

**Address by the Executive Secretary
of the Preparatory Commission for the
Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization**

Mr Tibor Tóth

**UNGA First Committee
Wednesday, 13 October 2010**

Mr Chairman,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is indeed a pleasure to address the First Committee today. This dialogue comes in the wake of several significant milestones for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. In 2010, the international community clearly reaffirmed its resolve to move forward. Aspirations for the realization of the dream of a world free of nuclear weapons have been revived. 2010 saw the observation of the first international day against nuclear testing on August 29th. High level events, such as the GA's meeting on the revitalization of the work of the CD, and the NPT Review Conference have deepened the sense of optimism. They were also a reminder that multilateralism has not withered away. That multilateral action to face common challenges is indeed still possible. It is perhaps the only way forward in a world of increasing complexity. More than ever, the changing international climate promises a new beginning in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. It shall be up to you, delegates of the First Committee to finally realize the will of the international community.

A few short months ago, the 2010 NPT Review Conference overcame the failure of 2005. The continued success, and for some observers, the very existence and cohesion of the multilateral nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime has received a huge boost. The Conference reaffirmed the CTBT's essential role for the NPT and the nuclear disarmament and non proliferation regime. The Conference affirmed the vital importance of the entry into

force of the CTBT as a core element of the regime. The participating states agreed that the Treaty plays a significant role in constraining the development of nuclear weapons, as well as the acquisition of a nuclear weapon capability.

In other words, the CTBT was recognized as an effective legal instrument to combat both horizontal and vertical proliferation. It is imperative that the international community implements the serious undertakings of the 2010 Review Conference. There is no shortcut to the implementation of these commitments. The CTBT has a key role to play in today's security environment. The CTBT can be the rally point on the road to the total elimination of nuclear weapons. A strong and verifiable final barrier to a nuclear weapons capability is of vital importance for a comprehensive approach to address our common security challenges. Norms need to be established and acted upon. Where they exist they should be strengthened. The CTBT offers such a systemic approach to address the challenges of the nuclear non proliferation regime being the last barrier against nuclear weapons.

We in the Preparatory Commission of the CTBT were particularly gratified with the results of the fifth session of the Ministerial meeting on the CTBT. The Conference was held on 23 September here in NY. It was attended by more than 70 countries, many at Ministerial level. Co-chaired by the Foreign Ministers from Japan and Australia, the Conference was an unequivocal expression of the international community's continued faith in the Treaty, and the Commission. In a strongly worded statement, hold-out States were called on to sign and ratify the CTBT for it to enter into force. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who is the depository of the CTBT, reiterated that call, and expressed his hope that the Treaty would enter into force within the coming two years. But we need leadership, leadership, and more leadership. We need determined action by the international community to go the very last mile. The First Committee has a special responsibility in this regard. The time is right for members of this Committee to engage in real, constructive dialogue and move away from the rhetoric of the past. It is time for the entry into force of the CTBT.

The CTBT is a unifying Treaty around which the international community can rally. As you are aware, the CTBT today boasts a near universal membership. 182 countries have signed the Treaty. 153 states have now ratified. Yet there remain 9 among 44 nuclear technology-capable states whose ratification is needed for entry into force.

The PTS has made major achievements in the build up of CTBT's unprecedented verification regime. As it stands today, more than 80% of the International Monitoring System has been built and certified. The PTS renewed its IT infra structure in its entirety. A new GCI is now in place, and fully operational, leading to higher availability and reliability of data.

But this is not the whole story, Mr Chairman. In the Commission, we recognize the true value of the investment with which we were entrusted by member states. We see this investment as a platform for scientific knowledge and capacity development in member states. Member states from developing countries are the prime potential beneficiaries of this investment. The unique verification system which is being shaped offers a host of opportunities for applications of scientific research and everyday life. Whether it is in the area of early tsunami warning, aviation safety, climate change, or marine life research, the four monitoring technologies have an obvious advantage. The Commission has offered hundreds of training opportunities in technologies associated with the verification system for researchers and scientists from member states.

As an organization operating at the cutting edge of scientific and technological knowledge, we are determined to share that knowledge with our member states. We seek to strengthen the scientific capability of member states in the four technologies used in the verification system. In order to ensure the readiness of member states for the entry into force of the Treaty, the Commission is providing assistance in the legislative and constitutional issues arising from the Treaty. The Commission is also working closely with member states to set up their National Data Centres. Through the provision of the necessary training, technical infrastructure and equipment, we ensure that member states reap the benefits of this unique organization. Such capacity building and development enhances the real and potential scientific and technical capabilities of member states. These new skills have a spill over effect into other areas of development.

Since its establishment, the Commission has trained more than two thousand technicians and professionals from member states. We are currently financing the

participation of nine technical experts from developing countries in official technical meetings of the Commission for a whole year.

We are also working on a multi-year project to assist member states from Africa and Latin America to establish their national data centres. As you know, these Centres are necessary to access and analyse the invaluable data and other products generated by the International Monitoring System and the International Data Centre.

Next week, the PTS will launch its first ever web streamed induction course targeting diplomats and scientists on the scientific and political significance of the CTBT. The course will offer the opportunity to a wide ranging audience to make the fullest of the expertise of the PTS. In addition to the more than 40 participants attending the course in Vienna, stakeholders throughout the globe will be able to participate through live web streaming.

Mr Chairman,

The CTBT is a joint international venture of its stakeholders. It's an all inclusive, multilateral and democratic legally binding framework. It's a prohibition regime of equal obligations. It has a verification regime that relies on its parties, and serves all of them in an equal and transparent manner. The CTBT is of course not the answer to all non-proliferation concerns. But it is an integral part of the comprehensive nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. As such CTBT entry into force may pave the way to solving many of the current and future challenges facing the regime. But time is of the essence. The good will and momentum generated over the past two years needs to be met with equally good action. Action on your part; you the member states; the stakeholders and owners of this process. Will we rise to the challenge?

Thank you, Mr Chairman.