Mr. Chairman,

Israel decided to vote in favor on resolution L.48 because of the importance it attaches to the objectives of the CTBT. However, Israel cannot support and has strong reservations regarding some of the new wording contained in the PP6.

Israel has always emphasized that the CTBT and the NPT are not one and the same, and a clear distinction should be maintained with regard to these two regimes. Acknowledging the NPT and its recently held Review Conference in a resolution devoted to the strengthening of the CTBT, could undermine the CTBT and its goals.

Israel's signed the CTBT in September 1996. This reflects its long standing policy to bring itself closer, wherever possible, to international norms on nuclear safety, security and non-proliferation.

Since the establishment of the Preparatory Commission of the CTBT in November 1996, Israel has participated actively in the development of all
elements of the CTBT verification regime. In addition, Israel transfers data from its certified seismic stations to the International Data Center, and actively participates in various activities related to the development of the On Site Inspection (OSI). These activities demonstrate the importance Israel attributes to the CTBT, and the role it has with regard to the enhancement of international peace and security.

Israel appreciates the significant progress made in the development of the CTBT verification regime, whose completion is a prerequisite to Entry Into force of the Treaty in accordance with Article IV of the Treaty. However, completion of the verification regime still requires additional efforts. Major steps required include, inter alia, continued build up and testing of the International Monitoring System stations and the completion of the OSI Operational Manual, equipment purchase and training.

Mr. Chairperson,

For Israel, the regional security situation in the Middle East, including adherence to and compliance with the Treaty by states in the region, is a major consideration for ratification.
Secondly, it is Israel's view that the Treaty's verification regime should be robust to detect non-compliance with its basic obligations, be immune to abuse and at the same time allow each state signatory to protect its national security interests. For Israel, completion of the verification regime constitutes a major consideration for ratification, as we would like to ensure that it is adequate including robustness of the OSI and coverage of the Middle East by the International Monitoring System (IMS).

Thirdly, Israel's status in the Policy Making Organs of the Treaty, including those connected to the geographical region of the Middle East and South Asia (MESA), and the Executive Council of the future CTBTO, must be addressed. Sovereign equality must be ensured.

Mr. Chairperson,

As it has done in previous years, Israel voted in favor of this resolution. Our position stems from the importance Israel attaches to the objectives of the CTBT.

Thank you.