



Security Council

Seventy-sixth year

8865th meeting

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New York

Provisional

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Byrne	(Ireland)
<i>Members:</i>	China	Mr. Zhang Jun
	Estonia	Mr. Tammsaar
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	India	Mr. Shringla
	Kenya	Mr. Kiboino
	Mexico	Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez
	Niger	Mr. Aougi
	Norway	Ms. Juul
	Russian Federation	Mr. Polyanskiy
	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Ms. King
	Tunisia	Mr. Laouani
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. Kariuki
	United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis
	Viet Nam	Mr. Dang

Agenda

Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Italy and South Africa to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mrs. Izumi Nakamitsu, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs; Mr. Robert Floyd, Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization; and Ms. Magdalene Wangui Wanyaga, Member of the CTBTO Youth Group.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I now give the floor to Mrs. Nakamitsu.

Mrs. Nakamitsu: At the outset, I would like to thank the Irish presidency of the Council for its initiative in convening today's event. I also would like to congratulate Mr. Floyd on his recent appointment as Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO). Allow me also to commend him on the successful conclusion of the twelfth Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) — or the Article XIV Conference — which was held last week in a virtual format for the first time in the Conference's history.

The norm against nuclear testing is one of the most hard-won gains of the post-Cold War era. Yet it exists today — violated by only one State in this century — because of the CTBT. Three decades in the making, a prohibition on nuclear testing has been a goal of the international community almost since the dawn of the atomic age. The CTBT represents the fulfilment of that goal.

From the deserts of Nevada to the steppes of Semipalatinsk to the outback of Australia and the atolls of the South Pacific, nuclear testing has done lasting damage to pristine environments, human health

and some of the most vulnerable communities in our international family. This alone should be enough to outlaw nuclear testing in perpetuity, yet the more than 2,000 tests that have been conducted since 1945 have also enabled the quantitative and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons, announcing the arrival of new nuclear-armed States and facilitating dangerous growth in the arsenals of their predecessors.

It is for this reason that the CTBT is recognized as an essential element of nuclear disarmament and a building block for a world free of nuclear weapons — the United Nations highest disarmament priority. Negotiating the CTBT was not easy. Its gestation lasted years, and when negotiations finally did commence, it was only by bringing the Treaty to the floor of the General Assembly that success was achieved.

Yet the negotiation of the CTBT also stands as a lesson for other multilateral disarmament initiatives — one of patience and one of determination, but also one of striking while the iron is hot. The twenty-fifth anniversary of the Treaty's negotiation brings us reasons both to celebrate and to rethink what we can do to overcome the challenges that still lie ahead.

Since its adoption by the General Assembly and opening for signature in September 1996, the Treaty has achieved near universal adherence, with 185 signatories and 170 ratifying States. It is one of the most widely supported treaties, not just in the disarmament and arms control field but in multilateral diplomacy. The International Monitoring System (IMS), which provides round-the-clock, real-time monitoring of any explosive nuclear activities on Earth, is now more than 90 per cent complete, with over 300 stations certified. The IMS is a towering achievement that has already demonstrated its worth on multiple occasions. The capacity-building benefits it provides are an excellent example of how multilateral disarmament instruments add value for all States and allow all States to participate in achieving their ends.

The cumulative result of these achievements is that no nuclear test conducted will ever evade the watchful eyes of the CTBTO, buttressing the strong global norm against any nuclear testing. Thanks to those States that have signed and ratified the CTBT, the Provisional Technical Secretariat has been transformed into a professional hub of scientific and technical expertise. I thank the staff of the Provisional Technical Secretariat for their enduring dedication to their cause.

Yet, despite all these remarkable achievements, there are still many challenges that lie ahead of us. The CTBT will play an important role in addressing those challenges. In recent years, we have seen a worrisome trend towards the modernization and expansion of nuclear arsenals. As the global arms control regime has crumbled, multilateral nuclear disarmament diplomacy has atrophied. As relations continue to decline among States that possess nuclear weapons, we cannot take it for granted that the norm against nuclear testing will hold.

Thus, a quarter of a century after States agreed to ban all nuclear tests for good, it is as important as ever to work towards upholding that norm and to pave a way to a world free of nuclear weapons. The best way to uphold the norm against testing is to reaffirm and enhance support for the CTBT — to reinforce its existing strengths and to strive to bring about its entry into force. We can do so on several fronts.

First, we must empower the youth of the world, on whose shoulders rests the responsibility to carry on the important work of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The CTBTO has made great strides in this area, with its CTBTO Youth Group initiative now counting nearly 1,000 participants. I look forward to hearing the Group's representative speak today. For the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, young people are an integral part of our activities in promoting disarmament and arms control, including through our own Youth4Disarmament initiative. Its members were recently involved in various initiatives to commemorate the International Day Against Nuclear Tests.

Secondly, we must not lose sight of the fact that the CTBT does not operate in a vacuum and that its full potential is realized when it works in tandem with other processes related to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The forthcoming Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is one occasion to do so. The NPT and the CTBT are inextricably interlinked. A ban on nuclear tests is considered the critical component of both nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, as stated in the preamble of the CTBT. Some of the old hands in this Chamber may also recall that negotiation of the CTBT was an essential element of the agreement by States parties to indefinitely extend the NPT in 1995. The Review Conference will, I hope, provide impetus to strengthen support for the CTBT and the global ban on nuclear tests.

Thirdly, we must continue to provide support for the IMS and further strengthen the CTBTO's technical capabilities to detect activities related to nuclear testing. The enhanced technical capability of the System to detect any and all nuclear tests would be a deterrent to any State that may harbour plans to develop nuclear weapons. Capacity-building activities undertaken by a number of States also contribute to the transfer of these technologies and expertise to developing countries.

Today, we rightly celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of a hard-won victory in multilateral nuclear disarmament diplomacy that has consistently benefited the international community. I hope that today's event will prompt us to reinforce the achievements made so far and provide a forum for the free exchange of ideas and suggestions on how to strengthen the monitoring regime, reinforce and solidify the global norm against nuclear testing and, of course, achieve the earliest possible entry-into-force of the Treaty.

The President: I thank Mrs. Nakamitsu for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Floyd.

Mr. Floyd: I am grateful to His Excellency Mr. Simon Coveney for the invitation to address today's Security Council meeting held, under Ireland's presidency, on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). I also thank Minister Byrne for presiding over this meeting.

