

**Statement to the 67th regular session of the
General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency
Preparatory Commission for the
Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization
25-29 September 2023**

Madam President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to express my congratulations on your election, Madam President, and to wish you, the IAEA Member States and the Secretariat, a productive General Conference. May I also convey sincere congratulations to Director General Rafael Grossi on his re-appointment. I am pleased to deliver this statement on behalf of Dr Robert Floyd, Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban-Treaty Organization.

While the mandates of the two organizations are distinct, the CTBTO Preparatory Commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency have always had much in common: we both work towards achieving a world free from nuclear weapons, we are important contributors to the global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime, and we have verification at the heart of our work.

The principles and methods that underpin our work also bring us together. Multilateralism and cooperation have formed the basis for many of our accomplishments. Both our organizations enjoy large memberships and rely on science and technology to serve and support our aims.

Over the years, these common objectives and common approaches have led to us working side-by-side.

Madam President,

The recent observance of the International Day against Nuclear Tests on 29 August reminded us all of the harm caused by decades of nuclear testing. But it again highlighted the commitment of the international community to banning nuclear test explosions – a commitment that has underpinned the CTBT since its opening for signature in 1996 – and even before that, when the aspiration of a test ban was written into the preamble of the NPT.

With 187 States Signatories and 178 ratifying States, the CTBT is getting very close to universality. We have had 2 more ratifications and one more signature since the last General Conference. The CTBT verification regime is robust. Over 90 per cent of the planned International Monitoring System facilities have been installed – 305 stations have been certified – and we have a long and solid track record in providing States Signatories with data and data products through our International Data Centre.

The fact remains that, despite an investment of well over one billion dollars into global security through the establishment of a verification regime, the CTBT is not yet in force. Its full benefits will not be realized until the eight remaining States listed in Annex 2 of the Treaty complete their respective ratification procedures.



However, the CTBT is already a success. Global uncertainty has brought renewed focus on the value and importance of our Non-Proliferation and disarmament architecture. This is in fact a moment to build from our successes. One of those, is the power of the norm against nuclear testing.

In the last two years, we have seen a surge in momentum towards universalization, and we are focused on translating that surge into greater momentum for entry into force. This was a key message delivered by states at the biennial Article XIV Conference on facilitating entry into force of the CTBT which took place just last week in New York.

At the same time, I would encourage all possessor states to restate their testing moratoria, as a sign of their national commitment to our collective goal – and as a means of building trust and confidence in these challenging times.

Madam President,

The IAEA and CTBTO share a home here in Vienna. We share a place in the global non-proliferation and disarmament architecture. Above all, we have a common ambition, shared by our memberships, to make the world safer, more secure – a better place.

It is only through cooperation that we can achieve a brighter future. Together.

Thank you.