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Statement of H.E. Paul Richard Gallagher, Secretary for Relations with States, at the IX Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty (New York, 29 September 2015)

Here below the Statement by H.E. Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher, Secretary for Relations with States, at the IX Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty (New York, 29 September 2015):

Statement by H.E. Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher

Mr President, Mr Executive Secretary, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to convey to you the greetings of Pope Francis, who, on the occasion of the III Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, stated that “a global ethic is needed if we are to reduce the nuclear threat and work towards nuclear disarmament. Now, more than ever, technological, social and political interdependence urgently calls for an ethic of solidarity (cf. JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 38), which encourages peoples to work together for a more secure world, and a future that is increasingly rooted in moral values and responsibility on a global scale”.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty can play a significant role in strengthening this “global ethic”. The CTBT requires not only that each State Party undertake not to carry out, to refrain from causing, encouraging, or in any way participating in the carrying out of any nuclear weapon test explosion or any other nuclear explosion, and to prohibit and prevent any such nuclear explosion, as stated in its Article 1. The Treaty requires also the collaboration of all States Parties in the implementation of the CTBT Verification Regime, which is an effective deterrent to any type of development of nuclear weapons, as well as an important “early warning” instrument in civil and scientific sectors, one capable of favouring a better response to natural catastrophes.

At the basis of this “global ethic”, there must be an awareness and determination that in order to respond adequately to the challenges of the twenty-first century, it is essential to replace the logic of fear and mistrust with the ethic of responsibility, and so foster a climate of trust which values multilateral dialogue through consistent and responsible cooperation between all the members of the international community.

This responsibility becomes all the more necessary at a time when, as the Holy Father pointed out in the encyclical *Laudato Si'*, mentioning among other things nuclear technology, “never has humanity had such power over itself, yet nothing ensures that it will be used wisely, particularly when we consider how it is currently being used” (No. 104). The nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, whose seventieth anniversary we mark this year, “has become the symbol of the boundless destructive power of man when he makes distorted use of scientific and technical advances, and serves as a perpetual warning to humanity to forever repudiate war and ban nuclear arms and all weapons of mass destruction” (*Post-Angelus Address*, 9 August 2015).

It is our duty towards humanity as a whole, and especially to the poor and to future generations, to use the unprecedented power which science and technology provide for the service of the common good, and for promoting a genuine culture of peace.

Mr President,

When the Holy See ratified the CTBT on 18 July 2001, it reiterated its longstanding view that the banning of tests and the further development of nuclear weapons, disarmament and non-proliferation “are closely linked and must be achieved as quickly as possible under effective international control”. Today, while commending those States who have decided to ratify the Treaty, my Delegation wishes to repeat its appeal to the remaining States whose ratification is necessary for the Treaty to enter into force, thereby demonstrating courageous leadership and a high sense of political responsibility at the service, once again, of the common good, and the promotion of a genuine culture of peace.

This is also one of the best ways to strengthen the promotion of two interdependent issues: nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, as well as to strengthen the fight against nuclear terrorism. The entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty will act as a cornerstone in the foundation of a global structure to support a nuclear weapons free world and to guarantee a cooperative security based on an ethic of responsibility. The Holy See gives its full moral support to the solemn act of ratification as an indispensable aspect of the concrete realization of a culture of life, peace and prosperity which can ensure a better tomorrow.

Thank you, Mr President.

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