

**Visit by Minister of State Kitt to Vienna**

**31 August to 4 September 2003**

**CTBTO Article XIV Conference**

**National Statement**

Mr Chairman,

Ireland fully associates itself with the statement made earlier by Italy on behalf of the European Union. I would like to reiterate the congratulations extended to you, by my Italian colleague, on your election as Chairman of this Conference and to wish you every success in your endeavours.

I would also like to express Ireland's appreciation to Ambassador Hoffman and all the staff in the Preparatory Commission for their work, not just in relation to this meeting, but in their ongoing preparation for the effective implementation of the Treaty as a whole.

Mr. Chairman

It is now almost seven years since the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly and opened for signature. The world has changed much during this period. Indeed, it is true to say that it has become in many ways a more dangerous place. The need for the CTBT has not therefore in any sense diminished over the years. Rather, its entry into force has become a more urgent priority.

This Conference, the third of its kind, must serve to underline the overwhelming support for the Treaty throughout the international community. It is not enough, however, simply to reaffirm our support for the CTBT. We have to also examine on a more practical level what we

can do to accelerate its entry into force. Ireland is fully committed to making every effort to achieve this objective.

While we may all regret that in 2003 we find ourselves at another Article XIV Conference rather than the first Conference of States Parties following entry into force, we should not lose sight of the progress made in the ratification process. The challenge for all of us now is how we can build to best effect on such progress.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the most recent ratifications to the Treaty. In particular, I welcome the ratification of Algeria which has taken us one step closer to entry into force. In this connection Ireland reiterates its call on those states which have not ratified to do so without delay and without conditions. In the case of the 12 remaining states whose ratification is required for entry into force this is particularly urgent.

The CTBT is a multilateral instrument and, as such, cannot and does not exist in isolation. Its links to other multilateral instruments and fora connected with non-proliferation and disarmament increase its significance and potential contribution to international peace and security.

There is for example a fundamental link between the CTBT and the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) which is the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. This link is enshrined in the preamble of the NPT itself, the Principles and Objectives agreed in 1995 and in the 13 practical steps for the systematic and progressive efforts to implement Article VI of the NPT which were agreed at the last NPT Review

Conference in 2000. We continue to regard these steps as the performance benchmark for nuclear disarmament.

The relationship with the important Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty process and the historic agreement of 2000 should inspire and encourage us further in our efforts to achieve early entry into force of the CTBT. Implementing the commitments we have made in the past even as we look to the future should be an integral part of our preparatory work for the next NPT Review conference in 2005.

The fact that many of the undertakings of the 2000 Review Conference of the NPT, including in respect of the CTBT, have not yet been fulfilled is testimony to how far we still have to go in our search for a nuclear weapons free world. It is not, however, a reason for the abandonment of that search or for a lowering of ambition. Rather, we should take up the challenge and intensify our efforts to persuade others of the merits of signature and ratification of the CTBT.

The significant benefits of the International Monitoring System (IMS) must also not be forgotten even as our efforts continue to achieve the entry into force of the treaty. The IMS will be a concrete example of multilateral verification in action and in addition will provide an opportunity for gathering and exchange of scientific information which can have significant environmental and other benefits.

Mr. Chairman

The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty was the last instrument to be negotiated by the Conference on Disarmament. At present efforts are continuing to solve the long-standing difficulties with regard to agreement on a programme of work for that forum. Entry into force of the CTBT would provide added impetus to these efforts by demonstrating in a practical way the success of its past negotiations and thereby encouraging future substantive work on other significant areas.

The CTBT, like the multilateral system itself, does not exist in a vacuum but is affected by and in its own turn can affect international events. Since the treaty opened for signature in 1996 there have been some worrying developments. The tests conducted by India and Pakistan in 1998 and the recent events on the Korean Peninsula should serve not to discourage us but rather to reinforce our determination as an international community to strive for the earliest possible entry into force of this important treaty. Actions which contradict the purpose of this treaty merely serve to demonstrate the urgency and necessity of the issue before us at this meeting. In this context, pending entry into force of the CTBT we would urge all States to continue to abide by a moratorium and to refrain from any actions which are contrary to the objectives and provisions of the Treaty.

Commitment to multilateralism is equally under strain. Within the UN disarmament system deadlock is inhibiting the kind of dialogue and negotiation which is essential. In the recently adopted Basic Principles on EU WMD Strategy the EU emphasised the central role of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation and the need for the

further development of the United Nations system in general and the Security Council in particular.

Mr. Chairman

The entry into force of the CTBT is one of a range of areas in which action is long overdue. We need a new energy in the dynamic of disarmament which reminds us of the goals and the essential bargain of the Non Proliferation Treaty. Fulfilment of that bargain cannot be a pipe-dream but is rather a vital test of the strength of the multilateral system. Ireland remains a firm believer in the value of the multilateral approach to global security, an approach we believe to be in our common interests. We will continue to be active on all key fronts in pursuit of international peace and security which is of necessity a shared responsibility. Our meeting here this week and the Final Declaration which we will issue at its conclusion, provide eloquent testimony to the continued validity and vitality of an important Treaty, one which we believe can do much to enhance international peace and security throughout the world.

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