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**STATEMENT
BY**

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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE**

**TO THE
CONFERENCE ON FACILITATING THE ENTRY
INTO FORCE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE
NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN TREATY**

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Mr President,

Allow me, at the outset, to congratulate you on your election as President of this important Conference and to assure you of my delegation's full support and co-operation during the coming days. South Africa would like to thank Ambassador Deborah Stokes, Permanent Representative of Australia in Vienna for the manner in which she chaired the informal consultations on the draft Final Declaration for this Conference. We also wish to express our appreciation to the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty Organisation (CTBTO) for preparing the necessary conference documents.

Mr President,

South Africa aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) by the Ambassador of Malaysia.

South Africa reaffirms that the key outcome of this Conference is to promote the Early Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We therefore add our voice to the large number of parties to the Treaty and call on all States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify this important instrument. In particular, South Africa calls on all those Annex 2 States whose signature and ratification is required for the Treaty to enter into force, but who have not yet done so, to sign and ratify the Treaty without any further delay.

Our disappointment at the lack of any substantive outcome at the 2005 Review Conference of the NPT has underlined the importance and strengthened our resolve to work towards the full implementation of all obligations, commitments and undertakings made at previous Review Conferences. South Africa's position on the CTBT is well known. My delegation calls upon all Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) States Parties to fulfil their obligations in accordance with the "Principles and Objectives" agreed to at the 1995 NPT Review Conference. We urge NPT States Parties, particularly the nuclear-weapon States, to recommit themselves to accelerate the implementation of the 13 practical steps for systematic and progressive efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons agreed upon by consensus at the 2000 NPT Review Conference. The early entry into force of the CTBT is a pressing goal and a non-negotiable commitment of all States Signatories on the international community's joint path towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Mr President,

State Signatories and Ratifiers to the CTBTO will recall that during the final stages of the negotiations of the CTBT in 1995, it was the nuclear testing conducted during that time and in 1998 that increased the international community's awareness of the dangers of continued testing and the development of nuclear weapons, which brought about the commitment to a nuclear weapons free world by entering into a legally binding regime.

South Africa believes that the development of new types of nuclear weapons or rationalisation for their use contradict the spirit of the NPT and go against the agreement reached at the 2000 NPT Review Conference for a diminishing role for nuclear weapons in security policies. The modernisation of nuclear weapons raises concerns that nuclear testing might be resumed, which would impact negatively on international peace and security.

While South Africa welcomes the declarations of some nuclear-weapon States to observe a moratorium on nuclear testing, South Africa urges these governments to sign and ratify the Treaty without delay. South Africa notes with serious concern the lack of any real progress by some nuclear-weapon States to meet their disarmament obligations in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner. South Africa places a special emphasis on the role of the five nuclear-weapon States as they have a collective and moral responsibility to see to the early entry into force of the CTBT. South Africa would like to reiterate the position of the Non-Aligned Movement that the early ratification of the Treaty by the remaining nuclear weapon States can only encourage the remaining Annex 2 states to sign and ratify the Treaty.

The global environment has changed since the events of 11 September 2001. Today, we are faced with new additional threats to international peace and security, including the possibility of nuclear terrorism. South Africa would like to urge States not party to the CTBT not to undermine any joint international efforts aimed at addressing such threats by declaring their intention not to join or by delaying the signature and ratification of the CTBT.

Mr. President,

Following the aftermath of the tragic Tsunami disaster, several State Signatories and Ratifiers have called for the CTBT to share its information gathering systems for a possible Tsunami early warning system. This has led to an intense debate amongst State Signatories and Ratifiers of the Treaty. The CTBTO's primary task is to detect seismological activity due to nuclear testing.

South Africa believes that any decision that we may take regarding the utilisation of the CTBT systems for any other purpose will have to be evaluated in terms of its impact on the CTBTO. We may not allow any decision to dilute the primary purpose of the Treaty and it would be important to give due consideration to the various proposals. South Africa welcomes the decision by the Preparatory Commission to task the PTS to explore the possible contribution of the CTBTO's monitoring and data collection systems to Tsunami early warning systems. South Africa has taken note of the report contained in document CTBT/PTS/INF.757 and look forward to further deliberations on this important matter.

In conclusion, Mr President,

It is our belief that the CTBT has already made an important contribution to the strengthening of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. We believe that progress in one area of disarmament and non-proliferation often facilitates progress in other areas. Similarly, however, it is also true that obstacles in one area may undermine achievements in other areas. The same holds true for the CTBT. If it does not enter into force, it will weaken the disarmament and non-proliferation regime and undermine the international community's quest to achieve a world free from these instruments of destruction. We will continue to work relentlessly with all State Signatories and Ratifiers of the CTBTO towards the entry into force of this important pillar of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

I thank you.