The significance of the CTBT, and indeed its twenty-fifth anniversary, must be understood within the broader context of our collective goal of universal, non-discriminatory and verifiable nuclear disarmament. And while there may be differing views on the best path to achieve this goal, a verifiable and enforceable ban on nuclear testing must be a core component of the legal and technical architecture of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Anniversaries are a time for reflection. A comprehensive ban on nuclear testing has long been part and parcel of the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament agenda. First proposed in 1954, this long-awaited and eagerly anticipated measure has been decades in the making.

With the opening for signature of the CTBT 25 years ago, the international community declared unequivocally that the era of unrestrained nuclear

testing had come to an end. In the 25 years since its adoption, the Treaty has created and sustained a norm against nuclear testing so powerful that fewer than one dozen tests have been conducted since adoption, and only one country has violated it this millennium.

Compare the situation today with the world before the adoption of the Treaty, where the average explosive yield of nuclear tests each year was equivalent to nearly 1,000 Fukushima-sized bombs. Nuclear testing not only created geopolitical instability and supported the development of more powerful and deadly nuclear weapons; it also caused untold human suffering and environmental damage. Because of the CTBT, we have left that world far behind.

Anniversaries are also a time for celebration. The CTBT is already a great success story. There is near universal adherence to the Treaty's prohibition on nuclear explosions. With 185 signatures and 170 ratifications, there has been much progress towards the universalization of the CTBT. The object and purpose of the Treaty — a verifiable end to nuclear explosions — is a common goal shared by the entire international community.

Its state-of-the-art global verification regime is nearly complete, and its ability to meet the verification requirements of the Treaty has been proven time and time again. More than 90 per cent of the 337 monitoring facilities worldwide are in place, and our data processing and analysis capabilities continue to improve. The on-site inspection element of the verification regime is already at an advanced stage of readiness.

In addition to the core mission of nuclear test monitoring, the Treaty's verification regime also provides useful data for other civil and scientific purposes, including tsunami warning and climate change studies. All States signatories are entitled to equal access to the data and to benefit from technical training and capacity-building programmes.

Anniversaries are a time for renewal of commitments. States signatories kicked-off our twenty-fifth year last week at the Article XIV Conference by committing to taking concrete actions to secure additional signatures and ratifications. I congratulate Italy and South Africa as co-Presidents of the Conference on a very successful event and look forward to coordinating our efforts to welcome even more States into the CTBT community.

That will continue to strengthen the global norm against nuclear testing and build momentum towards its entry into force. Every signature and ratification we gain this coming year will be a cause for great celebration, and I trust that we will have much to celebrate.

We have also seen that there is real appetite for civil society and youth engagement on the CTBT. Council members will shortly have the pleasure to hear from Magdalene Wanyaga, a Kenyan member of the CTBTO Youth Group, who will share her views on how civil society and youth can creatively contribute to our mission.

Our ultimate objective — the total elimination of nuclear weapons — is clear, but we cannot hope to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world without a universally applied, non-discriminatory and verifiable prohibition on nuclear testing. And what better way to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the CTBT than by moving the world closer to that noble goal? Let us join together in this twenty-fifth anniversary year to turn the promise of the CTBT into a reality.

The President: I thank Mr. Floyd for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Wanyaga.

Ms. Wanyaga: I am very pleased to be with the Security Council today.

My name is Magdalene Wangui Wanyaga. I am from Kenya, and I am a member of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) Youth Group, where I am an education coordinator. I am also a Project Manager at SandRose Ltd. where I am tasked with providing environmentally friendly solutions in the mining and other sectors in Kenya and East Africa.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is a key part of the global non-proliferation and disarmament architecture. It inhibits more countries from developing nuclear weapons and represents a meaningful step towards a world free of nuclear weapons. Many CTBTO Youth Group members are the same age as the CTBT, but the Treaty has yet to enter into force.

Over the past 25 years the CTBTO, through the state-of-the-art International Monitoring System — which consists of 337 seismic, hydroacoustic, infrasound and radionuclide monitoring stations and laboratories around the world — has proven its capacity to act as a comprehensive global monitoring system.

The organization ensures that no nuclear test explosion goes unnoticed by the international community.

Apart from detecting nuclear explosions, the data from the International Monitoring System has been used in various scientific applications, which are not limited to investigating climate change, tracking radiation or warning about tsunamis. In my case, the data has been of great help, especially in my training as a seismic analyst, and in research by complementing data from the local seismic stations.

Promoting and encouraging the usage of the data from the International Monitoring System, especially in the scientific community, is one of the ways we can advance the CTBT.

There are various ways we can promote the CTBT, and those include but are not limited to education to provide the necessary awareness of disarmament, since that is such a specialized sphere. Creating that awareness will make it easier for people to advocate for the CTBT in their capacities. An example is the work of the CTBTO Youth Group, where young people from all over the world and different professional backgrounds have been educated on the importance and relevance of the CTBT through the Youth Group's introductory curriculum, interactive webinars, research fellowship programme and various initiatives, such as the Building Bridges initiative, which gives us the ability to better advocate for the CTBT's entry into force. The former First Lady of South Africa, Graça Machel, once said, "Preventing the conflicts of tomorrow means changing the mindset of youth today".

Science and diplomacy are other tools that we can use to promote the treaty. I attended the CTBT Science and Technology Conferences in 2017, 2019 and 2021 and the second CTBT Science Diplomacy Symposium, held in 2018, where, as a scientist, I got to learn and appreciate the diplomacy aspect and how we can use science communication to inform policymaking.

The second way of advancing the CTBT is by including the younger generation in the sphere of nuclear disarmament through dialogue, education platforms and capacity-building events.

As President Franklin D. Roosevelt said, "We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future." We, the younger generation, play a cardinal role in promoting diversity, pluralism, tolerance and building trust and interest in

democracy and international peace. Young people have always been agents of change because we are devoted, passionate and eager to face challenges. That makes us the best advocates for international disarmament and non-proliferation, which will ultimately make the world a more peaceful, just and sustainable place.

I therefore urge organizations and entities at the national, regional and global levels to provide the power and tools to young people to promote and advocate those noble values, because our voice is worth hearing. I also encourage senior leaders to include the perspectives and ideas of young people in their work and offer opportunities to the next generation of leaders to deal with the complex issues of today in order to prepare for a better tomorrow. We can close the door to nuclear testing for good only if we keep reminding our Government, communities and leaders that this is one of the most urgent tasks before us. As Executive Secretary Floyd has said, we should remain optimistic realists.

I wholeheartedly believe that a world without nuclear tests is a better world. The CTBT is our path to get there. Let us finish what we started.

