



STATE OF ISRAEL

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Statement by
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Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the
Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty

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Mr. President,

Let me join previous speakers in congratulating you, on behalf of the delegation of Israel, on being elected President of the Conference.

Our thanks to the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission, Ambassador Tibor Tot, and the staff of the Provisional Technical Secretariat for their excellent work in preparing for the CTBT's entry into force, and especially for the efforts invested in establishing its verification regime.

Mr. President,

At the outset I would like to reiterate my Government's unequivocal support for the CTBT. Israel's support has been manifested all along including in our active participation in the many activities of the Preparatory Commission.

Mr. President,

Since the last Conference we have registered an improved capacity of IMS stations, IDC capabilities, and OSI necessary elements.

At the same time, several gaps have to be bridged over as we strive to move expeditiously towards entry into force.

In the first place there is a need for universal commitment not to carry out any nuclear test explosion and any other nuclear explosion. The DPRK's nuclear explosion on 25 May 2009, widely deplored by the international community, was an ominous reminder that the concerted will of many is not enough to enforce this norm and to respond collectively in an unambiguous manner. In this regard Israel is encouraged by the firm position of the President of the United States of America Barack Obama, who stated earlier this year in Prague: "After more than five decades of talks, it is time for the testing of nuclear weapons to finally be banned".

We should redouble the efforts to complete the CTBT verification regime to the level necessary for entry into force. This includes several aspects of OSI such as: technologies and techniques; procurement of OSI equipment; training of OSI inspectors; the completion of the draft of OSI Operational Manual; and the build up of OSI infrastructure.

Second, there is an urgent need to complete all IMS stations in accordance with the CTBT, their operation and maintenance, and the transmission of their data to the IDC. The focus should be now on major gaps in the system, especially in the Middle East, which currently lacks an adequate level of coverage. Until the designed IMS system is in place we should take measures to strengthen its capabilities. Such measures may include temporary operation of auxiliary seismic stations as primary ones.

Third, the completion and testing of IDC capabilities as required for entry into force is an important component.

Additional tasks are in the fields of Organization and financial support. With regard to the Organization it is necessary to prepare the structure and procedures of the Technical Secretariat in order to enable it to function efficiently and to fulfill its duties upon entry into force.

Activities by scientific fora and others, in support of the CTBT should be encouraged as well. Their potential contribution may promote, inter alia, new ideas to improve IMS capabilities.

Mr. President,

Israel considers the prohibition of nuclear testing as an indispensable element of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. The importance of CTBT global message and mission in this regard can not be exaggerated. It is especially true in view of non-compliance and cases of gross violations of NPT obligations in the Middle East, as well as the two nuclear explosions conducted by North Korea.

Mr. President,

Since the launching of the CTBT negotiations, Israel has been supporting it meaningfully in many respects. We have lent our active support to the establishment of the verification regime of the Treaty, recognizing it to be one of the main requirements for the Treaty's entry into force. Israel has done so also out of its genuine concern about the poor coverage of the IMS in the Middle East region.

Israel has constructed two auxiliary seismic stations in Meron and Eilat, as required by the Treaty. It has had them successfully certified by the PTS, and has been continuously transmitting their data to the IDC.

Israeli experts take part in most of verification build-up activities, especially those related to OSI. Their contribution is also marked in the drafting and testing of the OSI Operational Manual.

Mr. President,

Israel has always maintained that nuclear issues, as well as all other security issues, could only be realistically addressed within the regional context. It is our vision and policy to support, and wherever possible, to join those arms control and other international treaties that do not detract from Israel's uniquely narrow overall security margins in its region.

In recent years, the international community has witnessed growing threats and challenges to the non-proliferation regime from within the Middle East region besides alarming calls by some in the region against the very existence of the State of Israel. Notwithstanding current political realities in the Middle East, Israel has continued to contribute to global non-proliferation, through its policy of responsible behavior and restraint in the nuclear domain.

Mr. President,

In addition to the above mentioned considerations which are guiding the State of Israel in its approach towards ratification of the CTBT there is the consideration of Israel's sovereign equality status in the policy making organs of the Treaty. I wish to remind that the functioning of the MESA group, which entails the equal status of Israel in the CTBT and its organs, is still stalled, mainly by one state. Israel attaches high value to an appropriate correction of this anomaly. The work of the Commission, and later the CTBTO and its Executive Council should not be hampered by destructive politicization.

Mr. President;

Since the last Conference, major progress has been registered on the road to entry into force. The credit should go to all those who contributed to it. Yet, we shall all see to it that our mission is fully completed as designed in the Treaty. Israel pledges its cooperation and assistance to realize our common goal.

Thank you, Mr. President.