Mr. Chairperson,

Israel voted in favor of resolution L.29 because of the importance it attaches to the objectives of the CTBT presented in this resolution. However, Israel cannot support and has strong reservations regarding some of the language included in preamble paragraph 6 and operative paragraph 1.

It is the longstanding position of Israel that the CTBT and the NPT are not linked. An attempt to artificially force such a linkage, especially through a reference to the NPT review conference, a forum Israel is not a member of, would only jeopardize the CTBT and its noble cause, as well as any prospect for a better regional security in the Middle East. Israel’s signature to the CTBT in 1996 reflected 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, Israel has actively participated in the development of all elements of the CTBT verification regime. Israel also transmits data from its certified seismic stations to the International Data Center, and actively participates in various
activities related to the OSI. I am pleased to announce that recently Israel's Radionuclide Laboratory, supporting the IMS, has been certified. This substantive and intensive involvement demonstrates the importance Israel attributes to the CTBT, and its contribution 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. However, completion of the verification regime still requires further efforts. Major steps are still needed for the continued build-up and testing of the International Monitoring System stations, the completion of the OSI Operational Manual, as well as equipment purchase and training. In this regard, we commend the Executive Secretary and the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the CTBT for their continuing work and preparations for the IFE14 to be hosted by Jordan.

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.

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 there is adequate coverage of the Middle East by the IMS.

In addition, 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, which is a cornerstone of multilateralism, must be ensured.

Mr. Chairperson,

Pending EIF we believe that the CTBT should be advanced further by states taking upon themselves the following commitments and activities:

- Maintain the commitment not to carry out any nuclear weapon test explosion in line with the Treaty's basic obligations.
- Complete, as soon as possible, the CTBT's verification regime.
- Operate, maintain and test the IMS and IDC in order to gain experience and to provide early detection capabilities. In addition, where coverage gaps of IMS stations exist, take temporary measures to fill those gaps, such as operation of auxiliary seismic stations as primary ones until all primary stations are effectively functioning and transferring data.
- Maintain the technical and a-political nature of the Preparatory Commission's work and respect its Rules and Procedures.

Mr. Chairperson,

As we have done in previous years, Israel has voted in favor of this resolution. Our voting pattern stems from and reflects the importance we attach to the objectives of the CTBT. It is our hope that this would be realized faithfully and in a forthcoming manner.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.