



United Nations

General Assembly

**Informal Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly to mark the
2015 Observance of the International Day against Nuclear Tests**

New York, 10 September 2015

EU Statement delivered by

**H.E. Mr. Ioannis Vrailas
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.
Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations**

Check against delivery

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Candidate Countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Serbia* and Albania*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.
2. Today, as the General Assembly marks again the International Day against Nuclear Tests, we recall that nineteen years ago, in September 1996, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty was opened for signature. The cessation of all nuclear weapon 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.
3. The CTBT is fundamentally important to the EU, and all EU Member States have signed and ratified the Treaty. We regret that the CTBT has still not entered into force and become legally binding. We have intensified our engagement by promoting substantive political dialogue with countries that still need to sign or ratify the Treaty. The EU will continue to provide strong political and financial support for the Treaty.
4. We welcome the latest ratification of the CTBT by Angola in March 2015, as well as the fact that Cuba requested and was granted observer status in the CTBTO at the June session of the Preparatory Commission. The EU sees this positive development as a first step towards the signature and ratification of the Treaty by Cuba. The EU is encouraged by these latest positive developments, but continues to stress that greater efforts are needed in order to significantly move ahead towards entry into force of the CTBT. We look forward to the upcoming Article XIV Conference to be held in New York in the margins of the UN General Assembly High-Level Segment at the end of September, and hope to hear more good news on the progress of signatures, ratifications and entry into force of the Treaty. In this regard, we call on all States, in particular Annex 2 States, who haven't done so yet to sign and ratify the CTBT without delay.
5. The EU remains deeply concerned that the DPRK has threatened a fourth nuclear test and calls on the DPRK to refrain from any further provocative action, as well as to sign and ratify the CTBT without delay. The nuclear tests carried out by the DPRK in 2006, 2009 and 2013 remind us all of the relevance of this Treaty and its verification regime. The International Monitoring System (IMS) and the International Data Centre (IDC) are essential tools in ensuring the credibility and effectiveness of the verification regime.
6. The EU is pleased that at the NPT 2015 Review Conference the CTBT was widely recognised as a core element of the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime. We hope that this profound support could serve as a good basis for progressing towards the entry into force of the Treaty.
7. Pending the entry into force of the CTBT, the EU expects that the de facto moratorium on nuclear test explosions will continue to be respected. We call on all States to comply with this

* *The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.*

moratorium and to refrain from conducting any action contrary to the obligations and provisions of the Treaty. As an additional practical measure, the EU urges all States that have facilities for nuclear weapon test explosions to dismantle all of these in an irreversible and verifiable process, transparent to the international community. While such voluntary undertakings can strengthen and underpin the de facto international norm against nuclear weapon test explosions, these can never be a substitute for the legally-binding prohibitions as enshrined in the CTBT.

Mr. Chairman,

8. Since 2006 the European Union has provided over 15 million euros in financial contributions through EU Joint Actions and Council Decisions for capacity building, advancement of the verification regime and to assist the activities of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission. The EU is currently working on further financial assistance to the Organisation beyond 2015.

9. The International Day against Nuclear Tests highlights the urgency of entry into force of this Treaty, not only as a political imperative but also as a concrete contribution to further strengthening international peace and security.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.