The President: I thank Ms. Wangui Wanyaga for her briefing.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the Minister of State for European Affairs of Ireland.

It is an honour to chair today's meeting to mark 25 years since the adoption of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). This meeting is a reflection of the importance of the Treaty to global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Ireland is immensely proud of our long-standing and continuing contribution to multilateral nuclear disarmament, dating back to the early days of our United Nations membership, when we put forward the Irish resolutions that led to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

I thank High Representative Nakamitsu and Executive Secretary Floyd for joining us today. Let me also take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Floyd on his election as Executive Secretary and to express Ireland's strong support for him and the work of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO). I would also like to sincerely thank Ms. Magdalene Wangui Wanyaga for sharing her invaluable insights. Her perspectives and ideas on

engaging and mentoring youth to make use of what the CTBT has to offer should inspire us. Over the past five years, the CTBTO Youth Group has reminded policymakers and leaders of the responsibility we owe to this generation and the next. I recognize the co-Presidents for the successful Article XIV Conference last week and for the strong statement in support of the Treaty's entry into force.

Today's meeting allows us to reflect on the successes of the CTBT over its 25 years and to renew our collective efforts to pursue the entry into force and universalization of this key Treaty. The CTBT has 185 signatories and 170 ratifying States, highlighting the strong global support for the Treaty. It is an essential part of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation architecture and has been crucial in establishing and upholding the international norm against nuclear testing.

Nuclear-test explosions had been used to develop or modernize nuclear warhead designs and to demonstrate nuclear-weapons capabilities. These tests have affected the lives and health of generations of people around the globe. They also leave a lasting mark on the environment. Since 1998, with one exception, all States have respected the strong de facto international norm created by the CTBT and upheld the moratorium on nuclear weapons testing.

Importantly, each of the handful of nuclear tests conducted since the CTBT's opening for signature have been condemned by the Council, which has imposed sanctions in each case. By prohibiting all nuclear testing, the CTBT inhibits States from developing new nuclear weapons. It is therefore an important step along the path to a world without nuclear weapons and their devastating consequences for all of humankind.

I fully endorse the recent reiteration by President Biden and President Putin that nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought, an important recognition of the futility of nuclear weapons and the devastation that a nuclear war would bring.

Five years ago, on the twentieth anniversary of the CTBT, the Council adopted resolution 2310 (2016), which affirmed the importance of entry into force of the Treaty and the contribution that will make to international peace and security. The resolution repeated the statement of the five permanent members of the Council that "a nuclear-weapon test explosion or any other nuclear explosion would defeat the object and

purpose of the CTBT". I encourage the five permanent members to renew and reiterate their commitment to a moratorium on nuclear weapons testing.

The CTBT establishes a unique, comprehensive global verification regime, to monitor compliance. This comprises a global network of monitoring stations, the International Monitoring System (IMS), consisting of 337 seismic, hydroacoustic, infrasound and radio-nuclide monitoring stations around the world. The global verification regime has repeatedly proven that it works. The IMS has also demonstrated tangential scientific and practical benefits by enhancing our capacity to detect, analyse and warn about seismic and tsunami activity. In this way, the Treaty is already contributing significantly to disaster risk reduction and reducing humanitarian need.

The IMS has also made a very real contribution to regional stability as an important confidence-building measure, strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. This has all been achieved without the Treaty's entry into force.

For Ireland, it is very clear that, following its entry into force, this Treaty can provide so much more in cementing the international norm against testing and providing reassurance and confidence — based on the reliable and independent data offered by the verification regime — that no prohibited activities are being carried out. I urge all States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the Treaty without delay, in particular each of the remaining eight States listed in annex 2 of the Treaty.

The twenty-fifth anniversary of the Treaty is an opportunity to demonstrate that the international community can work together in pursuit of the common good. Ireland firmly believes that the Treaty's entry into force would be an important step along the path to a world without nuclear weapons. We look forward to working with all partners to achieve the same, as we have done every day since we joined the United Nations Organization 65 years ago.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I now call on the Deputy Foreign Minister of Estonia.

Mr. Tammsaar (Estonia): I thank Ireland for convening this very important meeting today in support of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

(CTBT). I would also like to thank Mrs. Nakamitsu, Mr. Floyd and Ms. Wangui Wanyaga for their most valuable insights and excellent briefings.

For Estonia, the CTBT is one of the key pillars of the international disarmament and non-proliferation architecture. The Treaty significantly curbs the ability of States to obtain and further develop nuclear weapons, thus contributing to our common goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Regrettably, after 25 years, we still cannot celebrate the Treaty's entry into force. For that, we need the remaining eight annex 2 States to sign and ratify the Treaty. We urge them to do so without further delay.

Although the CTBT has not formally entered into force yet, it has established a strong norm against nuclear testing. The Treaty has 185 signatures and 170 ratifications, which shows that almost every member of the United Nations has committed to ending nuclear testing and reducing the dangers posed by nuclear materials and nuclear weapons.

Furthermore, since 1998, all States but one have de facto respected the global norm against nuclear explosions and observed moratoriums on nuclear weapons testing. Whenever a nuclear test was conducted, it was strongly and unanimously condemned by the Security Council.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's stated intentions and activities to develop its nuclear and ballistic missile programme continue to be of great concern. It is imperative that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea take concrete steps towards complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization. We call on it to avoid any further provocations and engage in meaningful discussions with all relevant parties to achieve lasting peace and security on the Korean peninsula.

The CTBT has also provided the world with the most valuable global system for monitoring nuclear explosions. The International Monitoring System ensures that no clandestine nuclear test will go undetected and that the international community will be able to respond appropriately and swiftly. The system therefore serves as a strong deterrent against nuclear testing. Once the Treaty enters into force, additional verification and compliance measures will become available. For instance, the Treaty foresees the

possibility of on-site inspections that can be requested if there are suspicious activities.

In conclusion, the entry into force of the CTBT has clear benefits for international peace and security. Estonia continues to advocate its prompt entry into force. Further ratifications, especially by annex 2 States, would send an important message of the commitment to ending nuclear-weapon programmes for good.

Mr. Shringla (India): Mr. President, I would like to thank you for giving us this opportunity to express our views on the issues of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. I would also take this opportunity to congratulate you, Sir, and the delegation of Ireland for a very successful presidency of the Security Council this month.

I would like to thank Mrs. Izumi Nakamitsu, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Robert Floyd, Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), and Ms. Magdalene Wangui Wanyaga, CTBTO youth group member, for their briefings.

