



**High-level plenary meeting of the United Nations General Assembly
to commemorate the International Day against Nuclear Tests**

**Izumi Nakamitsu
High Representative for Disarmament Affairs**

As delivered



Wednesday, 3 September 2025
GA Hall

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

At the outset, allow me to extend my sincere gratitude to the President of the General Assembly, His Excellency Mr. Philemon Yang, for convening this important annual commemoration.

I also want to thank Kazakhstan for its leadership and unwavering commitment to ensuring that the devastating legacy of nuclear tests is never forgotten. By initiating this Day, Kazakhstan provided the world with not only a moment for remembrance, but also a platform for action.

And I take this opportunity to commend the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) Organization and its Provisional Technical Secretariat. Their tireless efforts to sustain the norm against nuclear testing, through advancing the Treaty's universalization and in strengthening the verification regime, are indispensable to our collective security.

Excellencies,

Today's commemoration takes place in a world overshadowed by conflict, mistrust and the looming shadow of nuclear weapons. Trust between States continues to erode, while investments in nuclear weapons and their delivery systems increase.

Against this backdrop, the prohibition of all nuclear explosive testing is not merely a technical or procedural matter. It is a moral and strategic necessity.

The CTBT is one of the most widely-supported instruments in the disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

The expansion and proven reliability of the International Monitoring System (IMS) and International Data Centre (IDC) are remarkable achievements.

Together, they have helped reassure the world of the absence of nuclear tests and detected those who have sought to violate this global norm.

Yet nearly three decades after its adoption, the CTBT has not yet entered into force and the totality of its promise remains unrealized. This delay cannot continue.

Let me be clear: the only path to abolishing nuclear tests is through a legally binding prohibition – respected, implemented, and above all enforced. That is the promise of the CTBT.

It is incumbent upon every State to bring that promise to life, but in particular those States whose ratification is still required for the treaty's entry into force. Their leadership will decide whether this Treaty finally closes the door on the era of nuclear testing.

In the meantime, the global moratorium on nuclear testing must hold. It embodies our shared commitment to the norm against nuclear tests.

Nuclear testing can never be permitted. Not as a tool of deterrence, not as a display of political influence, not under the guise of science.

The consequences of nuclear tests are indiscriminate and enduring. They have

left behind wounds – human, environmental and moral – that can never be fully healed.

Survivors of nuclear testing remind us of this truth every day. Their suffering is not confined to history books; it continues in the present. Families and communities endure intergenerational harm, underscoring the cruelty of these weapons. Their voices obligate us to ensure that no community bears such burden ever again.

The recent establishment of an independent scientific panel to study the effects of nuclear war is a clear acknowledgment by the international community of the enduring humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons.

It reflects a growing recognition that human, environmental and health impacts of nuclear explosions – whether in war or in testing – must be properly scrutinized through the lens of dispassionate science.

Distinguished delegates,

As the Secretary-General has said, the world must speak with one voice to end nuclear testing, once and for all.

Nuclear tests have haunted our past. They scar our present. They must not define our future.

From the steppes of Semipalatinsk to the atolls of the Pacific, the Earth still carries the burden of nuclear testing.

But the measure of our commitment will not be found in the words we speak

today – it will be found in the choices we make tomorrow.

That choice is ours – and it must be to end nuclear testing forever.

I thank you very much for your attention.