Statement by
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Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

United Nations, New York
27 October 2016
Mr. Chairperson,

Israel voted in favor of resolution L.28 entitled "Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty" in light of its longstanding support of the Treaty, which we signed in 1996. Since the establishment of the Preparatory Commission of the CTBT, Israel has actively participated in the development of all elements of the Treaty's verification regime. Israel transmits data from its certified seismic stations to the International Data Center, and actively participates in various relevant activities. Israel's significant support and involvement in the substantive work of the CTBTO Prep.Com is consonant with the importance it attributes to this Treaty, and recognition of its contribution to the enhancement of international peace and security. In that vein, Israel co-sponsored UNSCR 2310 adopted this year.

Mr. Chairperson,

Notwithstanding Israel's favorable attitude towards the Treaty, as outlined earlier, we were unable to support the language contained in L.28 in its entirety, in particular preambular paragraph 7 and operative paragraph 1.

Preambular paragraph 7 inserts into a resolution dealing with the CTBT, references from the NPT and its review conference. While both treaties are in the nuclear domain, they are different in their subject matter, scope, obligations and membership. In accordance with international law, decisions and resolutions taken in the context of one forum cannot be injected into the work of the other without the latter's explicit consent. Therefore, in our view, this reference has no place in this resolution.

Mr. Chairperson,

With regards to OP1, it should be noted that the completion of the verification regime is a prerequisite for entry into force (EoF) of the Treaty, in accordance with the stipulation of article IV(1). It also constitutes a major consideration for ratification for Israel. While significant progress has been made in the development of the CTBT verification regime, further efforts are still required. Specifically, additional steps are still needed for the continued build-up and testing of the International Monitoring System stations, the completion of the OSI Operational Manual, as well as purchase of equipment and training.

Mr. Chairperson,

The regional security situation in the Middle East, including adherence to and compliance with the Treaty by states in the region, is another major consideration for ratification for Israel. The Treaty's verification regime needs to be robust to detect non-compliance with its obligations, has to be immune to abuse, and at the same time allow each State Signatory to protect its national security interests. While the adequate coverage of the Middle East by the IMS is vital, regrettably three Middle Eastern countries have yet to build or operate national seismic stations, as required by the Treaty or transfer data to the International Data Center.
Another significant consideration for ratification is Israel's equal status in the policy making organs of the Treaty's Organization. The fact that the MESA regional group, defined in Annex 1 of the Treaty, has been paralyzed for nearly 20 years is an inexcusable situation that must be resolved. All states must be allowed to participate in the work of the Treaty on an equal footing in accordance with the principle of sovereign equality. Israel thus calls upon states in the region to rectify this situation and convene the MESA regional group, with the aim to enable its functioning.

I thank you.