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**Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the
Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty**

Statement by Austria

delivered by

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Distinguished Co-Presidents,
Executive Secretary,
Excellencies,
Distinguished participants,

We fully subscribe to the EU statement. I also echo the thanks for convening this Conference, for the high-level attendance and for the excellent work carried out by Belgium and Iraq as previous Article XIV Coordinators.

Dr. Zerbo, I commend you and your team at the CTBTO for your tireless work in promoting the entry into force and universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. At a time when the nuclear disarmament architecture is under severe strain, the CTBTO demonstrates time and again the benefits of multilateral cooperation.

Even without the CTBT being in force, the CTBTO has made outstanding contributions to regional and international security. Its global, hi-tech network of monitoring stations has collected reliable and high-quality data, invaluable in responding immediately and effectively to the nuclear tests conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. No one country alone could create a comparable system. The data collected through this system is not only essential in verifying nuclear disarmament but deters non-compliance with the Treaty, strengthening the global non-proliferation regime.

Beyond this, the CTBTO has also fostered effective multilateralism and the development of synergies, using its data in non-nuclear applications like climate modelling and earthquake early warning systems. The CTBT Science and Technology conferences contribute to global scientific advancement and are a valuable platform for multidisciplinary scientific exchange.

But this impressive work and voluntary moratoria are no substitute for finally bringing the CTBT into force. With already 184 signatures and 168 ratifications, the vast majority of states have declared that nuclear weapons test explosions or any other nuclear explosions are a threat to international peace and security and undermine the global non-proliferation regime.

This vast majority has made the CTBT a cornerstone of the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation architecture. We warmly welcome the signature of Tuvalu and the ratifications of Thailand and Zimbabwe since the last Article XIV Conference in 2017.

All of us who have signed or ratified already adhere to the objectives of the treaty by refraining from acts which would defeat its object and purpose. But only the entry into force will outlaw nuclear weapons test explosions or any other nuclear explosions in a verifiable way. Times of high tensions must not be an excuse for inaction. I therefore urge all states, and particularly the eight remaining Annex II states to sign and ratify the treaty without delay or preconditions.

In closing, let me reiterate that Austria, as proud host country of the CTBTO, will continue to use every opportunity to advocate for the ratification and universalisation of the CTBT. Any significant drive towards global non-proliferation and disarmament will begin with the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty.

It has now been 22 years since the treaty opened for signature. Its benefits are clear for all to see. So let's redouble our efforts to convince the remaining countries to join us and bring the CTBT into force.

Thank you.