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Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the  
Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (Article XIV)

H.E. Mr Espen Barth Eide  
Minister of Foreign Affairs

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Mr Secretary-General, Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen,

A world free of nuclear weapons is a longstanding objective of Norwegian foreign policy. Achieving a comprehensive ban on the testing of nuclear weapons is imperative if we are to prevent further proliferation and the development of new generations of nuclear weapons.

There is growing recognition that global security would be enhanced by the elimination of nuclear arms, and by a comprehensive ban on the testing of nuclear weapons. It is a paradox that this international treaty with more than 150 States Parties is unable to enter into force, and that we are gathered together at an Article XIV Conference yet again.

Norway is pleased to note that four more states have ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) since the last Article XIV Conference in 2011. We would especially like to commend Indonesia for completing its ratification process in 2012. This leaves eight states listed in Annex 2 to the CTBT. Norway urges the remaining Annex 2 countries that have not yet ratified the CTBT to do so without delay.

Although the CTBT is steadily gaining more support, the fundamental norm of non-testing continues to be challenged – most recently just seven months ago. This shows that a moratorium on nuclear testing can never be a substitute for a comprehensive, universally binding legal agreement.

The norm laid out in the CTBT is essential from a non-proliferation perspective. A total ban would be a major obstacle for any nation seeking to become a nuclear weapons state. It would act as a hindrance to the development of new categories of nuclear weapons.

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In addition, a legally binding CTBT would send a forceful message on the reduced role of nuclear weapons in security policy, and it would underpin our common objective to abolish this category of weapons.

Mr Secretary-General,

As we wait impatiently for the Treaty to enter into force, we must ensure that the CTBT verification regime is completed. The planned global network of monitoring stations and data centres is for the most part already in place, inspiring strong confidence in the Treaty's verifiability – as the immediate detection of the DPRK's nuclear tests in 2006, 2009 and 2013 clearly demonstrated. The monitoring system also provides States Parties with scientific and civil benefits, including tsunami warnings and other disaster alert systems, as well as invaluable data needed for analysing and assessing accidents – such as the one in Fukushima. The monitoring system works, it's valuable, and we must ensure continued momentum in this area as well.

Norway therefore calls on all State Signatories to provide political and financial support for the Provisional Technical Secretariat so that it can complete the verification regime. All outstanding obstacles must be addressed. In this regard, Norway greatly appreciates the work being done by the Provisional Technical Secretariat and the Executive Secretary in preparing for the implementation of the Treaty.

Mr Secretary-General,

Just a few weeks ago, we marked the fourth annual International Day against Nuclear Tests. The message from the world community then was loud and clear, as it is today: we are determined to achieve a world in which no nuclear explosions are permitted, and we are determined to achieve the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty.

Thank you.