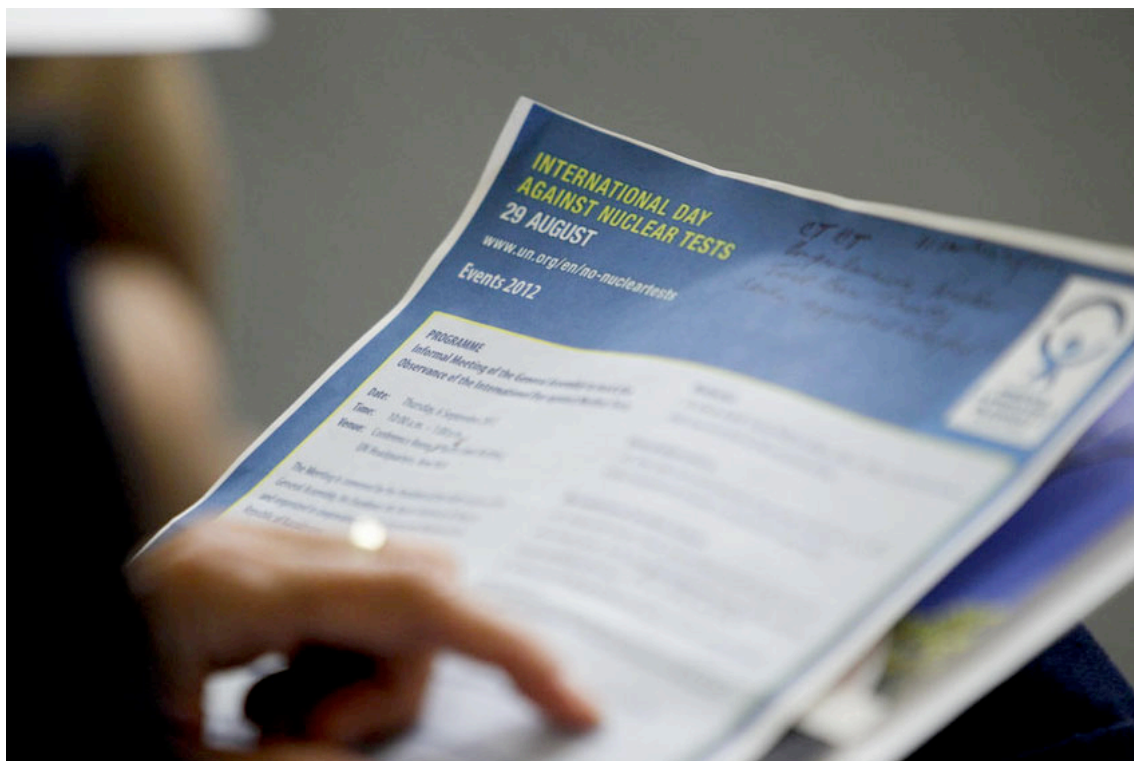


General Assembly meeting highlights need to end nuclear testing for a safer world



A participant looks over the programme of the General Assembly's informal meeting on the International Day against Nuclear Tests. UN Photo/R. Bajornas

6 September 2012 – The end of nuclear tests is one of the key means of achieving a safer and more secure world, United Nations officials stressed today, as the General Assembly met to observe the third annual International Day against Nuclear Tests.

“Nuclear tests are a threat to human health and global stability. Their effects are both harmful and long-lasting,” [Secretary-General](#) Ban Ki-moon noted in a video message for the observance.

The International Day is observed annually on 29 August, the date in 1991 when Semipalatinsk, located in north-eastern Kazakhstan and one of the largest test sites in the world, was closed for

good. The observance draws global attention to the need to abolish nuclear weapons and achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Mr. Ban urged States that had not yet done so to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) without delay. Pending the Treaty's entry into force, he urged all States to uphold the existing moratorium on all nuclear test explosions.

The CTBT, which aims to establish a verifiable, permanent global ban on all types of nuclear explosive tests, has been signed by 183 States and ratified by 157.

Ratification by eight so-called Annex 2 States is required for the treaty to enter into force. They are China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, Pakistan, and the United States.

“While much has been achieved to bring us closer to a universally effective legally binding comprehensive nuclear-test ban, much remains to be done,” the President of the Assembly, Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, told the gathered delegates in his address.

“The remaining effort is not necessarily scientific or financial but rather political. Stronger political commitment and true leadership are needed today more than ever,” he stressed.

Today's observance includes a high-level panel on the role of the UN in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, during which panellists will present insights on how the Organization can further promote progress on the issue and advance confidence building, including through nuclear-weapon-free zones and other relevant measures.

Mr. Al-Nasser encouraged participants to engage in constructive exchanges, not only to promote the entry into force of CTBT but also to promote progress on all parallel fronts.

“Needless to say, this will require the efforts of not just governments. It will also depend on the active engagement of civil society and other relevant stakeholders who support our global cause in nuclear disarmament,” he said.

He added, “It is my hope that this effort will continue and will gradually succeed in bringing us closer to achieve what I believe is our collective objective, and that is: a world where all nations can live in peace and stability without the looming threat and danger of nuclear destruction.”

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