India has played a leading role in global efforts towards nuclear disarmament. India was the first country to call for a ban on nuclear testing, in 1954, and for a non-discriminatory treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, as distinct from non-dissemination, in 1965. India is committed to the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world and the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, consistent with the highest priority accorded to nuclear disarmament by the final document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We believe that this goal can be achieved through a step-by-step process underwritten by universal commitment and an agreed global and non-discriminatory multilateral framework, as outlined in India's working paper on nuclear disarmament, submitted to the General Assembly in 2006 (A/C.1/61/5, annex).

As to the theme of today's discussion, India participated in the negotiations of the draft Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) in the Conference on Disarmament, but it could not join the CTBT, as the Treaty did not address a number of core concerns raised by India. India maintains a voluntary, unilateral moratorium on nuclear-explosive testing. Further, India would continue to work in the framework of the disarmament triad consisting of the Conference on Disarmament, the United Nations Disarmament

Commission and the First Committee of the General Assembly to strengthen nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation architecture.

As the world's sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, the Conference on Disarmament is well placed to advance the global disarmament agenda and negotiate legally binding instruments on items on its core agenda. Without prejudice to the priority we attach to nuclear disarmament, India has expressed his readiness to support the commencement of negotiations on a draft fissile-material cut-off treaty (FMCT) in the Conference on Disarmament on the basis of the mandate contained in document CD/1299. In this context, India has also participated in the work of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on the FMCT and the high-level FMCT expert preparatory group. Furthermore, through its membership in the earlier and the current groups of governmental experts, India has contributed to the GGE on nuclear disarmament verification, which will meet later this year in Geneva.

India has actively supported and contributed to the strengthening of the global nuclear security architecture. India participates in the Nuclear Security Summit process and has regularly participated in the International Conference on Nuclear Security organized by the International Atomic Energy Agency. India is also a member of the Nuclear Security Contact Group.

India is a key partner in global non-proliferation efforts. One of the important steps we have undertaken in this context is the piloting, since 2002, of an annual General Assembly resolution on measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction, which is adopted by consensus (see, e.g., General Assembly resolution 75/58).

Resolution 1540 (2004) is an important instrument for global non-proliferation efforts. There is a need for the international community to pay closer attention to the illicit proliferation of networks of nuclear weapons, their delivery systems, components and relevant technologies.

With the objective of strengthening the non-proliferation architecture, India has also joined various export-control regimes, namely, the Australia Group, the Wassenaar Arrangement and the Missile Technology Control Regime, and has harmonized its controls with the Nuclear Suppliers Group lists. We hope that the international community will continue to

work towards realizing our collective aspiration for a nuclear-weapon-free world.

In closing, I would like to recognize the efforts of the United Nations Secretariat and the United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs towards the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank High Representative Nakamitsu, Executive Secretary Floyd — whom we congratulate on his recent appointment and to whom I reiterate my country's support — and Ms. Magdalene Wangui Wanyaga, for their valuable briefings.

Mexico congratulates Ireland for convening today's meeting of the Security Council, which raises the political profile of the ban on all nuclear testing, the dire humanitarian and environmental consequences of which are well known. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), whose entry into force is pending, restricts the development of nuclear weapons and is therefore a key element in the non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

We welcome the success of the CTBT Article XIV meeting that took place less than a week ago, 25 years after the Treaty's opening for signature and congratulate Italy and South Africa, which so successfully co-pressed it.

Firm in its principles and convictions, my country together with Australia and New Zealand, submits the annual draft resolution to promote the CTBT in the First Committee of the General Assembly, to reflect the support of the international community for the nuclear-test ban. At this year's commemorative meeting to celebrate International Day against Nuclear Tests, on 8 September, Mexico, on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, reiterated the region's firm condemnation of any type of test anywhere in the world and called for the early entry into force of the Treaty.

For that reason, my country welcomes the fact that the number of countries that have already ratified it continues to increase. We are moving in the right direction and therefore we call on those States that have not yet done so, particularly the annex 2 States, to ratify it so that it can enter into force.

The Security Council must not sidestep the important role that falls to it in this respect. It has in the past condemned a variety of nuclear tests, and we

trust that it will remain steadfast in that stance in case any new incident occurs, something that we hope will not take place.

Through its resolutions and presidential statements, the Council has been clear in noting the threat represented by nuclear tests, which go against efforts to achieve nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament in addition to representing a threat that intensifies the arms race.

The Security Council has also called on States to refrain from conducting tests and to join the CTBT and other related treaties without any preconditions. As is clearly recognized in resolution 2310 (2016), the CTBT International Monitoring System facilities — five of which are located in my own country — contribute to regional stability as an important confidence-building measure and strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

We hope that the Council will continue to unequivocally support all international treaties on disarmament and non-proliferation. We call on all international actors to join forces and promote synergies through the various components of the multinational architecture. The next Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the first meeting of the States parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons are the forums best suited to strengthening the interlinkage among all the legal instruments at our disposal. The adoption of concrete measures with fixed deadlines aimed at achieving the entry into force of the CTBT will be a key deliverable that will contribute to the success of the NPT Review Conference.

I shall conclude by saying that the CTBT's entry into force is a pending promise to all the survivors of past nuclear tests. As we have noted previously, nuclear weapons represent a threat to human existence, and we therefore have the obligation to continue our efforts to bring about a world free of nuclear weapons.

Ms. King (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the three African members of the Security Council — Kenya, the Niger and Tunisia — as well as Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (A3+1).

We thank Under-Secretary-General Nakamitsu and the Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), Mr. Robert

Floyd, for their comprehensive briefings. We are also particularly pleased to have one of our very own young women, Ms. Magdalene Wanyaga of the CTBTO Youth Group, brief us today on the scientific aspects of the Treaty.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is a critical component of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation architecture and as such remains a vital instrument in our quest to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. As we recognize the twenty-fifth anniversary of the opening for signature of the Treaty, we reaffirm our commitment to upholding the global norm against nuclear testing.

The Caribbean and Africa have, through meaningful action and partnership, remained unwavering in our call for the total elimination and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and nuclear testing. Through the Tlatelolco Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean and the African Treaty of Pelindaba, our regions have vigorously pursued and reinforced the objectives of the CTBT.

Underscoring the contribution of nuclear-weapon-free zones across the world to the overall objectives of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, the A3+1 welcomes the convening of a United Nations conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, pursuant to General Assembly decision 73/546. We encourage all invited States to constructively participate in the forthcoming sessions of the Conference.

