

**STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENCY
OF THE EUROPEAN UNION
TO THE ARTICLE XIV CONFERENCE
FACILITATING THE ENTRY INTO
FORCE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE
NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN TREATY**

**September 21-23 2005,
New York**

**Statement by the United Kingdom of
Great Britain and Northern Ireland
on behalf of the European Union**

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I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Acceding Countries Bulgaria and Romania, the Candidate Countries Turkey and Croatia, as well as the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Serbia and Montenegro and the Efta countries Liechtenstein, Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and Moldova, associate themselves with this statement.

Mr Chairman,

May I begin by congratulating you, on behalf of all the members of the European Union, on your selection as the President of this Conference. I wish you every success in your work over the next three days and promise the committed co-operation of the European Union throughout.

Fellow Delegates

When the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty opened for signature, it marked an important step in the global effort to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Nearly ten years on, stopping the spread of these terrible weapons remains one of the greatest challenges facing the international community.

Over the past decade, the difficulties we face have broadened rather than diminished. An increasing number of states are now within reach of mastering nuclear weapon technologies. There is also a growing risk that such weapons of mass destruction will fall into the hands of non-state actors who would not hesitate to use them to kill large numbers of innocent people.

In confronting these changing and emerging threats, it is more vital than ever that the entire international community works together for our collective peace and security. The European Union remains committed to such a multilateral approach. We must use every instrument at our disposal to counter a nuclear threat which, if ever realised, would be disastrous for the whole world. This means developing new mechanisms where appropriate; and strengthening those existing mechanisms which obstruct and deter proliferation, as well as those which promote disarmament.

The European Union was disappointed that the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference was unable to agree a substantive final document. Regional tensions may drive proliferation, but widely-established disarmament and non-proliferation norms can frustrate it.

The CTBT, like the NPT, is one such norm. By prohibiting all nuclear weapon test explosions and other nuclear explosions, it plays a crucial role in the global non-proliferation and disarmament regime. It is an essential step towards achieving nuclear non-proliferation and towards nuclear disarmament.

For this reason, the EU places the utmost importance on the earliest possible entry into force of the treaty.

The European Union has worked consistently to achieve this goal. All the Member

States of the European Union, the Acceding Countries and most associated countries have ratified the Treaty. And based on this collective commitment we continue to take an active role in promoting the CTBT. In that respect, we are grateful, for the generosity of the Government of the Netherlands and the excellent work of Special Representative Ramaker.

Significant progress towards the goal of entry into force has been made. 175 countries have now signed the Treaty - just a handful short of universal adherence - and 123 countries have ratified, including 33 of the 44 countries whose ratification is required for entry into force. The EU welcomes this progress and the strong support shown for the treaty by the international community.

But despite these encouraging signs, we remain disappointed that the CTBT has yet to enter into force. We call upon all States who have not yet signed or ratified the treaty, and in particular those States whose ratification is required for entry into force, to do so as soon as possible, noting the relevance in this context of the geographic regions.

Several countries which have not yet felt able to ratify the Treaty, are nonetheless maintaining moratoria on nuclear explosions; it is now more than eight years since the last nuclear weapon test explosion. This is positive. The EU reiterates its call on all States to observe a moratorium and, pending entry into force of the CTBT, to refrain from any measure that would be in conflict with the obligations and provisions of the Treaty.

By the time the CTBT enters into force, we need to have a fully functioning verification regime. This will provide assurance that all states are complying with their treaty obligations. The European Union is particularly encouraged by the positive steps made in establishing an International Monitoring System which is unprecedented both in its technological scope and its global coverage. The system's detection capabilities already represent a significant deterrent to any would-be testers of nuclear weapons. An on-site inspection regime is another necessary element of this deterrent. Development of such regime continues to make progress.

The EU commends the tireless dedication of Wolfgang Hoffmann, who recently retired as the CTBTO's first Executive Secretary, in achieving this level of progress. And we warmly welcome the appointment of Tibor Tóth to the post. My EU colleagues and I are confident he will lead the Secretariat well in accomplishing its evolving tasks over the coming years. The European Union pledges to maintain our strong support for the organisation under his leadership.

However, the Provisional Technical Secretariat cannot fulfil its mandate to prepare for entry into force without the full support, both political and financial, of all States Signatories. Nor will it be possible, without this support, fully to develop and operate the verification regime. The EU underpins our political commitment to the Treaty with concrete action, including by meeting our financial obligations towards the organisation in full and on time. We urge all countries to do the same.

The Secretariat is now entering a crucial phase of testing and evaluating the monitoring network. It is important that those countries which host monitoring stations co-operate fully with the Provisional Technical Secretariat in building stations

and providing real time data. And the on-site inspection regime has to be robust if monitoring is to be effective. The European Union encourages all States to engage fully and constructively in its development.

Finally, the EU emphasises that the primary purpose of the verification system of the CTBT is to verify compliance with the Treaty; but we also support the continuing development of civil and scientific benefits of the system. If data from the verification technologies can mitigate the humanitarian consequences of certain natural disasters and save lives, we have a moral responsibility to make them available to disaster warning organisations. Furthermore we believe that exploiting the important additional scientific knowledge offered by the verification system will encourage states to access these further benefits by signing and ratifying the Treaty.

We call upon all countries to listen to the needs of civil and scientific organisations, and to work together to ensure that these additional benefits are widely shared.

Mr Chairman,

The challenge of nuclear proliferation is a clear one. The Secretary General made the point eloquently in May when he said:

"In our interconnected world, a threat to one is a threat to all, and we all share responsibility for each other's security. If this is true of all threats, it is particularly true of the nuclear threat".

The CTBT is a valuable instrument in meeting these threats. It can help contribute to a safer, more peaceful world without nuclear explosions.

Sixty years after the nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki this conference is an opportunity to reaffirm our common commitment to the CTBT. We should use it to signal our shared determination to bring entry into force closer, to build the verification regimes and to support their provisional operation. In all these areas you can remain confident of the European Union's continuing co-operation and support.