



**PERMANENT MISSION OF
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TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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STATEMENT BY

H.E. MR. FRANK A.M. MAJOR

**THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS**

FACILITATING THE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE

NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN TREATY

60TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 22, 2005

Mr President,

1. The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty was opened for signature in 1996, almost ten years ago in this very room. The Netherlands would like to see it enter into force as soon as possible. In my statement, I will be covering two areas. First, why the Treaty is so important – today perhaps more than ever. Second, the course of action the Netherlands will promote until it does enter into force.

First: Why the CTBT is so important

2. The Non-Proliferation Treaty remains the cornerstone of our efforts to hold back the further spread of nuclear weapons. It is also a vital link in the network of mutually reinforcing treaties, arrangements and regimes which deal with weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. The Netherlands is a strong supporter of international law as the foundation for relations between states and believes that it is the best way to guarantee that those relations will be stable and beneficial in the long term. This is why the Netherlands is concerned that the Non-Proliferation Treaty review conference in New York in May did not produce results.
3. Our concern is not limited to the importance of the Non-Proliferation Treaty itself but extends to the wider perspective of treaty-based non-proliferation and disarmament. We must ensure that treaties on weapons of mass destruction are not eroded from within.
4. At a time when our existing disarmament and non-proliferation treaties are under pressure, the prospects for developing new international law to limit the threat of nuclear weapons are not very bright. The impasse in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva is now in its ninth year; although negotiations on a Fissile Materials Cut Off Treaty are long overdue, they are unlikely to take place in the immediate future: we however will continue our endeavours to start these negotiations.

5. Against this backdrop, the CTBT's contribution to our nuclear non-proliferation treaty-based system is increasingly important. This is why we must continue to invest in the CTBT and redouble our efforts to promote its entry into force. If this does not happen, there will be negative consequences for the entire non-proliferation and disarmament landscape.
6. As I have said, the Netherlands considers that the CTBT is a vital addition to the framework of international law in the field of non-proliferation and disarmament. The essence of international law is the consent to be bound. And at this point in time there are still a number of countries who are not prepared to give their consent to be bound by the CTBT. That is the realistic starting point from which we must continue to operate.

Second: course of action until the Treaty enters into force

7. Only perseverance and political will can keep the CTBT and its prospects for entry into force alive. All our energies should be directed at bringing this goal closer. This is precisely why the Netherlands is making every effort to increase the number of ratifying countries. The Netherlands is pleased and honoured that Ambassador Jaap Ramaker, Special Representative of the CTBT is working closely with the president of the CTBT Australia to increase the number of signatories and ratifications.
8. The Netherlands continues to work bilaterally and together with other EU member states to convince countries which have not yet ratified the Treaty of the advantages of doing so.
9. In this endeavour, it is important to recognise that the group of countries outside of the treaty is not homogeneous and that the approach taken cannot be 'one size fits all'.
10. A first group of countries have not ratified the Treaty because they are either undecided or have not given the CTBT the priority it merits. These countries are the most promising in respect of ratification and we must convince them of the Treaty's importance and insist that it receive priority.

11. A second group of countries encounter difficulties with the more technical aspects of ratification, most notably national implementing legislation. These countries should be given assistance if requested.

The Netherlands notes the important activities of the CTBTO in this respect. We will continue to provide that organisation with voluntary contributions so that its work can continue.

12. This brings me to the third category of countries – countries which face political difficulties or are otherwise not in a position to ratify. This group is clearly the most difficult one, and calling it a group is in fact somewhat deceptive because the reasons for not ratifying the CTBT are very different. We do not have a single magic formula to convince them to ratify. We must instead try to understand each country's reasons and motivations and see what can be done to overcome their reservations.

13. In the meantime, we must be ready to accept that CTBT may not enter into force for a considerable period of time. This is a major source of disappointment, but at the same time we are pleased that the CTBTO is operating and that the verification network is being built. We must continue to expand the network and include states which have not yet ratified or even signed the Treaty. We must make sure that the CTBTO is in a position to do its work. And this will be possible only with the assistance of countries that are not yet able to ratify. In short, it means that while we may be critical of the countries which have not yet ratified, we must also acknowledge that, for now, they provide funding for the CTBTO and allow the verification network to be established and become operational, which, after all, helps to attain the objectives of the Treaty.

Mr President,

14. In conclusion, the Netherlands will continue to work towards early entry into force of the CTBT. The international community's patience will be tested and we may have to live with the present situation for some time. For the Netherlands, continued support for the CTBTO and the establishment of the verification network are of paramount importance in ensuring the Treaty's long-term well being.