

# Keynote Address

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**Managing Non-Proliferation and Disarmament in the XXI Century:**

**The Key Role of the CTBT**

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It is a great privilege for me to address you tonight – indeed, a triple privilege. I am able to return to the great city of Rome, to meet with friends and colleagues who work on disarmament and non-proliferation issues, and to enjoy a fine meal – not necessarily in that rank order.

Though the Landau Network-Centro Volta was established not long ago, it has already organized a large number of projects on diverse security issues that are global in scope. Its efforts to focus on scientific and technical aspects of many such issues is particularly welcome, given the extremely rapid rate of technological change around the world that is affecting international peace and security. I also commend the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs for its vision in recognizing the need for deeper understanding and greater multilateral cooperation in addressing disarmament and non-proliferation challenges posed by weapons of mass destruction.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon fully shares this vision and has repeatedly voiced his determination to revitalize multilateral efforts in both disarmament and non-proliferation, which he views as mutually reinforcing and indispensable for the future of international peace and security. Progress in achieving these great goals will require extensive cooperation not only at the level of governments, but also civil society, and we may already be witnessing some of the fruits of this cooperation in our increasingly interdependent world.

It is often noted, for example, that the frequency of wars between states has been declining in recent decades. Yet armed conflicts *inside* states continue to rage around the world, civilian deaths and casualties continue to mount, and prospects for social and economic development continue to be eroded in such states. A thriving illicit trade in small arms and light weapons continues, as the world community valiantly continues to improve its collective efforts against such trade. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute has just reported that global military expenditures last year were around \$1.2 trillion – a staggering figure, reminiscent of a statistic one last saw during the Cold War – while investments continue to fall short in meeting the needs of the poorest of the poor worldwide, as identified in the UN’s Millennium Development Goals.

These are all problems that are affecting millions of living human beings today. People tomorrow, however, may be facing even more formidable challenges, especially if national and collective efforts fail to eliminate weapons of mass destruction and to prevent their proliferation to additional states or their acquisition by non-state actors.

I am not the first to have observed that the use of such weapons, especially nuclear weapons, would jeopardize virtually all the United Nations seeks to achieve. Imagine trying to promote economic development, a clean environment, the most fundamental human right to life, and all the solemn principles of the Charter, in the wake of a nuclear war or in a world confronting acts of nuclear terrorism. Reflecting on the tragedy of 9/11, former Secretary-General Kofi Annan once stated that “We have entered the third millennium through a gate of fire” – if weapons of mass destruction are again used, humanity’s next gate of fire could be its last.

The fear of such a calamity has already provided a powerful incentive for multilateral cooperation. People often forget that the overwhelming majority of states in the world have absolutely no interest whatsoever in acquiring any such weapons. These states have wisely chosen to join multilateral treaties, to enact domestic laws and regulations, to promote expanded international cooperation, and to engage in other such activities to eliminate all such weapons and prevent their proliferation. This offers us something – actually something quite solid – on which to build.

We have made a great deal of progress in confronting these challenges. We hear a lot – and justifiably so -- whenever there are allegations of non-compliance with the three multilateral treaties dealing with weapons of mass destruction – the NPT, BWC, and CWC. To me, such reports do not testify to any weaknesses in the treaties themselves –they testify instead to the strength of the world’s commitment to the goals of these treaties. If nobody cared, reports of non-compliance would get no attention whatsoever. The fact is that people do indeed care about the fate of these treaties.

Also, I find it interesting that the world takes compliance for granted –nobody seems to take notice when another day passes and virtually all the parties to these treaties continue to live up to their solemn obligations. Each of these treaties is essentially a living document – it is continually evolving, as more states join, as non-compliance issues are identified and addressed, and as new challenges come to light. We are witnessing the gradual emergence of a global rule of law governing the disposition, and guiding the eventual destruction, of the world’s deadliest weapons. By promoting universal membership and full compliance, we are all contributing to this larger rule of law.

Here is where the significance of the CTBT becomes clear. Viewed in isolation, the CTBT does not offer a panacea: it cannot alone guarantee against future proliferation – either of the vertical or horizontal variety – nor can it alone achieve global nuclear disarmament. It will, however, allow for major steps forward in both of these areas and this is why the world has pursued it for so long.

The CTBT may be viewed an indispensable piece of a larger puzzle. The puzzle consists of the 62 years of efforts inside the United Nations -- and by highly motivated governments and groups in civil society – to eliminate nuclear weapons and to prevent their proliferation. The world has been seeking a nuclear test ban since 2 April 1954, when India’s Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru proposed what he termed a “standstill agreement” covering such tests. The goal of concluding a comprehensive treaty has not only been the subject of countless UN General Assembly resolutions, it was also part of the “package deal” that led to the indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995.

At the NPT Review Conference in 2000, the parties called again for the “early entry into force” of the CTBT. I believe that the future of the NPT will depend to a great extent on the future of the CTBT. A new round of nuclear tests, anywhere, even by non-parties, would call into question not just the goal of a comprehensive nuclear test ban, but also the basic goal of global nuclear disarmament. I do not believe that the NPT can rest solely upon the twin pillars of non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy – and nuclear tests are inconsistent with its third pillar of disarmament.

I note that the 2006 report of the international Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission, chaired by Hans Blix, strongly endorsed the entry into force of the CTBT, as did George Shultz, William Perry, Henry Kissinger, and Sam Nunn in their *Wall Street Journal* op-ed on disarmament published last January. I was pleased to have met recently with this group at Stanford University and it is encouraging to see this new interest both in disarmament and the CTBT in the United States.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has added his own voice to this cause. On 17 September, I delivered his message to the states attending the CTBT conference in Vienna on facilitating the entry into force of the treaty, in which he called for “rededication to the noble work that lies ahead” in achieving this goal – he added his hope that history would remember 9 October 2006 as the date of the world’s last nuclear test. In a message delivered on 21 October at the annual Pugwash conference in

Bari, he added that “disarmament must remain at the top of our agenda”, a theme that he has stressed throughout his first year of office.

I believe that persistent efforts by Italy and thoughtful initiatives by non-profit groups like the Landau network – multiplied by additional efforts by other states and groups throughout the world – will eventually bring us closer to the day when the CTBT will enter into force. Let us re-dedicate ourselves to achieve this great goal, for the safety and security of both present and future generations.

I thank you for inviting me to speak with you tonight, and wish you well in your own individual and collective efforts on behalf of this treaty.