A world without nuclear weapons is fundamental to the fulfilment of the legitimate aspirations of humankind, such as peace, security and development. Nuclear explosions not only threaten human lives but also have disastrous long-term environmental consequences. They can substantially undermine biodiversity and destroy land and marine ecosystems. The full implementation of the CTBT is therefore a global imperative.

The existence, development and testing of nuclear weapons threatens international peace and security, and that threat is heightened by rising geopolitical tensions and fragmentation across the multilateral system. Nuclear science and technology ought to be employed only for safe, secure and peaceful uses. Indeed, the exploration of those technologies can assist in our collective pursuit of achieving the Sustainable

Development Goals. We therefore recognize and respect the sovereign right of States to do so, guided by the oversight of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

We laud the professional and all-important work of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization to promote and ensure compliance with the Treaty's provisions, in particular through the Treaty's verification regime. The CTBTO's continued efforts bolster our confidence that no nuclear explosion will escape detection. We further commend and support the CTBTO's activities aimed at enhancing the national capabilities of signatories and promoting international cooperation.

The CTBT has received overwhelming support from the international community, as seen by the 185 States that have so far signed and the 170 that have ratified the instrument. We are, however, concerned about the positions of the annex 2 States, whose ratifications are required for the Treaty's entry into force. We strongly urge all States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the Treaty without delay so as to strengthen the norm against nuclear testing. We recall resolution 2310 (2016) and implore States to remain fully committed to the preservation of the agreement to end nuclear testing, maintain moratoriums and continue to explore all avenues, including through regional agreements and legislation, to completely eliminate nuclear weapons.

Nuclear disarmament must remain a high priority on the agenda of the international community. The CTBT, along with other indispensable instruments such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, is essential to realizing our collective vision of a safer world that is nuclear-weapon free. Today, let us recommit ourselves to this goal of safeguarding the future of humankind.

Mr. Polyanskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Russia is consistently committed to the goal of a complete and irrevocable cessation of nuclear testing throughout the world. Since 1991, our country has observed a moratorium on nuclear testing, and during that time has not conducted a single nuclear test.

This year marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). The agreement on the CTBT in 1996 was a major milestone in the context of international efforts to impose a comprehensive ban on nuclear testing. The Russian Federation actively participated in drafting the Treaty and ratified it as

early as 2000. Since then, we have strictly observed its provisions and made a constructive contribution to the work of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization.

On the twenty-fifth anniversary of the CTBT, Russian President Vladimir Putin issued a statement, in which he stressed that:

“The drafting of this historic document, aimed at a dramatic strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, has confirmed that even the most difficult global security issues can and must be solved through talks.”

Twenty-five years later, the CTBT has become almost universally accepted as the most advanced international legal instrument against nuclear testing. Its universal and unconditional ban of all nuclear tests, supported by an effective verification system, can provide a credible barrier against the proliferation and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons. For the vast majority of countries, including Russia, the CTBT has become an integral part of international security and stability.

We welcome the signing and the ratification of the CTBT by Cuba and its ratification by the Union of the Comoros. Each ratification is extremely important as another step towards the universalization of the Treaty.

Nevertheless, the festive mood on the occasion of the anniversary is overshadowed by the fact that the CTBT has not yet entered into force and its prospects remain very uncertain. States that have opted for the Treaty cannot fully rely on it. We have already expressed our concerns about that situation during the twelfth Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT, held on 23 September of this year. Unfortunately, eight annex 2 countries, whose ratification is required for the Treaty's entry into force, have so far not taken effective steps towards signing and/or ratifying it. That has created serious obstacles for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. It is hardly a normal situation that international agreements cannot become fully operational 25 years after their conclusion. We believe that any attempt to secure strategic advantages by refusing to take part in key international agreements is unacceptable.

In the light of some recent reports concerning the development of certain military technologies by some alliances, we are extremely concerned about the future of the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

The Russian Federation is committed to the progressive development of the verification regime under the CTBT and is making a significant contribution to that end by establishing its second-largest national monitoring programme, which will comprise 32 facilities upon completion. Twenty-nine of those are already operational.

The capacity of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission is unrivalled and has broad scope. However, that does not provide grounds for its unlimited and inappropriate use. The verification mechanism is set up for specific tasks, which are clearly set out in the Treaty. Its main purpose is to verify compliance with the Treaty's obligations, and the verification mechanism must be implemented in strict compliance with the provisions of the CTBT, the mandate of the Preparatory Commission and taking into account the realistic prospects for the Treaty's entry into force. I would like to recall that, pending the entry into force of the CTBT, the elements of the verification mechanism can function and operate only on a trial and provisional basis. Any participation by CTBTO Preparatory Commission member States in the relevant activities, including the transmission of data from International Monitoring System stations, is purely voluntary until such time as the CTBT has entered into force. By signing and ratifying the CTBT, we agreed to participate in it under those conditions.

We trust that this situation, which has become a necessary consequence of the CTBT's non-entry into force, will not continue for several years or decades. We appeal to the leadership of the countries on which the future of the CTBT depends to show the political will and responsibility and to take concrete decisions on signing and/or ratifying it as soon as possible.

It is essential that, until the CTBT enters into force, all States adhere to its letter and spirit. It is also crucial to ensure a moratorium on nuclear testing for the time being. Russia intends to maintain that moratorium in the future provided that other nuclear-weapon States take a similar approach. It should be borne in mind that a voluntary moratorium on nuclear testing is a temporary, interim measure that cannot replace the legal obligations of States under an international treaty and underpin the strength of the world community's collective action in the event of its violation.

Mr. De Rivièrè (France) (*spoke in French*): Only a few days ago, the Security Council met to address

the threat to international peace and security posed by North Korea's nuclear proliferation. Today we are gathered again, this time to celebrate 25 years since the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) was opened for signature. That is a key instrument not only for disarmament, but also for non-proliferation. The CTBT has brought about remarkable discipline. Voluntary adherence to the test ban is now a reality. It should be remembered that only one State — North Korea — has conducted nuclear tests in the twenty-first century. It is up to us to safeguard this achievement.

France was one of the first nuclear-weapon States to sign the CTBT, in 1996, and then to ratify it. Since signing the CTBT, our commitment has been translated into strong and specific actions. In 1998, France irreversibly and transparently dismantled its nuclear test site in French Polynesia, in partnership with the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO). At the technical level, France is the only nuclear-weapon State to have fulfilled its input to the CTBTO verification system: it operates 16 stations on its territory, eight abroad and one radionuclide laboratory.

