



Inter-Parliamentary Union
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Speech by Mr. Martin Chungong, IPU Secretary General

2022 CTBT Science Diplomacy Symposium

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Dear Mr. Executive Secretary of the CTBTO, dear Rob,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to address you on this edition of the CTBT Science Diplomacy Symposium. The IPU and the CTBTO have a longstanding relationship that began even before the Treaty was adopted, when the IPU, the global organization of parliaments, back in 1995, spearheaded calls for the early conclusion of a truly comprehensive and internationally verifiable test ban treaty.

Over 25 years later, this Treaty has gathered considerable support. As its universalization approaches, I am glad that, over the last two years, the IPU has contributed to some great successes by raising awareness in parliaments of all aspects of the Treaty and motivating parliamentarians to champion its ratification.

This panel is about “The CTBT’s Relevance” and I strongly believe that it is precisely because the CTBT is relevant that it gathers so much support, including at parliamentary level. For too long we have underestimated the threat of use of nuclear weapons, and the resurgence of this phenomenon—as previous speakers have mentioned this morning—is a reminder that the CTBT is a first step towards our shared ideal of a nuclear-weapons-free world.

But the CTBT is not only about banning nuclear testing: I salute its civil and scientific side benefits related to disaster prevention and mitigation, as well as climate change and environmental studies. This makes the CTBT extremely relevant in countering two of the existential threats currently faced by humanity and makes it equally relevant to members of parliament who, as per their mandate, must protect the citizens they represent from these multifaceted challenges.

Increasingly, parliamentarians are shifting from emotion-based to evidence-informed decisions. Scientific data, such as those provided by the CTBTO, are thus crucial for them to tackle security threats at national level through local solutions that can make a life-saving difference. This is one of the many reasons parliamentarians are keen to champion the Treaty. But parliamentarians are also eager to bring their countries’ foreign policy focus into line with issues that are high on the international agenda. As mentioned earlier, the brutal reappearance of threats to use nuclear weapons is surely a substantial motivation for them, members of parliament, to join the global effort to bring an end to nuclear testing.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me to conclude my remarks by stating again, loud and clear, that yes, the CTBT is relevant, in the current tense situation and for all citizens and their representatives. It represents the promise of a more peaceful world, in which people could envisage living free from fear. You can count on the IPU to continue mobilizing its member parliaments across the world to advance the treaty’s universalization and entry into force.

Thank you for your attention.