Statement of the Director of the
Legal and External Relations Division of the
Provisional Technical Secretariat of the
Preparatory Commission for the
Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization

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7 October 2004
Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates,

1. I am pleased to report on the activities of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO). The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is one of the cornerstones of the international regime dedicated to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. By putting an end to all nuclear explosions, the Treaty constitutes an effective measure in the course of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects, and therefore contributes to the enhancement of international peace and security, as well as to the protection of the environment.

2. Since its adoption the CTBT has increasingly become universal in its status. As of today, the Treaty has been signed by a total of 173 States and ratified by 119 States, including 33 of the 44 States listed in Annex 2 to the Treaty whose ratification is required for it to enter into force. I am pleased to note that since October 2003 four States have signed (Eritrea, Saint Kitts and Nevis, the Sudan and the United Republic of Tanzania) and fourteen States have ratified (Bahrain, Belize, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Honduras, Kyrgyzstan, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Serbia and Montenegro, Seychelles, the Sudan, Togo, Tunisia and the United Republic of Tanzania), including one of the Annex 2 States (the Democratic Republic of the Congo). To date, 98 States have notified the Preparatory Commission of their designation of National Authorities or national focal points, pursuant to Article III, paragraph 4, of the Treaty.

3. The 2004 Joint Ministerial Statement on the CTBT, initiated by Australia, Finland, Japan and the Netherlands and adopted on 23 September 2004, is another example demonstrating the support of States to bring about entry into force of the CTBT and correspond to the concrete measures to promote signature and ratification of the Treaty that were agreed by the 2003 Article XIV Conference and are being pursued in the Conference follow-up process.

4. The Preparatory Commission for the CTBTO was established eight years ago, on 19 November 1996, by a resolution of the States Signatories in New York, to carry out the necessary preparations for the effective implementation of the CTBT, and to prepare for the first session of the Conference of the States Parties to the CTBT after the entry into force of the Treaty.

5. The main activities of the Preparatory Commission and its Provisional Technical Secretariat, which started work at the Vienna International Centre on 17 March 1997, have been the establishment of the verification regime stipulated by the CTBT and the promotion of understanding and entry into force of the Treaty.

6. The global verification regime, which needs to be operational at the Treaty’s entry into force, to monitor compliance with the comprehensive ban on all nuclear test explosions, consists of four elements:
- The International Monitoring System (IMS), and respective means of communication supported by the International Data Centre (IDC), will be able to detect evidence of possible nuclear explosions;
A consultation and clarification process can clarify and resolve matters concerning possible non-compliance with the Treaty;

Each State Party will also have the right to request an on-site inspection in order to clarify whether a nuclear weapon test explosion or any other nuclear explosion has been carried out in violation of the Treaty, and to gather facts which might assist in identifying any possible violator;

Confidence-building measures will contribute to resolving compliance concerns arising from possible misinterpretation of verification data and thereby assisting in the calibration of IMS stations.

7. The establishment of the IMS, a worldwide network comprising 321 seismic, radionuclide, hydroacoustic and infrasound monitoring stations and 16 radionuclide laboratories, is steadily progressing. Out of this total of 337 facilities, site surveys have been completed for 322. Altogether, 190 facilities in the four technologies have been installed and meet or substantially meet, the Preparatory Commission’s specifications, and 96 of these facilities have been certified. An additional monitoring 78 stations are under construction or in the stage of contract negotiations. Funds are currently being provided for the operation and maintenance of more than 70 IMS facilities for testing and evaluation purposes, either prior to certification or post certification. The number of facilities contributing data to the IDC is currently 134.

8. This progress in establishing the IMS has been made possible thanks to a legal basis agreed between the Preparatory Commission and States for the conduct of IMS work. Of the 89 States hosting IMS facilities, 31 have concluded Facility Agreements/Arrangements with the Commission. Appropriate legal arrangements or exchanges of letters are in place for a total of 324 facilities in 82 States.

9. The IMS stations are transmitting raw data to the IDC in Vienna through a satellite-based Global Communications Infrastructure, which also connects the IDC with National Data Centres (NDCs) of States. As of today, about 105 waveform stations have been moved into IDC operations and are contributing to Reviewed Event Bulletins. From the IDC both data and the resulting analysis bulletins are distributed to NDCs. To date, 82 States have established NDCs.

10. On-site inspection (OSI), as provided for in the Treaty, is a final verification measure, and the development of the draft OSI Operational Manual is a key task of the Preparatory Commission in this area.

Mr. Chairman,

11. The primary purpose of the CTBT is to ensure globally an end to nuclear test explosions, thus enhancing national and international security. However, the CTBT verification technologies have the potential to offer important additional benefits derived from the IMS data and the activities of the IDC. At the experts' discussion on benefits of potential civil and scientific applications of the CTBT verification technologies, held in Beijing in
May, presentations were given by experts from nine States and scientists of the Provisional Technical Secretariat. The discussion, initiated by the Japanese and German Permanent Missions in Vienna, further illustrated the usefulness of these technologies for civil and scientific applications, which can significantly contribute to sustainable development and betterment of human welfare.

12. Seismic, hydroacoustic and infrasound data can be used in studies of the Earth’s structure and for research on earthquakes, volcanic eruption forecasting, tsunami warning, underwater explosion location, and sea temperature and climate change monitoring. In the oceans an increasing number of icebergs breaking off the Antarctic ice shelves have been observed, a phenomenon probably linked to global warming. Infrasound data can assist in minimizing the effect of volcanic eruptions on civil aviation and can be used for atmospheric and meteorological studies. The IMS radionuclide network offers opportunities for detecting radionuclide dispersion, monitoring radiation levels and studying natural radioactivity, biological research and environmental change investigations.

13. The Preparatory Commission continues to organize training programmes and workshops to support the enhancement of national capabilities of States Signatories in the implementation of the Treaty. These include training courses for IMS station operators, for NDC managers and technical staff, for data analysis, storage and management, on the Global Communications Infrastructure and on OSI technologies. In the field of international cooperation the Provisional Technical Secretariat continues its role as an information-clearing house and provides support for the advancement of the Commission’s work, including information visit programmes to support IMS and IDC activities. Voluntary contributions from Member States have been received to support these activities. In 2004, an international cooperation workshop for States from northern Africa took place in Tunis, Tunisia. From 29 November to 1 December an international cooperation workshop for States from southern Africa will be held in Pretoria, South Africa. Such workshops help identify a range of measures to enhance support for and further participation in the work of the Commission, as well as to advance national implementation of the Treaty.

Mr. Chairman,

14. Following the adoption on 15 June 2000 by the General Assembly of the Agreement to regulate the relationship between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the CTBTO our relations and interactions with the United Nations and its programmes, funds and specialized agencies are developing further and can better contribute to the goals of the United Nations. For example a service agreement which the Commission concluded with the UNDP provides us with operational support. The WMO is benefitting from the establishment of the Commission’s IMS, which has the potential to significantly contribute to strengthening the Global Atmosphere Watch Programme in natural radionuclide monitoring. In order to contribute fully to the work of the United Nations family the Preparatory Commission has requested full membership in the United Nations system’s Chief Executive Board (CEB). The
Executive Secretary, Mr. Wolfgang Hoffmann, will refer to this issue in his address to the General Assembly under the agenda item “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (resolution 57/44 of 21 November 2002)”.

15. In closing, I would like to underline that eight years of developments since its opening for signature have confirmed the growing support and recognition by the international community of the CTBT as an important instrument in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.