Today the Treaty is equipped with all the necessary instruments to be effective. The resources of the Provisional Technical Secretariat are fully operational, and the International Monitoring System is functioning. Moreover, it has made it possible to accurately detect North Korea's most recent test, in 2017.

To date, 185 States have signed the CTBT. The five nuclear-weapon States have adopted moratoriums on testing. The challenge now is to move towards the CTBT's entry into force. Eight so-called annex 2 States are still not on board and, without them, the CTBT cannot enter into force. Resolution 2310 (2016), adopted by the Security Council five years ago and co-sponsored by France, urged all States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the CTBT. That strong and unequivocal call by the Security Council must be heard. On this twenty-fifth anniversary, France, together with the European Union and its partners, reiterates its firm commitment to the CTBT's entry into force as soon as possible.

In conclusion, allow me, on behalf of France, to express my thanks to Mr. Lassina Zerbo for his resolute action to promote the universalization of the Treaty and to wish the new Executive Secretary of the CTBTO every success.

Mr. DeLaurentis (United States of America): I thank you, Mr. President, for holding today's briefing. I want to congratulate Ireland and our Irish colleagues as they near the end of an active, successful and productive month as President of the Security Council. And I thank today's briefers for their valuable insights and their dedication to this issue.

Today's discussion brings to mind the seminal role Ireland played 60 years ago in reducing the dangers posed by nuclear weapons. The 1961 resolution submitted by Ireland — General Assembly resolution 1665 (XVI) — led to the creation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, leaving us far more secure and more prosperous than we would be without it. As we celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), it is important to recognize the paramount role of the CTBT, even prior to its entry into force, in establishing and maintaining a nearly universal political norm against nuclear-explosive testing.

Let me affirm that the United States supports the CTBT and is committed to working to achieve its entry into force, while recognizing the significant challenges that lie ahead in reaching that goal. In line with the goals of the CTBT, the United States continues to observe its zero-yield nuclear-explosive testing moratorium. We call on all States possessing nuclear weapons to declare or reiterate such a moratorium.

Maintaining the international norm against nuclear-explosive testing remains in the interest of all States. That norm is essential for sustaining the international non-proliferation regime and contributing to a more peaceful and secure world.

As we look ahead to the future of the CTBT, the United States is committed to taking a leading role in revitalizing international arms control efforts. We welcome engagement with all States that share our commitment to implementing effective measures towards achieving a world without nuclear weapons.

Mr. Kariuki (United Kingdom): Let me thank you, Mr. President, and the Irish presidency for bringing us together today to underline our support for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Let me also thank our three briefers for their presentations and reiterate the United Kingdom's congratulations to Mr. Floyd on his election as Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO).

The United Kingdom views the CTBT and its entry into force as a vital part of the step-by-step approach to nuclear disarmament under the framework of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We continue to be a faithful campaigner for its entry into force, engaging by publicly and privately with the remaining eight annex 2 States. The United Kingdom's Minister of State, Mr. Cleverly, underlined our continued support just last week at the CTBT Article XIV Conference.

Our goal is very simple: to bring an end to nuclear-weapon test explosions anywhere on the planet. Each signature and ratification takes us closer to that goal. We therefore welcome the ratifications by Cuba and the Union of the Comoros since the last Conference.

The United Kingdom has not carried out any nuclear-weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions since 1991. We played a central role in the negotiation of the CTBT, being one of the first States to sign it, and to complete ratification in 1998.

The United Kingdom condemns North Korea's continued development of illegal nuclear and ballistic missile programmes, demonstrated most recently on 15 September by two ballistic missile launches, in violation of Security Council resolutions, and their six nuclear tests since 2006. We call for the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of North Korea, and I urge the country to resume dialogue with the international community. We call on North Korea to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

Turning to the CTBTO, it is our collective responsibility to sustain the verification mechanism, financially and technically, in order to ensure it is fit for purpose upon the CTBT's entry into force. The United Kingdom is one of the largest financial contributors to the CTBTO, providing £4.5 million annually. We provide extensive technical and political support. We maintain the United Kingdom National Data Centre and host 13 facilities, which support the International Monitoring System.

We must all take responsibility to promote the Treaty's entry into force, including engaging with the remaining annex 2 States, but also with civil society and youth, to demonstrate the crucial role that the Treaty and its organization play in maintaining international security and as a step towards our shared goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

Ms. Juul (Norway): I thank Ireland for convening this very important meeting. I also thank the briefers: High Representative Izumi Nakamitsu, Executive Secretary Robert Floyd and Ms. Magdalene Wanyaga of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) Youth Group.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) has been a centrepiece of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime for 25 years now. And although the Treaty has still not entered into force, it has established an important norm against nuclear tests.

Despite that, we cannot forget or ignore the utterly unacceptable human and environmental consequences of nuclear testing. That is also why a norm or a self-imposed moratorium on nuclear testing can never be a substitute for a comprehensive, universally binding legal agreement. It remains imperative that we spare no effort to encourage further signatures and ratifications of the Treaty, so that it may enter into force as soon as possible. The tenth Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons has an important role to play. State parties should reaffirm the essential role of the CTBT within the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime and call for its entry into force without delay.

We must also continue our efforts to complete the verification regime. There are encouraging signs. Even on a provisional basis, the monitoring and analytical elements of the verification regime have contributed to regional stability and represent a significant confidence-building measure. The International Monitoring System (IMS) and the International Data Centre (IDC) have already brought about tangible scientific and civil benefits, such as tsunami warning systems.

Norway is proud to contribute. We have fulfilled our responsibilities under the IMS: there are six monitoring stations on Norwegian territory — all of which are transmitting their data continuously to the IDC. We also continue to contribute financially to CTBT capacity-building, including training courses for developing countries.

Norway welcomes the election of Mr. Floyd as Executive Secretary of the CTBTO. I wish him the best of luck in leading efforts to ensure that the verification regime will be operational upon the Treaty's entry into force. In the interim period, it is important to uphold the self-imposed moratorium on testing.

In that regard, Norway notes with regret the statement made by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in January of last year, in which it declared that it no longer considered itself bound by such a commitment. We are gravely concerned about the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's publicly stated intentions and continued efforts to develop weapons of mass destruction.

Finally, allow me to underline the importance of innovative partnerships in order to achieve the entry into force of the CTBT. That cannot be a Government-only affair; we must involve civil society, academia and the private sector if we want to achieve results.

