instead, they should serve as inspiration for further concrete action.

The fact remains that, despite a one billion dollar investment into global security through the establishment of a verification regime that has proven its worth, the CTBT is not yet in force. Its full benefits will not be realized until the eight remaining States listed in Annex 2 of the Treaty complete their respective ratification procedures.

But there is reason for hope. Numerous initiatives, backed by strong political will, have successfully contributed to a decrease in nuclear weapon stockpiles, halting their further development and reducing the spread of nuclear weapons. In fact, recent developments have shown that multilateral cooperation and coordination, together with sustained dedication and efforts, are critical to achieve progress in non-proliferation and arms control – even when progress seemed elusive and an agreement, impossible. There is now an urgent need to galvanize and expand individual and multilateral initiatives to create the conditions for the urgent entry into force of the CTBT.

On 29 September 2015 in New York, under the co-presidency of the Foreign Ministers of Japan and Kazakhstan, the biennial Article XIV Conference will offer a powerful and timely opportunity to consider collective measures aimed at advancing the Treaty's entry into force. Let us not miss this opportunity to join forces and ensure that the international community does not wait another twenty years to get a return on its investment – a return that is both scientifically proven and politically honourable.

The CTBTO and the IAEA share a vision, as well as responsibilities – that of working towards the creation of a safer and more secure world, free of the threat of nuclear weapons. But the very principles and methods that underpin our work also bring us together. Multilateralism, verification and cooperation have formed the basis for many of the Agency's accomplishments in the field of non-proliferation. Likewise, the CTBTO relies on these same concepts to discharge its mandate and serve its Member States. But in the same way as

challenges have been met with a strengthened multilateral endeavour on this side of the building, it will take a renewed multilateral commitment and an engagement in open exchange and meaningful dialogue to make the CTBT become global law.

The seventieth anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the observance of the International Day against Nuclear Tests reminded us that the threat of nuclear weapons and nuclear testing is as real as the existing mechanisms to curb them. Whether we look at IAEA safeguards or the CTBT and its monitoring system, both the political will and the technical tools are there. By joining forces to bring the CTBT into force, the international community will add an essential and long-awaited pillar to the legal edifice that has been established over the last decades to bring us closer to the world that we wish to leave to the next generations.

Thank you for your attention.