

## FACT SHEET

### COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN TREATY

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) bans nuclear weapon test explosions and any other nuclear explosions (Article I). Unlike the Partial Test Ban Treaty of 1963, which banned nuclear tests in the atmosphere, underwater and in space, the CTBT bans nuclear weapon test explosions anywhere. Negotiated but not agreed by the Conference on Disarmament, the treaty was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in resolution 50/245 on 10 September 1996 and opened for signature on 24 September 1996. The 2010 NPT Review Conference, in its Final Document, recognizes that “the cessation of all nuclear test explosions and all other nuclear explosions, by constraining the development and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and ending the development of advanced new types of nuclear weapons, constitutes an effective measure of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects.”

**“I am committed to the goal of a world free of nuclear tests and nuclear weapons. During the last five years I have visited Semipalatinsk, Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Nobody can visit such places and return home the same person. Nuclear tests poison the environment – and they also poison the political climate. They breed mistrust, isolation and fear.”**

*Secretary-General, 17 February 2012,  
Vienna.*

Over 2000 nuclear explosions were recorded between July 1945 when the first nuclear bomb was tested by the United States and 1996 when the CTBT banning such explosions was opened for signature. These nuclear tests were undertaken by the United States (1000+), the Soviet Union (700+), France (200+), the United Kingdom and China (45 each).

Since the CTBT was opened for signature 1996, three countries have tested nuclear weapons explosive devices: India and Pakistan in 1998, and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) in 2006, 2009, 2013 and 2016.



While the CTBT has been nearly universally accepted, it has yet to enter into force. So far, 183 countries have signed the Treaty, of which 164 have also ratified it, including three nuclear-weapon States: France, the Russian Federation and the United Kingdom. Before the CTBT can enter into

force, however, 44 countries listed in Annex 2 of the Treaty, must sign and ratify it. Of these, eight have yet to do so: DPRK, India and Pakistan, which have not yet signed the Treaty, while China, Egypt, Iran, Israel and the United States have not ratified it. The CTBT will enter into force when all States listed in Annex 2 of the Treaty have signed and ratified it. The last Annex 2 State to ratify the Treaty was Indonesia on 6 February 2012. For the latest status of signatures and ratifications of the CTBT, please visit the UN Treaty Collection Website at [www.treaties.un.org](http://www.treaties.un.org).

In order to facilitate the promotion of the entry into force of the Treaty, the Secretary-General, upon the request of a majority of ratifying states, convenes biennially the conferences on facilitating the entry into force of the Treaty (i.e. the “Article XIV” conferences). Eight such conferences have been held every alternate year since 1999 in Vienna, Austria, and New York, United States, respectively. In addition, the ministerial meeting of the Friends of the CTBT (Australia, Canada, Finland, Germany and Japan and the Netherlands) is held in the years when an Article XIV conference does not take place. Seven such conferences have been held since 2002.

### **CTBT Verification Regime**

The Vienna-based Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO PrepCom) maintains the International Monitoring System (IMS). The IMS is a worldwide network of seismic, hydro acoustic, infrasound and radionuclide stations used to remotely detect nuclear explosions and to thereby verify compliance with the CTBT. The network is nearly 90% complete with 301 monitoring facilities installed. When fully established, the IMS will consist of 337 monitoring facilities in 89 countries and will be complemented by an on-site inspection regime applicable once the Treaty has entered into force.

### **The role of the United Nations**

The Secretary-General of the United Nations is the depositary of the CTBT and the convener of the “Article XIV” conferences. He has repeatedly called for the universalization of the Treaty and its early entry into force. The United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs together with the Technical Secretariat of the CTBTO serves as the secretariat for these conferences and maintains “a close working relationship on matters of mutual interest and concern” in accordance with the Agreement to Regulate the Relationship between the United Nations and the CTBTO PrepCom (General Assembly resolution 54/280).

### **CTBT@20**

To mark the 20th anniversary of the opening for signature of the CTBT, on 23 September 2016, Security Council adopted Resolution 2310 (2016). “Stressing the vital importance and urgency of achieving the early entry into force of the Treaty,” the resolution urges all States that have yet to sign or ratify the CTBT to do so immediately and uphold their moratoriums on nuclear testing. It also called on States to support and strengthen the verification regime administered by the CTBTO Preparatory Commission. The UN and the CTBTO organized and planned a series of events and activities to commemorate the anniversary, including the ministerial-level event in Vienna on 13 June 2016 and a meeting of the General Assembly on 31 August 2016 to observe the International Day against Nuclear Tests.

### **Resources for Further Reading**

United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law “Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty” at: <http://legal.un.org/avl/ha/ctbt/ctbt.html>.