

En el marco de esta Conferencia, debemos tener presente dicho imperativo, que exige de nuestra parte la inteligencia y la valentía de reconocer las oportunidades que ponen en nuestras manos, el debate de alto nivel, las deliberaciones del grupo de trabajo abierto sobre desarme nuclear en Ginebra, el proceso de revisión del TNP y las conferencias sobre el impacto humanitario de las armas nucleares en Noruega este año y en México el próximo.

La entrada en vigor del CTBT y el inicio de las negociaciones sobre un instrumento internacional jurídicamente vinculante que prohíba las armas nucleares, deberían ser los pasos naturales para responder plenamente a esta coyuntura.

Secretary General,
Conference Co-presidents and distinguished Ministers and Vice-ministers of Foreign Affairs,
Mr. Lassina Zerbo, Executive Secretary of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission,
Esteemed colleagues and friends,

Allow me to begin by congratulating Mr. János Martonyi, Minister of Foreign Affairs for Hungary, and Mr. Marty Natalegawa, Minister of Foreign Affairs for Indonesia, for your designation as Co-presidents of this Conference.

Likewise, we would like to call to attention the commendable work carried out by Mexico and Sweden, which served as the previous Co-presidents, and their efforts to facilitate and promote the CTBT's entry into force. The majority of the international community continues to share this primary objective on the path toward permanently freeing the world of the constant threat posed by the mere existence of nuclear weapons.

We would also like to take this moment to congratulate Iraq and Guinea-Bissau for its very recent ratification of the Treaty—bringing the total number of ratifications to 161—as well as all those governments who have taken this fundamental step in the last two years.

We particularly wish to highlight Indonesia's ratification in 2012—one of the 36 governments of Annex II that has honored its special responsibility to ensure that bringing the CTBT into force becomes a reality, rather than the mere object of declarations and hopes.

We make a strong call to the remaining eight governments of Annex II, to accelerate their processes of adopting the CTBT and, thus, demonstrate decisive political will for the sake of peace and international security.

In CELAC's recent Declaration on Nuclear Disarmament, released in August of this year, Latin American and Caribbean nations demanded the complete prohibition of nuclear testing of any kind, and expressed their complete rejection of efforts to perfect existing nuclear weapons or develop new types of nuclear weaponry.

Costa Rica completely supports these demands and aspirations, and considers nuclear weapons testing, other types of nuclear explosions, or any relevant non-explosive experiment—including subcritical testing—to be actions that are without question contrary to the purpose, objective and spirit of the CTBT and its potential impact as a global standard against nuclear testing.

In this context, my country cannot fail to reference the nuclear test carried out in February of this year by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in addition to the nation's threat of conducting new nuclear and ballistic missile tests—acts toward which we reiterate our strongest condemnation.

For Costa Rica, it is very clear that the third nuclear test carried out by the DPRK highlights once more the urgent and essential entry of the Treaty into force, and the need to finish establishing the international verification system set forth by the CTBT as soon as possible. Although the system is very close to being finalized, several aspects still need to be completed. These include the remaining radionuclide stations, their noble gas systems and associated laboratories.

The work of the Provisional Technical Secretary has been exemplary in this regard, and deserving of the continued support of all Signatory States. Our country wishes to recognize Mr. Zerbo, current Executive Secretary, and Mr. Tibor Toth, who concluded his functions as Executive Secretary in July after eight years of service to the organization.

As part of this important development of the operability of the international verification system, we express our compliance with the preparations carried out for the Integrated Field Exercise (IFE14), which will take place in Jordan next year. IFE14 will be key in ensuring that the Provisional Technical Secretary can provide the international community with a completely functional system, capable of detecting nuclear explosives testing anywhere in the world.

For Costa Rica, the CTBT is a fundamental element in the architecture of global non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament, complimenting the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Being a country that values disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction as one of the pillars of its foreign policy, our commitment to the CTBT's entry into force is uncompromising—expressed by our diligent and enthusiastic participation in all of the organization's related activities, whether at its Vienna headquarters or elsewhere.

While serving as CTBO Preparatory Committee President last year, Costa Rica had the honor of presenting the biannual resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the Commission before the UN General Assembly. The resolution was approved by consensus and has helped keep the challenges to the CTBT's entry into force in motion.

To conclude, I would like to stress the urgency that, particularly in our current international context, we advance in a positive and ambitious direction toward the global abolition of nuclear weapons. Yesterday, a historic high-level event took place on this subject, in which it was made evident that this is a common ideal shared by member States, the international community and the people of the world.

In the framework of this Conference, we must bear this imperative in mind. This requires the intelligence and the courage to recognize the opportunities that lay within our hands—the high-level event on nuclear disarmament, the Open Ended Working Group on Nuclear Disarmament in Geneva, the NPT revision process and the conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons in Norway this year, and in Mexico the next.

The CTBT's entry into force and the start of negotiations regarding a legally binding international instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons should be the natural next steps for at this juncture.

I thank you.