NPT rev7

Mr President, Excellencies, Friends

It's 5:29 in the morning. It's called The Gadget.

It's been hauled to the top of a steel tower.

A flash of light fills the sky, followed by a thunderous sound and a blast of energy.

It's 16 July 1945 and the world has changed.

That famous Trinity test was followed just a few short weeks later with the bombings in Hiroshima then Nagasaki.

Tragedy. Devastation.

80 years later - Still the only wartime use of nuclear weapons.

*****

In the years that followed, nuclear weapons testing reached dizzy heights.

A peak of 1 per week!

Nearly 60 years ago the NPT was agreed.

It was clear back then: Ending nuclear testing is a key part of stopping proliferation.

But the NPT negotiators couldn't agree it.

The science wasn't strong enough to detect secret underground testing.

Instead they included the cessation of nuclear testing as an aspiration, in the Preamble.

*****

It took decades to bring together the diplomacy. The science.

The willingness to compromise.

But we got there.

In 1996 the CTBT opened for signature

Transformation!

From over 2000 tests to fewer than a dozen.

*****

Four years ago I addressed this eminent body. I gave an optimistic speech about a bright future.

A lot has changed in the world since then, right?

Well, a lot has changed for the CTBTO too.

Our International Monitoring System, our IMS is now more complete.

New stations coming online, in Argentina, China, 2 in Russia, and – just a few weeks ago – the installation of the last US station, in ANTARCTICA.

It's more complete, it's also more important.

Today, States are expecting so much more from the IMS.

It's able to detect and characterize the signs of a nuclear test down to a blast equivalent to 500 tonnes of TNT, anywhere in the world.

500 tonnes? That's only 3% of the yield of the Hiroshima bomb.

The IMS works - Every DPRK test was quickly detected. Even the small first one.

*****

I know what you're thinking!

What about smaller nuclear tests BELOW that 500 ton yield threshold?

What if CTBTO's systems can't separate nuclear explosions from other events?

The CTBT drafters had these issues in mind.

For these scenarios, the Treaty has other mechanisms:

Consultation and clarification.

Confidence-building mechanisms.

Critically, on-site inspection.

But could greater certainty be achieved, even before entry into force?

Voluntary application of these mechanisms?

Monitoring stations with increased sensitivity?

Enhanced transparency on a bilateral, trilateral or pentilateral basis?

All this is possible. Reducing uncertainty. Building trust.

*****

Other things that have changed since the last RevCon!

Five more states have ratified our Treaty. And one more has signed.

More countries benefiting from capacity building.

As well as important civil and scientific applications of our data.

*****

Friends,

At the outset of this important NPT Review Conference, we all have different levels of optimism or pessimism regarding the future of nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament.

I prefer realism – realism that is based on facts.

Let me share one fact that shapes my realism.

* * * * *

In Japan I heard this saying:

Hiroshima was the first and may Nagasaki forever be the last.

And 80 years later, Nagasaki is STILL the last. Never again has a nuclear weapon been used in warfare!

Isn't that amazing? This is a fact.

If you were a diplomat back in September 1945, would you have thought it possible?

Well, I'm an optimistic sort of person, but I would not have believed it.

THIS fact gives me a solid basis for optimism.

We have journeyed 80 years without another nuclear weapon being used in warfare.

Surely we can journey on for yet another 80 years, where Nagasaki will still be the last.

We can do this!

Thank you.