



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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144th IPU Assembly

Nusa Dua, Indonesia
20-24 March 2022



Workshop *Engaging for a universal ban on nuclear tests*

*Organized jointly by the IPU and the CTBTO
Tuesday, 22 March 2022, 13:15 – 14:15
Nusantara 2 & 3, first floor, BICC
to be followed by a reception*

Concept note

Background

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) bans nuclear explosions by everyone, everywhere: on the Earth's surface, in the atmosphere, underwater and underground. Its provisions make it very difficult for countries to develop nuclear bombs for the first time, or for countries that already have them to make bombs more powerful. It also prevents the huge damage caused by radioactivity from nuclear explosions to humans, animals and plants. The Treaty has a unique and comprehensive verification regime to make sure that no nuclear explosion goes undetected. Over 300 facilities worldwide monitor the planet for signs of nuclear explosions using seismic, hydroacoustic, infrasound and radionuclide technologies. Collected data are processed and distributed to the CTBTO's Member States in both raw and analysed form within a few hours. These data can also be used for purposes other than detecting nuclear explosions. They can provide tsunami warning centres with almost real-time information about underwater earthquakes, helping to warn people earlier and possibly save lives. The data can also be used to support scientific research to help better understand the oceans, volcanoes, climate change and many other issues.

Many attempts were made during the Cold War to negotiate a comprehensive test ban, but it was only in September 1996 that the Treaty became a reality. As of August 2021, 185 countries have signed the Treaty, of which 170 have also ratified it. However, before the CTBT can enter into force, 44 specific nuclear technology holder countries, listed in Annex 2 to the Treaty, must sign and ratify; of these, eight are still missing.ⁱ

Universalization of the CTBT has been on the IPU's agenda since the beginning, as a first step to achieve a world without nuclear weapons. Regular resolutions since 1995, at the time the Treaty was being negotiated, have been issued, calling on IPU Member Parliaments to take action. A targeted campaign, starting in 2019, also helped raise awareness of the Treaty and its civil and scientific side benefits.

Between September 2021 and September 2022, the CTBTO is celebrating the 25th anniversary year of the CTBT, providing an opportunity to celebrate the Treaty and create momentum for its universalization and entry into force. CTBTO Executive Secretary Dr. Robert Floyd has launched a series of initiatives to achieve as many ratifications as possible within the anniversary year and has called for Treaty supporters and force multipliers to engage to this end. The IPU, during its 144th Assembly, will play a robust advocacy role in favour of CTBT universalization, including through the organization of a side event, to engage for a universal ban on nuclear tests.

Objectives

The event will aim to celebrate the latest States to ratify the Treaty and to engage with non-ratifying IPU members in a strategic dialogue to further advance CTBT universalization. Furthermore, it will provide space for delegates to share experiences and good practices on national processes and the creation of institutional arrangements to champion the Treaty.

The round table will start with keynote addresses by the IPU Secretary General and the CTBTO Executive Secretary. It will be followed by interventions from:

- Delegations of countries that have recently ratified the CTBT, signed the instruments of ratification, or are actively pursuing ratification within the treaty 25th anniversary year. They will showcase their commitment, sharing why ratifying the CTBT is important, what motivated their country to mobilize and take this step, and why parliamentarians' engagement is important. It will also provide an opportunity to talk about their national processes.
- Delegations of States that have not ratified Annex 2 will be invited to talk about their national position on the CTBT and their national processes and engage with the IPU Secretary General and the CTBTO Executive Secretary on any questions they may have or share suggestions on how to progress with ratification in their respective States.

Practical information

The overall duration of the event will be two hours: one hour for the round table and one hour for the ceremonial event immediately after.

ⁱ One hundred and eighty-five countries have signed the Treaty, of which 170 have also ratified it, including three of the nuclear weapon States: France, the Russian Federation and the United Kingdom. But 44 specific nuclear technology holder countries (known as "Annex 2 states") must sign and ratify before the CTBT can enter into force. Of these, eight are still missing: China, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan and the USA. India, North Korea and Pakistan have yet to sign the CTBT. The last Annex 2 State to ratify the Treaty was Indonesia on 6 February 2012.