

UNSCEAR

Sixtieth Anniversary Reception

**Remarks by Lassina Zerbo
Executive Secretary**

Delivered by Mr Patrick Grenard, Special Assistant

27 June 2016

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to deliver these remarks on behalf of Executive Secretary Lassina Zerbo, who unfortunately could not be here in person this evening. He sends his greetings and his warm congratulations on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization is also commemorating a significant anniversary this year. 2016 marks twenty years since the CTBT was opened for signature. And tonight provides a good opportunity to look at the journeys both UNSCEAR and CTBTO have made up to this point.

Since the 1950s, UNSCEAR has emerged as the world authority on global levels and effects of ionizing radiation. One of the reasons why nations sought a nuclear testing ban for so long was the environmental and health dangers of nuclear explosions. So from the outset there are clear links between us.

In fact those links go even further than they might first appear. UNSCEAR played a major role during the assessment of the consequences from radiation after the Chernobyl accident. At that time, radionuclide detection technology was light years away from what it is now.

The CTBTO International Monitoring System – now over 90% complete – is in place to monitor and detect signs of nuclear explosions. It uses seismic, radionuclide, hydroacoustic and infrasound technologies to do so. Although not originally foreseen when the verification regime was being established, IMS data has proven to have great value in the event of emergency situations.

Following the Fukushima nuclear accident, data from the IMS radionuclide stations were able to accurately predict the dispersion of the radioactive cloud. Shortly afterwards, the CTBTO joined the UN's Inter-Agency Committee on Radiological and Nuclear Emergencies (IACRNE) in order to better integrate our capacities with global efforts to respond to such emergencies.

More generally, both UNSCEAR and the CTBTO understand the need for science to inform diplomacy and policymaking where nuclear issues are concerned. That is one reason why we hold biannual Science and Technology Conferences here in Vienna. The next will be June 2017, and I hope that UNSCEAR will put it into its diary.

Let me close by repeating Dr Zerbo's and the CTBTO's best wishes on this anniversary. I have no doubt that your important work will continue, and look forward to partnering with you more strongly than ever in the years to come.

Thank you.