

Special Meeting on the Consolidation of the Regime Established in the Treaty of Tlatelolco and to Promote the Full Force and Effect of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)

Presentation

by
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Excellencies, distinguished participants,

It is an honour for me to address this Special Meeting of the OAS Committee on Hemispheric Security on the Consolidation of the Regime Established in the Treaty of Tlatelolco and to Promote the Full Force and Effect of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). As a citizen of Brazil, and in my capacity as the UN's High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, I would like to express my gratitude to this Committee for inviting me to participate in this important event.

The two treaties that serve as the focal points of today's meeting represent significant steps in rejecting nuclear weapons and in seeking the total elimination of nuclear arsenals. By signing and ratifying the CTBT, States of the Latin American and Caribbean region have underscored their commitment to the promotion of international security, nuclear disarmament, and non-proliferation – a commitment also eloquently expressed in the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

Although I will focus my remarks today on the CTBT, I cannot help but pay tribute to the great legacy of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, whose parties now include all states in this region. This Treaty did not only establish the world's first nuclear-weapon-free zone in a populated area, it offered a model that inspired the creation of similar zones in four additional regions – the South Pacific, Southeast Asia, Africa, and Central Asia. Its Preamble contains one of the most powerful statements in any treaty of the dangers posed by nuclear weapons – and its first Article affirms a positive duty of all parties to use nuclear energy exclusively for peaceful purposes. It is no surprise that this Treaty has always enjoyed strong support at the United Nations, even before it was concluded.

The United Nations has also engaged in activities worldwide to promote the entry into force of the CTBT ever since it was opened for signature in September 1996. Several of these measures have been undertaken with the Preparatory Commission for the CTBT Organization (CTBTO). The formal basis for this cooperation was established by an Agreement to Regulate the Relationship between the United Nations and the CTBTO, which was signed in May 2000.

Since then, the United Nations and the CTBTO's Provisional Technical Secretariat have jointly engaged in numerous activities to promote understanding of the Treaty among decision makers and the general public. Together, we have also worked to strengthen political support and to encourage international cooperation for the Treaty's early entry into force. The Secretary-General of the United Nations, acting as Depositary of the CTBT and in accordance with its Article XIV, has convened five Conferences between 1999 to 2007 aimed at facilitating the Treaty's entry into force.

The United Nations also supports CTBT-related work at the regional level, thus contributing to the CTBTO's own direct discussions with States in all regions of the

world. In this particular region, this support is provided through its Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, which is part of the UN's Office for Disarmament Affairs (ODA). Based in Lima, this Regional Centre cooperates closely with the CTBTO and the Treaty of Tlatelolco's Agency, OPANAL, to promote the CTBT and to build national capacities for implementing it.

In terms of Treaty status throughout the region, in 2000/2001, the Provisional Technical Secretariat and the UN's Lima Regional Centre developed a cooperation mechanism to promote the signature and ratification of the CTBT in four Latin American States whose ratification was necessary, according to Annex II of the Treaty, for the Treaty to enter into force. I am very pleased that each of these four States – namely, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay, and most recently Colombia – has since ratified the Treaty.

In 2004, this cooperation focused on countries in the Caribbean, with the Bahamas and Antigua and Barbuda being the first States to be visited by both organizations. Antigua & Barbuda ratified the Treaty in January 2006, whilst The Bahamas announced its ratification during a CTBTO workshop in November 2007. Barbados, another country consulted and visited by the partners as part of this cooperation, ratified the Treaty on 14 January 2008. I remain hopeful that the United States – as the first State to sign the CTBT and as a fellow member of the OAS – will also decide to ratify the Treaty, a step that would undoubtedly improve prospects for its early entry into force.

All in all, a total of 29 States among the 33 States in the Latin American and the Caribbean region of have signed the Treaty, while 28 States have so far ratified it. In other words, only four States in the region have taken no CTBT treaty action thus far.

The ratifications of Latin American and Caribbean States in the past few months have succeeded in raising expectations that the few remaining countries in this region, still not Party to the Treaty, will soon follow suit. Further cooperation between the CTBTO's Provisional Technical Secretariat and UN's Lima Regional Centre is expected throughout 2008. With the support and participation of Austria and Costa Rica – the two Co-chairs of Article XIV Conference – this cooperation will focus on Dominica, Guatemala, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, as well as possibly Cuba. This effort has several aims, including:

- continuing to raise awareness on the need to sign and ratify the Treaty;
- identifying national needs where the Provisional Technical Secretariat and the UN's Lima Regional Centre could provide assistance;
- providing best practices and lessons-learned on how best to ensure Treaty adherence;
- helping to enhance national capacity and establishing and/or fostering national dialogue and regional processes for CTBT universality and implementation; and
- responding to any questions and/or clarifications national policy-makers may

have.

This 2008 cooperation may also comprise the following potential activities:

- organizing national one-day consultation missions designed to raise awareness and promote interaction to address specific concerns expressed by the beneficiary States;
- creating national committees/working groups which could eventually evolve into the nucleus of the National Authority for the CTBT and the establishment of the National Data Centre; and
- developing a country signature/ratification strategy.

In spite of the welcome progress in expanding the number of CTBT adherents in the region, and in the momentum towards its universality, many of the challenges that confront the Treaty's entry into force still persist today ... eleven years after its opening for signature. It is clear that there remains a need for concerted efforts at the global, regional, and national levels in order for the Treaty to enter into force.

The UN Secretary-General, in his message at the opening of the Fifth Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT, called on all States that had not signed or ratified the Treaty to do so as soon as possible – especially those whose ratification is needed for the Treaty's entry into force. Until this great goal is achieved, he urged all States to maintain a moratorium on all types of nuclear explosions and to refrain from acts that would defeat the object or purpose of the Treaty. At the Millennium Summit, the Secretary-General named the CTBT as one of the 25 core multilateral treaties, and in 2007, he included it as one of the treaties that most directly affect human beings.

In closing, I am confident that the States of the Latin American and Caribbean region will work to enhance their support for the CTBTO and the Treaty, which the United Nations will also continue to promote, in partnership with the CTBTO.

On a more personal note, I must say that anybody who examines the record of commitment of the States in this region to the achievement of global nuclear disarmament and to strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime cannot help but be impressed. I was not therefore at all surprised to see that the Committee on Hemispheric Security decided to convene this meeting – it is yet another expression of the importance of these issues to all States in this Region.

Thank you for inviting me today, and please accept my very best wishes for success in all your future work.