



**Abstract**

This project aimed to educate high-school and university students in the United States about the CTBT and its contributions to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The expected outcome of this project was an increased awareness among students about the contribution of the CTBT's verification regime to the SDGs.

**Introduction**

Students in the United States are not aware of the CTBT, despite the United States' standing as the largest financial supporter of the Treaty's verification regime. Public consciousness about nuclear threats remains limited, and progress on achieving entry-into-force of the Treaty has remained an enduring challenge. In the United States, arms control treaties are under attack, and there has been limited public outcry about the negative effects of withdrawing from such agreements. The United States has abrogated its responsibilities under the Iran Deal in 2018, announced the termination of the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty in 2019, and placed conditions on the extension of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, which is set to expire in 2021. The 2018 Nuclear Posture Review further indicates a shift in the United States' approach to strategic stability, demonstrating a greater willingness to expand nuclear deterrence to encompass non-nuclear threats.

The Sustainable Development Goals present an opportunity to renew political attention on the contributions of the CTBT to the international community. This project sought to introduce students and young professionals across the United States to the contributions of the CTBT verification regime to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

**Methods**

This project involved in-classroom visits with university and high school students in California and Texas, as well as a presentation to university students in New York. In February 2019, the project author traveled to the United Nations Association Global Engagement Summit in New York City. In March 2019, the author visited Dr. Olga Mohan Alliance High School in Los Angeles, the UNA-USA Whittier Chapter, and Soka University in Irvine, California, to present at a symposium on nuclear disarmament and meet with students to discuss youth engagement in nuclear nonproliferation efforts. In April 2019, he visited The University of Texas at Dallas to speak to a classroom session about the CTBT's verification capabilities, and in May 2019 presented at a side event on peace education at the Nonproliferation Treaty Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference (NPT PrepCom) in New York City.



Clockwise, from top right: Soka University Symposium (CA), United Nations Association – Global Engagement Summit (NY), Dr. Olga Mohan Alliance High School (CA), 2019 NPT PrepCom (NY)

**Findings**

Students who took part in the seminars and presentations came away with a greater understanding of the contributions of the CTBT to the international security framework and the Sustainable Development Goals. In addition, students learned about the benefits of securing CTBT entry-into-force.

*“The efforts of all supporters of international co-operation, individuals as well as nations, will be needed to create in all countries an opinion to voice, with ever increasing clarity and strength, the demand for an open world.” -Niels Bohr, 1944*

**Conclusion**

Educating next-generation leaders about the contributions of the CTBT to the Sustainable Development Agenda will ensure the Treaty remains relevant in the years to come. The global nuclear nonproliferation is under duress, facing challenges on multiple fronts that threaten to unravel the foundations of arms control in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The CTBT's entry-into-force would represent a positive step in the journey towards a more stable global security environment. Over the past two decades, it has continually strengthened its verification regime and enjoys strong global support. A legally-binding CTBT would strengthen the international norm against nuclear testing and create a safer global security environment. Elevating the voices of youth is crucial to the enduring success of nonproliferation and arms control agreements.

**References**

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