



Statement by Dr Robert Floyd

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UN Security Council Briefing on the non-proliferation of WMD: 25th Anniversary of the CTBT

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Mr President,
High Representative Izumi Nakamitsu,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am grateful to His Excellency Simon Coveney for the invitation to address today's Security Council briefing held under Ireland's Presidency on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

The significance of the CTBT, and indeed its 25th anniversary, must be understood within the broader context of our collective goal of universal, non-discriminatory and verifiable nuclear disarmament. And while there may be differing views on the best path to achieve this goal, a verifiable and enforceable ban on nuclear testing must be a core component of the legal and technical architecture of a nuclear-weapons-free world.

Anniversaries are a time for Reflection

A comprehensive ban on nuclear testing has long been part and parcel of the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament agenda. First proposed in 1954, this long awaited, and eagerly anticipated measure has been decades in the making.

With the opening for signature of the CTBT twenty-five years ago, the international community declared unequivocally that the era of unrestrained nuclear testing had come to an end. In the twenty-five years since its adoption, the Treaty has created and sustained a norm against nuclear testing so powerful that less than one dozen tests have been conducted since adoption; and only one country has violated it this millennium.

Compare the situation today with the world before the adoption of the treaty, where the average explosive yield of nuclear tests each year was equivalent to nearly 1,000 Hiroshima sized bombs. Nuclear testing not only created geopolitical instability and supported the development of more powerful and deadly nuclear weapons, it also caused untold human suffering and environmental damage. Because of the CTBT, we have left this world far behind.

Anniversaries are a time for celebration

The CTBT is already a great **success story**. There is near universal adherence to the Treaty's prohibition on nuclear explosions. With 185 signatures and 170 ratifications, there has been much progress towards the universalization of the CTBT. The object and purpose of the Treaty – a verifiable end to nuclear explosions – is a common goal shared by the entire international community.

Its state-of-the-art global verification regime is nearly complete, and its ability to meet the verification requirements of the Treaty has been proven time and time again. More than 90 per cent of the 337 monitoring facilities worldwide are in place, and our data processing and analysis capabilities continue to improve. The on-site inspection element of the verification regime is already at an advanced stage of readiness.

In addition to the core mission of nuclear test monitoring, the Treaty's verification regime also provides useful data for other civil and scientific purposes, including tsunami warning and climate change studies. All States Signatories are entitled to equal access to the data and to benefit from technical training and capacity building programmes.

Anniversaries are a time for renewal of commitments.

States Signatories kicked-off our 25th year last week at the Article XIV Conference by committing to take concrete actions to secure additional signatures and ratifications. I congratulate Italy and South Africa as co-Presidents of the Conference on a very successful event and look forward to coordinating our efforts to welcome even more States into the CTBT community.

This will continue to strengthen the global norm against nuclear testing and build momentum towards its entry into force. Every signature and ratification we gain this coming year will be a cause for great celebration, and I trust that we will have much to celebrate.

We have also seen that there is real appetite for civil society and youth engagement on the CTBT. You will shortly have the pleasure to hear from Magdalene Wanyaga, a Kenyan member of the CTBTO Youth Group, who will share her views on how civil society and youth can creatively contribute to our mission.

Our ultimate objective is clear – the total elimination of nuclear weapons. But we cannot hope to achieve a nuclear-weapons-free world without a universally applied, non-discriminatory, and verifiable prohibition on nuclear testing. And what better way to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the CTBT than by moving the world closer to this noble goal? Let us join together in this 25th anniversary year to turn the promise of the CTBT into a reality.

Thank you.