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Statement

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at

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

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Madame President,

Let me begin by congratulating you on your assumption of the Presidency of the Fourth Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). I wish you every success in your work and pledge my delegation's full cooperation.

I would also like to thank Ambassador Tibor Toth, Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission (PrepCom), and his staff for their excellent work in preparing for the Conference.

Madame President,

Earlier this week, the Six-Party Talks in Beijing made an important breakthrough in containing the most imminent spectre of nuclear proliferation, which has been haunting the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia, while in another part of the world the spectre is slipping out of control. From a global perspective, proliferation threats are on the rise, while the existing mechanisms for dealing with these threats are under severe stress. Nuclear weapon technologies are spreading to an increasing number of States, while the revelation of an extensive nuclear black market has brought home the real danger of fissile materials and weapons of mass destruction falling into the wrong hands.

Unfortunately, at a time when threats to our collective peace and security are mounting, the global nuclear non-proliferation regime based on the NPT is languishing. Multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation machinery, including the Conference on Disarmament, the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) and the NPT review conference, is in limbo. It is also a pity that last week's historic summit commemorating the 60th anniversary of the United Nations failed to include in its outcome document any agreement on nuclear non-proliferation or disarmament.

All these disappointing developments make the entry into force of the CTBT more urgent than ever. The CTBT is a vital instrument for realizing a world free of

nuclear weapons. As such, its entry into force will make a substantial contribution towards making the world a safer and more peaceful place for all. It will also help boost declining confidence in the NPT, which has been stuck in an existential crisis.

The Republic of Korea therefore reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and its earliest entry into force.

We welcome the substantial progress that has been made towards achieving universality since the Treaty opened for signature nine years ago. Since the last Article XIV Conference, in 2003, eight States have signed and 21 States have ratified the Treaty, bringing the total to 176 signatories and 125 ratifiers. Of the 44 States listed in Annex 2 of the Treaty, whose ratification is necessary for the Treaty's entry into force, 33 have now ratified. While such a record should not be taken for granted, we still have a long way to go before the Treaty enters into force.

In this context, we reiterate our call on all States that have not yet done so, particularly those States listed in Annex 2, to sign and ratify the Treaty without further excuse or delay.

Furthermore, while continuing voluntary adherence to a moratorium on nuclear testing should be welcomed and supported as the best interim measure pending the entry into force of the CTBT, it should not be a substitute for a permanent and legally binding commitment to end nuclear testing, as enshrined in the Treaty. We also add our voice to the call for all States to refrain from acts that would defeat or undermine the objective of the Treaty pending its entry into force, and we call for a prompt launch of negotiations for a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) to supplement and reinforce the CTBT.

We look to the nuclear weapon states to exercise leadership in saving the global non-proliferation regime from its current distress. They can start by demonstrating their collective political commitment to accelerate the long-overdue entry into force of the CTBT. They can also do a great service to the cause of disarmament

and non-proliferation by irreversibly abandoning the options of making qualitative improvements to their nuclear arsenals and developing advanced new types of nuclear weapons. **By** doing so, they would gain the moral high ground to deny potential proliferators a pretext for actual proliferation.

Madame President,

We believe that an effective verification regime is vital in ensuring confidence that all States parties are living up to their Treaty commitments. In this regard, we welcome the progress that has been made in building an extensive CTBT verification system. We encourage and support the PrepCom in its efforts to complete all elements of the verification system, including the global web of the International Monitoring System, whose scope is unprecedented. We also support the sharing of the scientific and civil benefits created by the CTBT verification technologies with the broader international community through its contribution to tsunami warning and other disaster alert systems.

Finally, the Republic of Korea reaffirms its unflagging support for the efforts of the Preparatory Commission and the Special Representative to facilitate the signature and ratification process. In this context, I am pleased to inform this Conference that my Government, in cooperation with the Provisional Technical Secretariat, will host a Workshop on Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) International Cooperation in Southeast Asia, the Pacific and the Far East in Seoul from 18-20 October this year.

Thank you.