

**EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Conference
EU Non-Proliferation Consortium**

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**Special Session 5 (16.15 – 17.45)
"Promoting the CTBT"
Introductory Remarks by Ambassador Balázs Csuday**

1. The position of the CTBT in a changing disarmament architecture

Disarmament and non-proliferation require a tight attention and relentless efforts of the international community now, as well as in the future. Since the Prague speech of President Obama in April 2009, we all seem to share the same goal which is to live in a world free of nuclear weapons.

How do we get there? Promoting legal order, a culture of compliance with existing obligations and encouraging further international disarmament and non-proliferation negotiations are our major tools.

Along with the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the CTBT is usually referred to as one of the cornerstones of the global disarmament and non-proliferation architecture. Despite the fact that it is under pressure because of the lack of some remaining key ratifications, since its opening for signatures, it has functioned adequately as the basis of a strong norm against nuclear testing

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, banning all nuclear-weapon tests, is one of the most critical mechanisms to halt the nuclear arms race. It represents one of the most important steps towards a nuclear weapons free world. Closing the door on the destabilizing and dangerous practice of nuclear testing requires transforming the de-facto international norm against nuclear testing into an enforceable legally binding instrument. Furthermore, in order to move towards multilateral disarmament involving all the nuclear armed States, it is imperative that the CTBT enters into force.

Unlike the NPT, the CTBT does not differentiate between haves and have-nots. It imposes a legally binding verification mechanism upon both Non-Nuclear Weapon States and Nuclear Weapon States, an unprecedented evolution within the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

2. Risks of a diminishing attention

The current situation of no potential Annex-II ratifications on the horizon represents a crucial challenge for the Preparatory Commission and the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the

CTBTO: the question is how long we will be able to secure the appropriate financial means for a credible and sustainable verification regime.

The 2000 NPT Review Conference designated entry into force of the CTBT as the first of 13 practical steps to achieving nuclear disarmament. It has been too long since then, that the global test ban is *'in operation'* but not *'in effect'*.

The most important mission of the CTBT is to provide the confidence that no nuclear test can go undetected. When North Korea announced its nuclear tests, the CTBT verification regime proved its worth, detecting the tests reliably and confidently.

Nevertheless, the fact that the Treaty is operational may create the false impression that entry into force is not indispensable. This is a very risky approach to take. Until the Treaty is legally locked in, there will always be the chance of going back to the days of nuclear testing. That in turn would have grave repercussions for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. In these circumstances, handling CTBT in a *"business as usual manner"* would be a major mistake.

3. A regional approach – focus on the Middle-East

The CTBT can serve as a regional confidence and security building measure. Ratification of the Treaty by States in the Middle East, in particular the Annex 2 countries Egypt, Iran and Israel, would be a positive catalyst for other security-related issues affecting the region. The CTBT can play an important role as a confidence-building and transparency measure in the Middle East.

The Integrated Field Exercise (IFE14) to be held in Jordan at the end of this year, involving over 100 participants from across the region and the world, is a major contribution to the promotion of the Treaty in the Middle East. Such activities are of particular value given the developments in the region: be it chemical weapons in Syria or controversies of the Iranian nuclear program. Jordan's efforts to ensure the success of the IFE14 will contribute to the process towards the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

An increased support for the CTBT in the Middle East could pave the way for a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the region, advancing the ultimate goals of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

There is a strong complimentary force between Nuclear Weapon Free Zones (NWFZ) and the CTBT. While the CTBT has not yet achieved legal international standing, it is already effectively in force in all of the States covered by existing NWFZs. As such, the CTBT provides a powerful verification mechanism to NWFZs. Moreover, ratification of the CTBT by countries that are not yet covered by NWFZs, such as those in the Middle East, can serve as powerful confidence and security building measures aimed at creating the right conditions

for the establishment of such a zone.

The conduct IFE14 in Jordan will demonstrate the progress the CTBTO made since the previous field test in 2008. IFE14 will test crucial aspects of all inspection phases in an integrated manner and assess progress with the development of On-site Inspection (OSI) procedures and techniques.

IFE14 will help to gain enhanced political support for further development of the OSI regime and the promotion of the CTBT. By developing and testing the OSI regime, the CTBTO can further demonstrate that the Treaty is verifiable, thus facilitating the decision to join the CTBT to those countries who are yet to do so, particularly the remaining Annex 2 countries. An eventual success of a UN conference on a Middle-East Nuclear Weapon Free Zone to be held until the next NPT RevCon would also have an immense beneficial impact.

4. *An innovative tool: The Group of Eminent Persons (GEM)*

When taking up Article XIV presidency, we were in agreement with the assessment of the then newly appointed executive secretary Dr. Lassina Zerbo, that the advocacy of the early entry into force of the CTBT may no longer sufficiently be assured by the instrument of the Article XIV Conferences and Ministerial Meetings, rather it needs to be strengthened by some additional measures. Therefore, since the beginning, we have most warmly commanded his initiative to establish a group of high profile personalities that are in a position to efficiently represent and further promote the ratification of the CTBT.

I am happy to have assisted at the very birth of this eminent group last September in the premises of our Permanent Mission in New York. I am confident that the endeavors of the Group of Eminent Persons will contribute to a reinforced dialogue with important stakeholders in the remaining Annex II countries. We consider that the activities of the GEM and those of the Article XIV coordinators can and should be planned on a complementary basis. A thorough and regular coordination between us is indispensable, even imperative to secure a smooth and fruitful cooperation for the sake of the same cause.

We consider the latest meeting of the Group in Stockholm on 10-11 April was a successful one that was able to determine some basic guidelines for the future of the Group in general and also to outline concrete and imminent actions to be taken individually by its members. Since the reference in a very positive tone to the GEM in the Final Declaration of the last G7 meeting in Brussels – which is obviously a result of the intervention of some GEM members – there is no longer any doubt over the potential of these eminent persons, experts, and scientists to exert a strong conclusive impact, rather to be able *to influence* high ranking political decision-makers. And this is the main reason to keep this initiative alive and further unfold its capacities.