Mr. Dang (Viet Nam): We thank Ireland for this initiative and for its commendable efforts on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. We also thank Mrs. Nakamitsu, Mr. Floyd and Ms. Wanyaga for their informative presentations. We welcome the representatives of Italy and South Africa to our briefing today.

We reaffirm that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) plays an important role in the global non-proliferation and disarmament architecture. Since the first nuclear test in 1945, more than 2,000 tests have been conducted, with devastating effects on human life and the environment. After the CTBT opened for signature in 1996, the number of nuclear tests decreased significantly, with only 10 tests in the past 25 years. That is thanks to the international community's efforts on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament and the commitments of the nuclear-weapon States to the moratoriums on nuclear testing.

We note the efforts of the Security Council to address matters related to the CTBT, including the adoption and implementation of resolution 2310 (2016). We also note recent efforts by the Russian Federation and the United States on the extension of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms through February 2021.

Despite the existing moratorium, the fact that the CTBT has not yet come into force leaves the door open for nuclear testing in various forms. For the interests of humankind and the environment, especially for generations to come, we urge all Member States that have yet to do so, particularly the remaining States listed in annex 2 of the CTBT, to sign and ratify the

CTBT as matter of urgency with a view to its entry into force. As we celebrate 25 years of the CTBT, we need to further strengthen the CTBT and other related instruments. We welcome the efforts of States parties to bolster the biennial Article XIV Conference process and prepare for the upcoming tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the first meeting of State parties of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Viet Nam reaffirms its consistent policy of supporting all nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament efforts, with a view to the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Viet Nam is a party to the NPT, the CTBT, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone. We commit to fully meeting our obligations under international law, including the treaties I mentioned and all relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

We support the inalienable right of States to develop, research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. We support the work of Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization and call for further assistance, especially for developing countries, to facilitate access to data from the International Monitoring System and the International Data Centre for socioeconomic development applications, as well as for non-proliferation and disarmament. We commit to continue to work with all Member States and regional and subregional organizations on the CTBT in order to further strengthen nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament for a better world with peace, cooperation and development.

Mr. Zhang Jun (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank you, Mr. President, for presiding over today's meeting. I also thank High Representative Nakamitsu, Executive Secretary Floyd and Ms. Wangui Wanyaga for their briefings.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is an important milestone in humankind's quest for a world free of nuclear weapons. In the 25 years since it opened for signature, the CTBT has made significant contributions to curtail the nuclear arms race, mitigating the risk of a nuclear war and maintaining international peace and security. The Treaty has become a major pillar of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation architecture.

The volatile and challenging dynamics of international strategic security and stability that we are seeing today highlight the importance of the CTBT.

In his *Our Common Agenda* report, Secretary-General Guterres calls for a new agenda for peace and new actions to, inter alia, reduce strategic risks. Promoting the early entry into force of the CTBT ought to be one of the many efforts to that end. In that regard, China would like to propose the following.

First, we must firmly uphold multilateralism and create an enabling security environment for the entry into force of the Treaty. All States should practice true multilateralism; stay committed to win-win cooperation, equity and justice; reject the Cold War mentality of zero-sum games; work towards common, universal and durable security; and eliminate the root causes of the existence, proliferation and testing of nuclear weapons.

Secondly, in order to support the object and purpose of the Treaty and build on the strong political momentum for its entry into force, the international community should continue to advocate for the complete prohibition and total destruction of nuclear weapons and enable the vision of a nuclear-test ban so as to gain greater traction among the peoples. Nuclear-weapon States should honour their commitment to a moratorium on nuclear testing, genuinely reduce the weight of nuclear weapons in their national security policies and make a no-first-use pledge.

Thirdly, in order to preserve the international armed conflict regime and provide more robust institutional safeguards for the entry into force of the Treaty, all States should work together to uphold the international order based on international law, strengthen the multilateral disarmament machinery with the United Nations at its core, comply with and fulfil their international obligations and commitments, renounce double standards and discriminatory practices and maintain the integrity, authority and effectiveness of the international armed conflict treaty system.

Fourthly, in order to advance the preparations for the implementation of the Treaty and reinforce a robust foundation of capacity for its entry into force, the international community should continue to push ahead the development of the International Data Centre, the International Monitoring System and the on-site inspection mechanism, and must do so in a comprehensive and balanced manner. The international

community must also assist development countries with capacity-building with a view to ensuring their full technical readiness for the operation of the verification regime once the Treaty enters into force.

Both the CTBT and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) are important pillars of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. While promoting the early entry into force of the CTBT, the international community should also conscientiously safeguard the authority, universality and effectiveness of the NPT. All States should demonstrate a responsible attitude in that regard. China objects to a utilitarian approach to the NPT or the application of double standards in its implementation. It is wrong for a scant few nuclear-weapon States to make noble pronouncements about their commitment to the international nuclear non-proliferation regime, while they assist non-nuclear-weapon States to build nuclear submarines. Not only will that intensify the arms race — to the detriment of the international non-proliferation regime, as well as international and regional security and stability — it also runs counter to the spirit of the NPT. We hope that the countries concerned will heed the call of the international community, faithfully fulfil their international non-proliferation obligations and put greater effort towards regional peace and stability.

China was among the first signatories to the CTBT and has conducted the fewest nuclear tests of all nuclear-weapon States. The Chinese Government has scrupulously upheld the moratorium on nuclear testing since its announcement in 1996 and has never wavered in its support for the Treaty at the political level. In its own way, China has made its due contributions to the entry into force of the Treaty, to the preparations for its implementation and to international cooperation on the Treaty.

I would like to reiterate that China will not become an obstacle to the entry into force of the CTBT. Come what may in the shifting international political climate, China will remain staunchly committed to safeguarding multilateralism, maintaining international peace and security and preserving the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. China will continue to work with all other parties to continuously consolidate the international consensus on a nuclear-test ban, contribute to bringing the Treaty into force, and make unremitting efforts towards our noble goal,

namely, the complete prohibition and total destruction of nuclear weapons at an early date.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Italy.

Mr. Massari (Italy): I would like to thank Ireland for convening today's Security Council briefing on the topic of the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). As pointed out by High Representative Nakamitsu, Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) Floyd and many Council members, it is of the utmost importance to come together to reach that key goal for the sake of present and future generations.

