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India's CTBT pledge not firm enough: US (PTI)

The United States has said that Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's speech at the United Nations was only an expression of intent to adhere to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty by autumn this year, but does not constitute a commitment. "You can parse it by careful formulation any way you like but we take it as a 'statement of intent' to adhere to the CTBT by fall," US deputy assistant secretary of state Robert Einhorn said . . [He] said the US "had no other assurances from India on the CTBT . . . That (Vajpayee's speech) is the authoritative articulation of the Indian position," . . .

Clarifying New Delhi's stand, the deputy chief of mission [in Washington], Mr. T.P. Srinivasan said "the Prime Minister's words were: 'India is prepared to bring the discussions to a successful conclusion so that entry into force of CTBT is not delayed beyond September 1999.' That is reassurance enough."