



Permanent Mission of Germany
to the United Nations

Address

by Klaus Scharioth,

State Secretary of the Foreign Office

of the Federal Republic of Germany,

at the Fourth Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force

of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty

New York, 21 September 2005

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Mr President,

First of all, I would like to endorse the address given by Foreign Secretary Jack Straw on behalf of the EU and to assure you of the support of the German delegation.

For Germany, the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons remains the central goal of the political efforts to secure peace throughout the world. Given the horror which weapons of mass destruction can unleash, we believe that humanity has an obligation to work towards their elimination. This should be not only a contractual but also a profoundly moral obligation for us all.

The Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty, the CTBT, is a key element of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. The German Government therefore lends its full support to all endeavours to persuade those states which have yet to demonstrate their backing for the CTBT's aims to sign and/or ratify the Treaty.

Nuclear proliferation is a key challenge for the international community: the growing proliferation of nuclear weapons increases the risk that these weapons could fall into the hands of terrorists – an apocalyptic scenario.

If the international community is to be successful, it must react appropriately to the twofold challenge of nuclear proliferation risks and the commitment of the nuclear-weapons states to push ahead with disarmament.

We are following with concern the lack of progress made in the efforts to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the undeniable risk of the erosion of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Indicative of this deplorable state of affairs is the fact that the Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in May did not achieve a substantial result and the final document of the Millennium Review Summit last week did not address disarmament and non-proliferation. An end to the deadlock at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva is not in sight.

North Korea's readiness to halt its nuclear-weapons programme and to rejoin the Non-Proliferation Treaty, expressed at the recent six-party talks, if implemented, would be a very important first step. Nevertheless, further steps are necessary – in particular, the signing and ratification of the CTBT.

The various instruments of the multilateral system – NPT, CTBT, the IAEA Safeguards Agreements and the Additional Protocol, export control regimes, etc. – complement and enhance each other. Only by strengthening and further developing all elements can we substantially strengthen international security and stability. This is also the basic premise of the EU Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction adopted in 2003. A selective non-proliferation policy will not suffice if we are to master the challenges ahead. Rather, we must use the existing arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation instruments to the full. Furthermore, an effective approach will require the avoidance of double standards.

The CTBT plays a central role in containing the risk of nuclear proliferation. The Treaty has already proven its potential, even though it has not yet entered into force: none of the signatory states has ever broken its moratorium on nuclear tests. After all, even a secret nuclear test would be detected by the CTBTO's International Monitoring System. We should also take advantage of the potential civilian uses of this monitoring system: the tsunami disaster reminded us how vitally important this is; we should do everything we can to ensure that the highly sensitive CTBTO monitoring stations are also used as an early-warning network for tsunamis, thus helping to save lives.

Unfortunately, it is still not possible for the Treaty to enter into force nine years after it was opened for signature due to the failure of eleven of the states listed in Annex 2 to accede to the treaty. I therefore call upon the states in this group in particular to reconsider their position and to help the Treaty gain universal validity. They have a special responsibility to make their contribution and thus strengthen the credibility of the global non-proliferation policy.

Mr President,

The CTBT is an important component for the creation of a safer and more stable world. We are all called upon to play our part.

Thank you.