I would also like to thank Ireland for inviting Italy and South Africa to share with the Council the results of the recent Article XIV ministerial conference that we, Italy and South Africa, co-presided. As Council members know, the Conference took place in New York and Vienna on 23 and 24 September in a year that marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Treaty's opening for signature. Each ratifying State took the opportunity to reaffirm the urgency of the entry into force of the CTBT and the hope for its universalization, highlighting its essential value as a landmark agreement on the path towards disarmament and non-proliferation.

The Final Declaration of the Conference was adopted by consensus. It reiterates States' overwhelming support for the Treaty's universalization and the urgency of its entry into force, recalling relevant General Assembly resolutions and the recommendations for follow-up actions from the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), as well as the calls for the entry into force of the CTBT made during the process leading up to the 2020 NPT Review Conference.

The Final Declaration also hails progress made towards the CTBT's universalization since the last Article XIV conference and attaches importance to the signature and ratification by Cuba and the ratification by the Union of Comoros, which brought the number of ratifying States to 170 and that of State signatories to the Treaty to 185. It urged the eight remaining annex 2 states to sign and ratify the Treaty without further delay and calls on all States to refrain from nuclear-test explosions.

Furthermore, the Final Declaration expresses condemnation for the six nuclear tests conducted by

the Democratic Republic of Korea since 2006 and reaffirms the significance of the full implementation of all relevant Security Council resolutions and of the complete denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. The Declaration reaffirms the commitment of all States to providing political, technical, financial support to the CTBTO Preparatory Commission and commencing the establishment and functioning of the International Monitoring System (IMS) and the International Data Centre as core facilities that would enhance on-site inspection capabilities and forge a global and fully operational verification regime.

The Declaration also sets out concrete and actionable steps towards the swift entry into force of the Treaty and its universalization, including encouraging further signatures and ratifications of the Treaty through the designation of coordinators to promote the Treaty's universalization, recognizing the role of the Group of Eminent Persons in assisting the promotion of the Treaty's objectives, encouraging the organization of regional activities and education and training initiatives, and supporting cooperation with intergovernmental and non-government organizations as well as civil society.

CTBT parties underscored the significant results the CTBTO has accomplished to date: establishing a global norm on nuclear testing, building an effective verification regime, and identifying civil and scientific applications. CTBT parties also invoked the need to continue to observe the de facto moratorium on nuclear tests and explosions and to redouble efforts in this regard until entry into force of the Treaty. Signatory parties reaffirmed the crucial role of the International Monitoring System in providing a cost-effective, verifiable and sustainable verification regime. They also commended the verification regime as a key tool in addressing broader challenges, as is the case for climate change, thanks to the tsunami warning system.

In line with its role as an Article XIV Coordinator for the upcoming two-year period, Italy reiterates the plea to the eight remaining annex 2 States to sign and ratify the CTBT in a timely manner. Italy also welcomes the United States commitment expressed during the Article XIV Conference to supporting the entry into force of the CTBT through dedicated outreach initiatives and education. Italy calls on the international community to keep supporting the completion of the CTBT's monitoring system even prior to the entry into force of the Treaty, in order to improve its capacity to

provide accurate data analysis. In this regard, Italy remains firmly committed to the strengthening of the IMS, including through our national seismic station and radionuclide laboratory.

Italy attaches great importance to the CTBT's contribution to multilateralism and the view that disarmament and non-proliferation are undertakings that involve responsibilities shared by all States.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of South Africa.

Mr. Mabhongo (South Africa): We thank Izumi Nakamitsu, Robert Floyd and Magdalene Wangui Wanyaga for their briefings today.

The Security Council's convening of today's open debate to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is timely. Not only does it mark a significant anniversary of the Treaty, but it also follows very closely on the successful holding of the twelfth Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT, also known as the Article XIV Conference, on 23 and 24 September, over which South Africa and Italy had the honour to preside. We are therefore grateful to Ireland as President of the Security Council during this very busy month for convening today's debate. It is our hope that the debate will form part of sustained and enhanced efforts aimed at encouraging the signing and the ratification of the Treaty.

Today's Council meeting also provides us, as the international community, with an opportunity to once again highlight the dangers and threats posed to international peace and security by nuclear weapons and their tests and to pay tribute to those who have been victims of the use of nuclear weapons. This meeting is also consistent with the Final Declaration adopted by the Article XIV Conference, in which States resolved to

“[s]pare no effort and use all avenues open to us to encourage further signature and ratification of the Treaty, and urge all States to sustain the momentum generated by this Conference and remain seized of the issue at the highest political level”.

A quarter of a century is far too long a period for the specter of nuclear-weapon tests to loom, despite commitments made on a moratorium on these tests, especially given the catastrophic humanitarian and environmental consequences of a nuclear weapon

detonation, whether by accident or by design, and in any environment. A moratorium should not be seen as a viable long-term replacement for the legally binding commitment of States signatories of the CTBT. In fact, it may even distract from the urgency of such a binding legal commitment. South Africa realized this urgency early on, and the importance it attaches to the CTBT and its objectives has been demonstrated by the fact that we were one of the first countries to sign and ratify the Treaty, and we will continue to strongly support its entry into force.

However, it seems that for some the escalation in vertical advancement and stockpiling, and the horizontal spread of the development of nuclear arsenals and their means of delivery remains an ill-conceived factor in their strategic thinking. South Africa therefore urges the nuclear-weapon States and those that possess these horrific weapons to make urgent progress towards the achievement of the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

For us, the CTBT serves as a solid foundation for the achievement of a world free of nuclear weapons, and we remain concerned about the lack of progress in the ratification of the Treaty, in particular by the eight remaining annex 2 States. However, we recognize the positive developments that have taken place since 2019,

such as the recent ratifications of the Treaty by the Comoros and Cuba.

For its part, and as co-President of the article XIV Conference and a participant in the Group of Eminent Persons, South Africa will continue its active role in the work of the CTBTO from both a technical and political perspective. That includes support for concrete, actionable steps towards the early entry into force and universalization of the Treaty such as using avenues to encourage further signatures and ratifications as well as outreach activities, which our participation in this Council meeting today illustrates. We encourage the full implementation of and commitment to those actionable steps by all States parties to the Treaty.

We look forward to working with all States parties as well as with the Executive Secretary, Mr. Robert Floyd, with whom we are glad to share this platform today and whose work we support going forward. We call on the Council, in the interests of its mandate of maintaining international peace and security, to support the efforts of all to realize the entry into force of the CTBT as soon as possible. We cannot ignore the catastrophic threat posed by these weapons and their testing to our people and our environment.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.