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Presidenza Italiana
del Consiglio dell'Unione Europea



MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

***CONFERENCE ON FACILITATING THE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE
COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN TREATY***

***STATEMENT BY SENATOR ALFREDO MANTICA,
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ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN UNION***



Check against delivery

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Mr. President,

I am speaking on behalf of the European Union. The Acceding Countries Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lituania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia and the Associated Countries Bulgaria, Romania and Turkey associate themselves with this statement. Iceland also associates itself with this statement.

Mr. President,

let me start by congratulating you, on behalf of the European Union, on your election as the Chairman of the third Conference on facilitating the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and by wishing the success of your endeavours in this delicate task. We express our thanks to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for convening this important event and to the Government of Austria for hosting it. We also thank the Under-Secretary General, Antonio Maria Costa, for his opening remarks. We express our appreciation to Ambassador Wolfgang Hoffmann, Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission and Secretary of the Conference, for his statement and for the work he is doing with regard to the preparations for the effective implementation of the Treaty at its entry into force.

Turning to the work of the Conference, I would like to begin my statement by calling the attention of all participants on the historical

result achieved in 1996 through the adoption by the General Assembly of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. The Treaty prohibits “any nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions” and represents an unequivocal response to aspirations which have been alive in our world for more than fifty years.

The presence today of so many Representatives of Governments, specialised agencies and non-governmental organisations bears witness to the determination of the international community to bring to effect such achievement. In that regard, the Agenda we have just adopted clearly defines our tasks. We are here to “decide by consensus what measures consistent with international law may be undertaken to accelerate the ratification process in order to facilitate the early entry into force of the Treaty”. We are going to focus our discussions on specific measures which, hopefully, will pave the way to the fulfillment of our expectations. We are going to consider the concrete steps which are to be undertaken in the framework of an overall strategy based on incentives: an intense dialogue aimed at ensuring that the force of the good-will prevails so that both the regional and the international security be strengthened; the full appreciation of the scientific and civil benefits of the CTBT International Monitoring System; the assistance to Countries in their ratification and implementation process. The Final Declaration we will adopt at the end of our work enshrines our political commitment

to the objective of providing the international community with a functioning Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Regime, which is an essential instrument to enhance international peace, confidence and security.

Mr. President,

we all know that the basic prerequisite for the viability of any multilateral agreement is the awareness of the common interests that it represents and safeguards. It is essential that we keep in mind this concept when we develop an overall strategy aimed at facilitating the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. The CTBT would safeguard this common interest of the international community and we must spare no effort in ensuring that the value of such intrinsic asset of the Treaty is fully assessed by those States which have not yet signed or ratified it.

In that regard, all the European Union Member States, the Acceding Countries and the Associated Countries have ratified the treaty, remain steadfast in their commitment to the CTBT and are actively involved in promoting the understanding of the Treaty, its entry into force and its universal adherence. The European Union consider those issues very important and, in preparation of the Conference, adopted a decision to implement a Common Position as an instrument of

its Common Foreign and Security Policy. On this basis the EU carried out demarches all over the world and continues to advocate the merits of the Treaty in all relevant international fora. The European Union is convinced that the CTBT meets global concerns, since it is an important measure for achieving nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament and has an essential role to play in strengthening international peace and security, including the fight against terrorism.

It was not by a coincidence that the CTBT was indicated as the first measure to be implemented in the framework of the “Principles and Objectives for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament” adopted in 1995 by the Conference which decided the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Nor was it a coincidence the fact that the entry into to force of the CTBT was one of the 13 practical steps for the systematic and progressive efforts to implement Article VI of the NPT agreed in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference of the States Parties to the NPT. The European Union fully endorses the importance awarded to the CTBT by the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons which remains the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament.

It is for the above reasons that the European Union attaches the

utmost importance to the entry into force of the CTBT at the earliest possible date and we call upon all States that have not yet signed and ratified the Treaty to do so without delay and without conditions, in particular the remaining [12] States whose ratification is required for its entry into force. Pending the entry into force of the CTBT, the European Union urges all States to abide by a moratorium on nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions and to refrain from any actions which would defeat the object and purpose of the Treaty.

Mr. President,

while regretting the fact that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty has not entered into force 7 years after its opening to signature, the European Union believes that we should not neglect the progress made so far. [168] States have signed the Treaty and [104] have deposited their instruments of ratification. The Provisional Technical Secretariat, the core of the future CTBT Organization, has been established with 266 staff members from 70 Countries. The legal, technical and administrative framework has been put in place so as to allow the steady build-up of the verification regime. We are encouraged by the spirit of co-operation characterizing the work of the Preparatory Commission and wish to express our appreciation for the work done by the Executive Secretary and the Secretariat, which should be provided with the necessary financial resources.

We should build upon this progress if we want to enhance the perspective for an early entry into force of the Treaty and we shall do this through actions carried out at two different levels, which are closely interlinked.

On the one hand, we shall increase our individual and collective efforts aimed at giving the necessary support to the Treaty so as to accelerate the ratification process. In this regard, the European Union welcomes the adoption of a Final Declaration which contains a strong unequivocal signal and which contributes to maintaining the necessary political momentum.

On the other hand, we shall enhance our activities within the Preparatory Commission, whereas the establishment of the verification regime in a timely and effective manner and the demonstration of its ability to be operated in accordance with the Treaty's provisions is an important contribution for promoting the entry into force of the CTBT.

Mr. President,

in concluding my statement, I would like to stress how eagerly the Governments of the European Union Member States are looking forward to seeing the international community to rise to the challenge in order to

ensure a safer, more secure, more peaceful world without nuclear explosions. The entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty will certainly constitute an essential step in that direction.

Thank you, Mr. President.