



AUSTRALIA



AUSTRALIAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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Comprehensive-Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty Article XIV Conference

Statement by The Hon Kevin Rudd MP
Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs

(Check against delivery)

Conference Chairs, Ministers, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

In the fifteen years since the CTBT opened for signature, the world has witnessed six nuclear tests – six tests that have enhanced the deadliness of nuclear arsenals that remain beyond the reach of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Although this number is substantially lower than for the previous fifteen years, any nuclear test stands squarely in the way of our common objective, a world free of nuclear weapons.

Some states yet to ratify the CTBT have declared moratoria on nuclear testing. These moratoria helpfully serve to reinforce the taboo against developing nuclear weapons. But, in the wake of these six nuclear tests, they clearly fall well short of the assurance we need: that nuclear weapons will never again be tested by any country.

By imposing a legally-binding ban on testing – through ratification by the nine remaining Annex 2 states – we can minimise the threat of new states developing nuclear weapons, while also limiting the ability of existing nuclear weapon states to develop new, more lethal weapons.

The CTBT's entry into force and effective implementation are essential for strengthening the non-proliferation regime and for reinforcing efforts toward our commonly held goal of a nuclear weapon-free world.

In preparation for this, we welcome the steady progress being made in the development and implementation of the CTBT's verification system. With more than 80 per cent of International Monitoring System stations now up and running, much has been achieved. These stations proved their effectiveness and reach in successfully monitoring the test conducted by Democratic People's Republic of Korea in 2009.

Australia has a long and proud association with the CTBT. We played an active role in negotiating the treaty in the Conference on Disarmament and, when negotiations in Geneva faltered, took it directly to the floor of the UN General Assembly.

And we are pleased to be making a continuing contribution. We host 21 monitoring facilities – the third largest number of any state – and actively support the CTBTO in developing on-site inspection verification procedures.

Australia commends the work of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission and calls upon all states to provide strong practical, financial and political support for its work.

Universalisation of the treaty is our passionately held goal. For that reason, Australia congratulates Guinea on its recent ratification, and Ghana for ratifying in June of this year. We warmly welcome them to the fold. Every additional ratifier sends a message to those yet to ratify – this global movement is growing and you should join it.

But it is with those countries whose ratifications are required for entry into force that we need to redouble our efforts.

To this end, Australia and nine other countries participating in the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative have agreed to intensify our diplomatic efforts to help obtain the necessary ratifications.

We must all make special efforts to highlight the manifest security benefits of the CTBT – not just as a final barrier to militarisation of nuclear programs, but also as a significant confidence-building measure, especially in regions where tensions – and the potential for costly and dangerous arms races – are high.

The adoption of a strong and unanimous declaration at this Conference on facilitating the entry into force of the Treaty would underscore our shared commitment to a CTBT in force and fully implemented, a CTBT that serves as an important milestone marking real progress towards ridding the world of nuclear weapons.

Thank you.