

CTBTO event on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the NPT
Remarks by Ambassador Gustavo Zlauvinen
President-designate Tenth NPT RevCon
6 October 2020

High Representative Nakamitsu
Executive Secretary Zerbo
Distinguished panellists
Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen

My sincere thanks to the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization for arranging today's virtual event. The series of NPT webinars organized by the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs during the COVID-enforced postponement of the Tenth NPT Review Conference have been both well-received and effective in maintaining momentum. They have allowed States Parties to engage with experts and other stakeholders, such as civil society and the youth, on the issues most vital to the Treaty. I am very glad to see the CTBTO Provisional Technical Secretariat taking up the cause, and I thank the personal commitment by Executive Secretary Zerbo in that regard.

Before I start my remarks, let me express my sympathy and solidarity with those states and people suffering from the COVID-19 pandemic. It is a constant reminder that we must remain vigilant against global threats with direct consequences for the entire world's population – not least from the threats posed by nuclear weapons.

As we have heard today, there is a high level of interdependency between the NPT and the CTBT. I appreciate the panellists' thoughts and views on how this linkage can be used to further strengthen both treaties.

The need to ban nuclear testing was central to the negotiations of the NPT, and the CTBT constitutes one of the most important effective measures under Article VI. Likewise, pressure to negotiate the CTBT was instrumental to the indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995.

As I have consistently said at events such as this, it is not my responsibility to dictate the substance of any outcome from the Review Conference. That is entirely the prerogative of States Parties. It is, however, my role to facilitate an outcome that is balanced across all three of the NPT's pillars – nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation, and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The CTBT is integral to both pillars one and two of the NPT. As an integral element of a world free of nuclear weapons and as an essential roadblock to the development of nuclear weapons, it is both a disarmament and non-proliferation measure. It is an effective brake on the qualitative and quantitative improvement of nuclear weapons.

For these reasons, the CTBT has been an important element of every NPT Review Conference outcome since 1995, as States Parties have rightly recognized the importance of an in force CTBT to the goals of the NPT.

In my ongoing consultations with regional groups, States Parties have, understandably, been primarily concerned with the logistics for the Review Conference – when and how will it be held. However, they have also held discussions on substance and there have been many calls for a reaffirmation of support for the NPT and for all commitments undertaken as States Parties. This would obviously include all commitments to bring about the entry into force of the CTBT.

When the Review Conference is held, I expect support from the vast majority of States Parties for an outcome that includes a strong endorsement of the CTBT. Such an endorsement would likely seek to bolster its entry into force and universality, while praising the effectiveness and strengthening of the International Monitoring System, as well as to reinforce the international norm against nuclear testing. In the context of nuclear disarmament verification, I hope that States Parties will recognize the CTBTO's leadership in this field, especially in the integration of new technologies into its work.

Supporters of the CTBT are also advocates of a strong nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, with the NPT as its load-bearing column. Such a regime

is in the security interests of all States to prevent any use of nuclear weapons and bring about their elimination.

It is, therefore, in the interests of all States to both realize an in force CTBT and ensure a fully implemented and robust NPT. I believe the Tenth NPT Review Conference is an opportunity to help achieve both.

I look forward to hearing your questions.

Thank you.