Statement by H. E. Ambassador Shen Guofang, Head of the Chinese Delegation, at the 2nd Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (12/11/01)

2004/04/16

Mr. President,

First of all, I would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of this conference on facilitating the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). I believe that with your wisdom and diplomatic experience, you will surely guide the conference to a success. I would also like to take this opportunity to express our thanks to H. E. Masahiko Komura, President of the first conference and former Japanese Foreign Minister for his excellent work. Our thanks also go to Dr. Wolfgang Hoffmann, Executive Secretary of the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the PrepCom for CTBTO and all other people who have been working for the entry into force of the CTBT.

Mr. President,

The present conference is convened in the new century and against the special backdrop of the “September 1” event. International terrorism is a malignant tumor in today’s world, directly threatening the security and stability of all countries. The Chinese Government opposes all forms of terrorist activities. In the meantime, we call for enhanced international cooperation in the combat against terrorism.

As an important treaty, CTBT is of great significance to the maintenance of international security. Up to now, 161 countries have signed and 84 ratified it. Various preparations for the establishment of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) are underway in an orderly manner, which fully testifies to the recognition and support of the international community of the CTBT.

Yet there is still a long way for us to go before the objective of thorough destruction of nuclear weapons and a world free of nuclear arms is attained. It has been five years since the CTBT was opened to signature, yet the prospect for its entry into force does not allow optimism. The preparations for the CTBTO have encountered some new difficulties. The effort to comprehensively ban nuclear tests is yet to win a final victory.

It is notable that regrettable voices have been uttered in the process of endeavoring for an early entry into force of the CTBT. The 1st Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT had barely concluded, a country explicitly refused to ratify the treaty. More recently, it even asserted that it would participate in the work of the PrepCom for CTBTO selectively.

The CTBT is essential to preventing the horizontal and vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons and promoting the nuclear disarmament process. The CTBT states in its Preamble that "the cessation of all nuclear weapon test explosions and all other nuclear explosions, by constraining the development and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and ending the development of advanced new types of nuclear weapons, constitutes an effective measure of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects." A negative attitude towards the CTBT will bring about very adverse effect on the entry into force of the treaty and the international nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament process.

Mr. President,

An early entry into force of the CTBT serves the common interest and aspiration of the international community. To this end, we must continue to work together to overcome the various technical and political barriers confronting us and accelerate the process of the treaty’s ratification and entry into force.

First of all, an international environment favourable for countries to trust and support the CTBT should be created. As long as the motivation of some countries to acquire and develop nuclear weapons is fundamentally removed, more countries will be attracted to join the CTBT. The most effective way in this regard is to establish a new security concept centering on mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and cooperation, abandon Cold War mentality and power politics, renounce nuclear deterrence strategy based on the first use of nuclear weapons and address disputes through dialogue and cooperation.

Second, efforts should be made to maintain global strategic balance and stability and prevent new nuclear arms race. The research into, deployment and proliferation of an advanced anti-missile system will disrupt the existing balance and stability of the current international strategic pattern, remove the basis of the nuclear disarmament process and, as a result, a fresh round of nuclear arms race will be on the verge of breaking out. Such dangerous developments will inevitably make CTBT a victim.

Third, international cooperation in arms control has to be strengthened, for it is the only right way to promote arms control and disarmament. Any unilateral and expedient attitude on questions of disarmament and non-proliferation will only undermine the efforts and confidence of countries in cooperation for this purpose and bring the international disarmament and non-proliferation process to stagnation. Such a scenario serves the interest of...
At present, it is most imperative to uphold the authority of the CTBT. Countries should join together to urge the country concerned to change its erroneous position on the CTBT, observe the principle of “pacta sunt servanda” in international law, stick to its commitment of a moratorium on nuclear test explosions, and pay its contribution to the PrepCom for CTBTO in full and in a timely manner so as to promote the preparations for the CTBTO in a comprehensive and balanced way and ensure its entry into force according to the relevant provisions at an early date. At the same time, it is necessary to enhance the universality of the CTBT by promoting early signature and ratification of the treaty by countries that have not done so yet.

Mr. President,

China has all along stood for the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons. As a nuclear-weapon state, China has never evaded her responsibility in nuclear disarmament or participated in nuclear arms race. China is not in favour of seeking strategic superiority over other countries through nuclear arms race. China actively supported and participated in the negotiations of the CTBT and made important contributions to and major concessions for the conclusion of the treaty. Although changes have taken place in the international security situation, the Chinese Government’s basic position of supporting the CTBT has not changed. China will honour her commitment to pursue a moratorium on nuclear test explosions and continue to actively support and participate in the preparation work for the CTBTO. The Chinese Government has completed the due procedure of CTBT review and presented the treaty to the National People’s Congress. It is our belief that the National People’s Congress will deliberate on the treaty according to the relevant legal procedures.

Mr. President,

China finds it necessary and timely to convene a conference once again on facilitating the entry into force of the CTBT in a time of difficulties for the treaty’s entry into force and the work of the PrepCom. This conference will exert positive influence on promoting the process of CTBT’s ratification and entry into force. The Chinese Government supports this conference. The Chinese Delegation stands ready to fully cooperate with you and other participating parties to contribute to the success of the conference.

Thank you, Mr. President.