



REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA



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STATEMENT

By H. E. MR. DANIEL MITOV,

MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

AT THE CONFERENCE ON FACILITATING THE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE
COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN TREATY

NEW YORK, 29 SEPTEMBER 2015

Mr. President,

On behalf of the Bulgarian Delegation, let me add my voice to those that have congratulated you on your appointment as Co-chairs of the Ninth Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). I would like to assure you of Bulgaria's full support in your endeavors.

I would also like to express our appreciation to my colleagues from Hungary and Indonesia, Japan and Kazakhstan, as well as to the Executive Secretary and the Preparatory Commission for preparing this meeting. I am also glad to see many colleagues here today. Their presence is yet another proof of the significance of the CTBT.

I believe that this Conference will contribute to the main objective - bringing into force this Treaty, which will be an important step to enhance the world's security.

[Bulgaria aligns with the statement delivered by the EU. Nevertheless, I would like to share some additional observations from a national perspective.]

Mr. President,

While we are gathered here today, the world is facing serious challenges in Ukraine, in the Middle East and in North Africa backed with the immigration pressure on Europe and the barbaric acts of Da'esh against humanity and against the world's historical and cultural heritage. Nonetheless, nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and the need for speedy entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty remain relevant.

Yet, let us recall that over 2,000 nuclear explosive tests have taken place around the world over the last 70 years. Since 1996 there have been only 7 nuclear tests - a proof that CTBT, even not in force, has a discouraging effect. Bulgaria hopes that the *de facto* moratorium on nuclear test explosions, voluntarily observed also by most of the States that have not yet ratified the Treaty, will continue in the future. Nevertheless, these unilateral measures need to be replaced by a legally binding and verifiable prohibition. This is the way to strengthen the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. CTBT has a crucial role to play in this regard.

It is clear that almost 20 years after the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty was open for signature, it has not entered into force.

Today 183 nations have signed the Treaty and 164 have ratified it. As an Annex II country, Bulgaria is among those who have signed and ratified the Treaty bringing it closer to entering into force. We welcome the latest ratification of the Treaty by Angola and the fact that Cuba has been granted an observer status in the CTBTO. This positive development is encouraging. Yet even more efforts are needed. We call upon all States, in particular Annex II States, who haven't done so yet, to sign and ratify the CTBT as soon as possible.

Once in force, CTBT will be a legally binding global ban on nuclear explosions of any kind. Bulgaria strongly believes that the entry into force of the Treaty will make a practical contribution to further strengthening the international non-proliferation regime.

In this regard, Bulgaria calls upon DPRK to refrain from any further action in this field, especially the threat to conduct a forth nuclear test, as well as to sign and ratify the CTBT without delay. DPRK's development of nuclear and ballistic missile programs constitutes a grave challenge to the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and to the peace and stability in the region and in the world.

We call upon all other states to refrain from actions that would undermine the objective and purpose of the Treaty pending its entry into force.

Mr. President,

Last but not least, I take this opportunity to express my delegation's appreciation and gratitude to the Preparatory Commission and its Provisional Technical Secretariat (PTS) for their valuable work in preparing the timely implementation of all provisions of the Treaty once it enters into force.

I am glad to note the progress made by the CTBTO Preparatory Commission and its Provisional Technical Secretariat in developing the International Monitoring System (IMS) of the Treaty. Its network now encompasses 337 certified facilities, which are being successfully operated and tested on a provisional basis. We also commend the work of the International Data Center (IDC). It is encouraging that the IMS and the IDC have also demonstrated their utility in bringing scientific and civil benefits, including for tsunami warning systems and possibly other disaster alert systems. The CTBT network of radionuclide stations plays a key international role in detecting and tracing the atmospheric movement of radionuclide particles released, thus contributing to global nuclear safety.

Mr. President,

I hope that the message we send with the Final Declaration of this Conference is received and heard, and that in two years we will see tangible results.

Thank you, Mr. President.