



**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**  
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**REMARKS TO THE FOURTH BIENNIAL  
MINISTERIAL MEETING  
IN SUPPORT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE  
NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN TREATY**  
**New York, 24 September 2008**

Your Excellencies, distinguished Foreign Ministers,  
Special Envoy of the Government of Japan, Her Excellency Ms. Yoriko Kawaguchi  
Mr. Jaap Ramaker, Special Representative to Promote the CTBT Ratification Process  
Mr. Tibor Tóth, Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission of the Comprehensive Nuclear-  
Test-Ban Treaty Organization  
Former US Secretary of Defence, Mr. William Perry,  
UN Messenger of Peace, Mr. Michael Douglas,  
Mr. Sergio Duarte, the UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs,  
Mr. Sergei Ordzhonikidze, Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament,  
Distinguished guests, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

It is an honour to address you on this vital subject. Since it was opened for signature 12 years ago today, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty has achieved near universal adherence. One hundred and seventy-nine States have signed it, and 144 have ratified it. I am encouraged that in 2008, Barbados, Columbia and Malaysia ratified the Treaty. I also welcome Iraq's recent signature of the Treaty.

However, despite the progress that has been made, the CTBT has still not entered into force. Of the 44 States whose ratifications are required, nine have yet to do so. This is cause for serious concern.

The Treaty's entry into force would be a major step in our effort to build a safer, more peaceful world. It would outlaw all nuclear tests and move us towards the larger goals of ridding the world of nuclear weapons and preventing their proliferation.

It is with profound appreciation that I commend the outreach activities by the Foreign Ministers who are here with us today. Let me say from my heart that your efforts to promote the entry into force of the Treaty are truly appreciated. Some critics are saying it would be unrealistic to expect the entry into force of the Treaty anytime soon given the overall stalemate in the areas of disarmament and non-proliferation. I flatly reject such a pessimistic view. With the persistence and optimism that you have demonstrated thus far, we can, and we shall, see the day when the Treaty enters into force.

Therefore I very much welcome the launching of the Fourth Joint Ministerial Statement of support for the Treaty. States are not only reaffirming their commitment to its entry into force, but are showing real determination in working towards that important goal.

Having served as chairman of the Preparatory Commission of the CTBTO in 1999, I am personally committed to achieving this objective. Last month in Mexico City, I attended an extraordinary session of OPANAL, the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean. I emphasized the importance of international efforts to prevent proliferation and achieve nuclear disarmament. The global system of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation faces significant challenges. If not properly handled, these challenges could pose far greater threats to regional and international peace and security.

The prospects for achieving nuclear disarmament and the ultimate objective in the disarmament process -- general and complete disarmament under effective international control - hinge on the international security environment. But we cannot wait for the perfect security environment to come along. Rather, I believe that the process of moving forward in disarmament, non-proliferation and against the uses of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists will itself contribute to international peace and security.

It is worthwhile noting that we are already past the mid-point of the preparatory process for the Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which will take place in 2010. The CTBT is an integral part of reinforcing the NPT regime. I encourage all States to seize this opportunity.

The United Nations, for its part, will continue to work with the Preparatory Commission for the CTBTO so that it will be ready to fulfil its vital functions upon the Treaty's entry into force. I particularly laud the efforts being made by the Preparatory Commission to establish the Treaty's international monitoring system, and encourage its Member States to continue providing their full support for completion of the global verification regime.

Allow me once again to urge all Governments that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the Treaty without delay. I also call upon States to continue their voluntary adherence to a nuclear-weapon-test moratorium and to refrain from acts contrary to the object and purpose of the Treaty prior to its entry into force. As Depository of the Treaty, I intend to send a letter to the nine countries whose ratifications are required for the Treaty to enter into force, urging them to do so as soon as possible.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The threat to the very survival of humankind posed by the existence of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, is universally recognized. We must redouble our efforts to achieve deeper reductions in nuclear arsenals and to further diminish the role of nuclear weapons in security policies. With persistence and courage, a world free of nuclear weapons -- a safer world for present and future generations -- can be ours.

Thank you very much.