



European Union

**EU Statement on
Fifty-Sixth Session of CTBTO Preparatory Commission
Vienna, 21 - 22 June 2021**

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. The following countries align themselves with this statement: Turkey[§], The Republic of North Macedonia^{*}, Montenegro^{*}, Serbia^{*}, Albania^{*}, Bosnia and Herzegovina^{*}, Iceland⁺, Norway⁺, Ukraine, The Republic of Moldova, Georgia and San Marino.
2. We thank the Executive Secretary for his comprehensive report, and express our support for the recommendations contained in the reports of Working Groups A and B, as well as of the Advisory Group.
3. The CTBT's entry into force has always been and remains a top priority for the European Union. All EU Member States have ratified the Treaty and consistently call upon the remaining eight Annex II States: China, Egypt, Iran, Israel, and the USA who still need to ratify the Treaty and the DPRK, India and Pakistan who still need to sign and ratify it in order to bring it into force, to do so without any preconditions or further delay. Pending the entry into force of the Treaty, the EU calls on all States to abide by the moratorium on nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosion, and to refrain from any action contrary to the object and purpose of the Treaty.

Mr. Chairman,

4. We appreciate the work of Germany and Algeria as the outgoing Article XIV coordinators and encourage States Signatories to express an interest in assuming this important role. We look forward to the designation of the 2021 Co-Chairs with a view to preparing the September Article XIV Conference, which coincides with the 25th anniversary of the CTBT's opening for signature. The CTBTO should also play a prominent role at the next NPT Review Conference in order to keep the CTBT high on the international agenda.

[§] Candidate Country

^{*} Candidate Countries the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania as well as potential Candidate Country Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

⁺ Iceland and Norway are members of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.

5. In addition to the CTBT's obvious contribution to international peace and security, the CTBTO's Integrated Capacity Building assists States in using International Monitoring System (IMS) data and International Data Centre (IDC) products to support civil and scientific applications and research associated with Treaty-related verification technologies, including tsunami and volcanic ash cloud warning. To make best use of our collective investment, the EU, through its voluntary contributions of more than 29.5 million EUR to date, supports and contributes to developing countries benefitting from such CTBTO services.

Mr. Chairman,

6. The IMS and IDC have proved their unique ability to provide States Signatories with independent and reliable means to detect nuclear tests. We commend the Provisional Technical Secretariat (PTS) for assuring uninterrupted service during these difficult times. However, the highly sophisticated CTBT verification system, including the further development of on-site inspection operational capabilities and related capacity-building activities require substantial financial input. It is therefore crucial for the operation of the verification regime of the Treaty, and for the wider organization's financial health, that all States demonstrate their political commitment and honor their legal obligation to pay their assessed contributions, on time and in full.
7. Mobile monitoring systems are also essential for the functioning of the IDC in helping to further understand the global background for all four IMS technologies. Such background studies using mobile monitoring systems not part of the IMS have been going on for years to improve the performance of the verification regime and ensure the correct detection of events. Therefore, this activity is part of, and helps carry out the mandate of the PTS. We would like to express our appreciation to the Ambassadors of Switzerland and South Africa, as facilitators, for their work on this issue, and the non-paper they have circulated.
8. The EU and its Member States would like to thank the PTS for the budget proposal for 2022-2023 and can support it as it stands.
9. We would also like to reiterate our appreciation to Sir Michael Weston for his longstanding and outstanding service to the Advisory Group, and welcome and support the nomination of Ms Rashmi Rajyaguru by the UK, as new Chair of the AG. In this regard, we encourage States to nominate experts of recognised standing and experience in financial matters at the international level to the Advisory Group. Furthermore, we reiterate our principled position that States Signatories should honour their financial obligations. This is especially true for States that have nominated a member for the Advisory Group.

Mr. Chairman,

10. The EU encourages the PTS to continue to pro-actively promote the CTBT and its verification regime, including by identifying and involving relevant civil society stakeholders, including the Group of Eminent Members and the CTBTO Youth Group.
11. The upcoming CTBTO Science and Technology Conference will be an important milestone in further building and strengthening the CTBTO's relationship with the scientific and research community. The EU will actively participate in the Conference, by organising a panel discussion, on 28th June, on the role of Youth in securing a nuclear test-free world. Moreover, on 2nd July, the EU will hand-over the EU Star Award for the best scientific presentation during the Conference.
12. The European Union would like to warmly congratulate Dr. Robert Floyd on his appointment as the next Executive Secretary (ES) of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organisation (CTBTO) – the first ES from the South East Asia, the Pacific and the Far East region – and assure him of our full support and cooperation. We look forward to continuing and deepening our excellent cooperation with the Organisation under the leadership of Dr. Floyd, in order to further promote our common efforts to bring the CTBT into force and further develop the verification regime.
13. We would also like to reiterate our appreciation to Executive Secretary Dr. Lassina Zerbo for his leadership and dedication to the Organisation, including as ES since 2013. We commend Dr. Zerbo for his tireless efforts to promote the universalisation and entry into force of the CTBT, as well as for the excellent cooperation with the EU in the implementation of the EU Council Decisions in support of the CTBTO monitoring and verification activities.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.