



**United Nations Office
for Disarmament Affairs**

Remarks at the Twelfth Ministerial Meeting of the Friends of the CTBT

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Your Excellencies, Foreign Ministers Wong and Motegi,
Executive Secretary Floyd,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Secretary-General, it is a pleasure to join you for this Twelfth Ministerial Meeting of the Friends of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

I thank the Governments of Australia and Japan for their sustained leadership in support of the Treaty and its entry into force.

For many years, the Friends of the CTBT have helped sustain political attention on a simple but unfulfilled objective: bringing into force one of the most widely supported instruments in the global disarmament and non-proliferation architecture.

Thirty years after the CTBT opened for signature, much has been achieved.

Today, 188 States have signed the Treaty and 179 have ratified it. Tonga's ratification in July marked another important step towards universalization.

The CTBTO has built an advanced global verification regime, providing States with objective and reliable information relevant to the detection of nuclear explosions.

The norm against nuclear testing is strong. Verification capabilities are highly advanced. And political support is nearly universal.

Yet one fact remains impossible to overlook – the Treaty is still not in force.

What remains is a political task:

The remaining Annex 2 States must sign and/or ratify the CTBT without further delay and without conditions.

That goal has become even more urgent.

We meet amid heightened geopolitical tension, eroding trust and renewed concern about the possibility of nuclear explosive testing. Any such test would deepen mistrust, risk triggering reciprocal testing and further fuel a nuclear arms race.

Until the Treaty's entry into force, all States possessing nuclear weapons must maintain their existing moratoria on nuclear explosive testing.

Those moratoria are indispensable. But they cannot be the final destination.

Excellencies,

This is where the Friends of the CTBT have an important role.

Your collective voice carries political weight. I encourage you to use it to make clear that a return to nuclear explosive testing would be a step backwards for international peace and security.

Those communities that live with the human and environmental consequences of past nuclear tests remind us what is at stake. Preventing such harm from ever recurring is a security imperative and a moral responsibility.

The CTBT is often described as unfinished business. After three decades, it is time to finish the job.

Let us ensure that the next milestone we mark is not another anniversary of waiting, but the entry into force of the CTBT.

I thank you very much for your attention.