



Preparatory Committee for the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Meets for the first time. Photo: UN photo.

29 August 2016 — "On this Day, I call on all countries and peoples to work for the CTBT's entry into force as soon as possible so that we may advance toward a nuclear-weapon-free world." — UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon.

Since nuclear weapons testing began in the mid-twentieth century, with the first test on 16 July 1945, nearly 2,000 have taken place. Over the course of the Cold War, hundreds of nuclear weapon tests left behind a devastating legacy for local citizens and their natural environment. On 2 December 2009, the 64th session of the United Nations General Assembly declared 29 August the [International Day against Nuclear Tests](#) by unanimously adopting resolution 64/35. The resolution calls for increasing awareness and education "about the effects of nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions and the need for their cessation as one of the means of achieving the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world."

Today marks a quarter of a century since the closure of the Semipalatinsk test site in Kazakhstan, ground zero for more than 450 nuclear tests. The victims there are joined by others scattered across Central Asia, North Africa, North America and the South Pacific.

