



BELARUS

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United Nations General Assembly

72nd Session

Tenth Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

New York, September 20, 2017

**Statement by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus,
H.E. Vladimir Makei**

Dear Mr. Chairman,

Let me thank the distinguished Co-Chairs of the Conference, as well as the Provisional Technical Secretariat for their impressive work on preparing of the Conference and reaching an agreement on the draft Final Declaration, which we fully endorse.

Belarus is a consistent supporter and participant in the processes of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

This year marks twenty-four years since our country's accession to the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons as a state, which does not possess such weapons.

The withdrawal of nuclear weapons from the territory of Belarus was completed in 1996, just shortly after the opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

When we voluntarily and without any preconditions rejected the possibility of possessing of nuclear weapons, we intended to maintain the momentum of the disarmament process, which in the nineties of the last century inspired the hope of building a safer world. Today our expectations of progress in nuclear disarmament are more modest and our hopes are cautious.

Belarus ratified the CTBT in 2000 and considers its entry into force to be a priority task, while actively promoting this issue in multilateral formats and bilateral contacts.

Belarus will continue to support joint efforts to make this Treaty a valid international legal instrument. We hope that the "Group of Eminent Persons" created on the initiative of Executive Secretary Lassina Zerbo will succeed in strengthening by its work the comprehensive efforts aimed at the universalization of this document.

We believe in the critical importance of work of the Provisional Technical Secretariat to create and improve the International Monitoring System that meets the advanced requirements for verifying compliance with the obligations under the Treaty.

We would like to note the high level of work performed by the International Data Centre and the development of the verification regime.

The practice has proved the ability of this system to provide the States Parties with precise and accurate information. It offers significant opportunities for prevention and prompt response to global disasters of natural and manmade character.

Belarus is interested in close cooperation with the Provisional Technical Secretariat. We are grateful for the support it has provided in the field of professional training of Belarusian experts.

At the same time, there are scientific and technical organizations, infrastructure and experts that could be of interest to the CTBTO in Belarus.

Belarusian manufacturing companies are ready to participate in the relevant tenders by offering high-tech novelties that can be useful for the Organization.

Mr. Chairman,

The elaboration of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty was once a great victory of international diplomacy that proved its effectiveness in meeting fundamental challenges to international security.

We sincerely hope that the leadership of the eight remaining 'Annex II' States will demonstrate political will by starting to take concrete steps towards its signing and ratification.

I thank you.