

KAZAKHSTAN

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STATEMENT

BY H.E. MR. KANAT SAUDABAYEV

SECRETARY OF STATE - MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

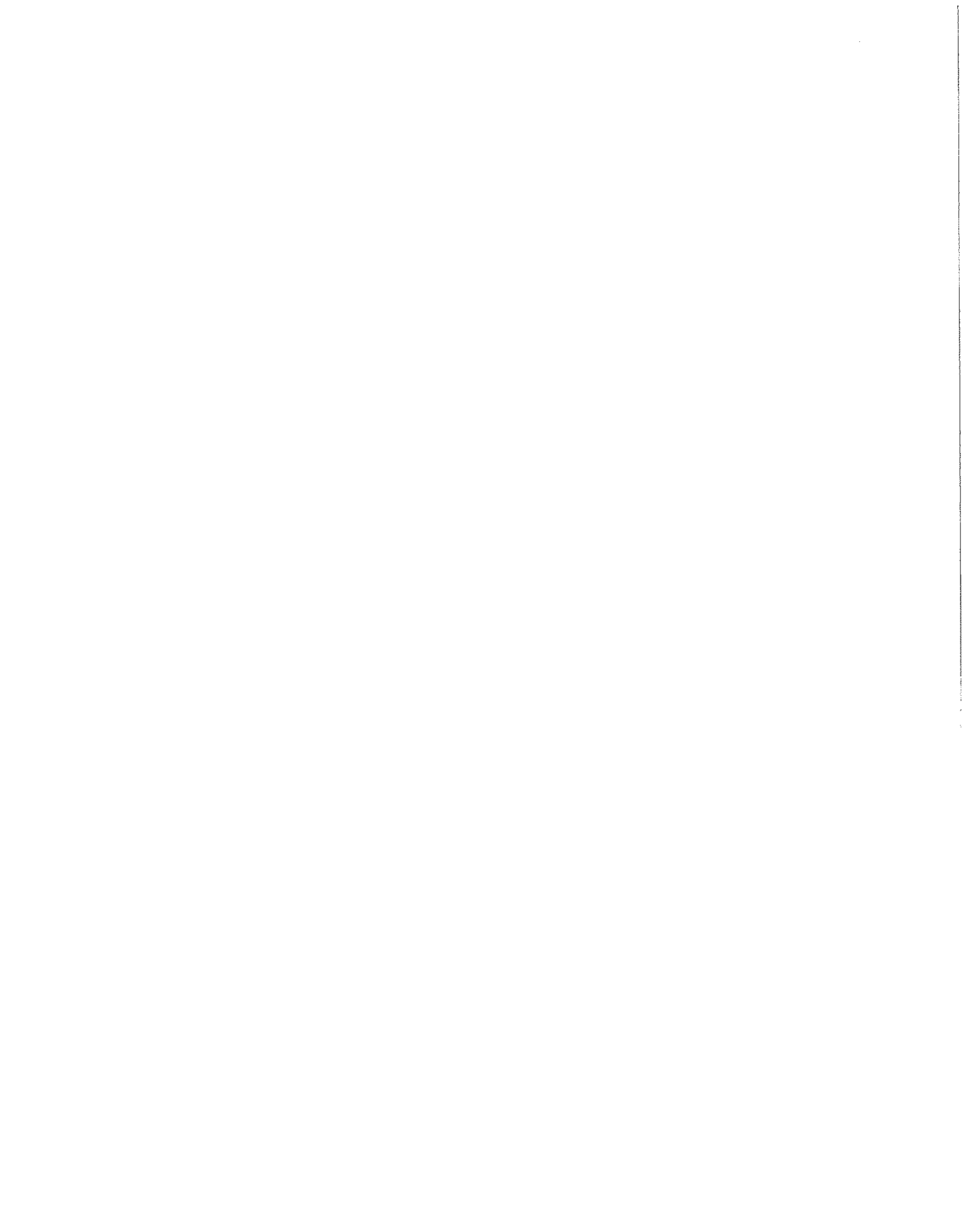
AT THE CONFERENCE ON FACILITATING THE ENTRY INTO

FORCE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN

TREATY (ARTICLE XIV)

24 September 2009

New York



Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Sixty years ago, a tragic page was turned in the history of my nation – the Soviet Union conducted the first test of a nuclear device at the Semipalatinsk testing ground in Eastern Kazakhstan. In the course of the next forty years, some 450 tests of over 600 nuclear devices were conducted there, with their cumulative capacity equaling that of some 2,500 bombs dropped on Hiroshima. About one and a half million citizens of Kazakhstan have suffered from the effects of radiation. Vast territories, comparable to the size of Germany, have been exposed to radioactive contamination.

On 29 August 1991, by his decree, President Nursultan Nazarbayev shut down the world's second largest Semipalatinsk nuclear test site. By voluntarily renouncing the world's fourth largest nuclear-missile arsenal, Kazakhstan reaffirmed that it had opted for a nuclear-weapon-free world. Throughout all these years, it remains strongly committed to the principles of non-proliferation. On that ground, we have every right to stress the need for further decisive actions aimed at reducing nuclear threat.

An early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), which could serve as a catalyst for the process of nonproliferation and effective implementation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, is among the steps in that direction.

We welcome the progress made by the CTBTO, since 1996, and an increasing global support of the concepts of disarmament and non-proliferation. At this juncture, the international community should, through joined efforts, convince nine states, that have yet to either sign or ratify the Treaty, to do so. We are encouraged by US President Barack Obama's intention to give a new impetus to that process.

For our part, we actively participate in the CTBTO Preparatory Commission, promoting the development and functioning of the International Monitoring System and on-site inspection techniques. Our country has been able to put in place a cutting-edge national monitoring system. Five stations functioning in Kazakhstan have been integrated into the International Monitoring System and used to provide a 24-hour monitoring of natural and man-made seismic events in the region. They demonstrated their high effectiveness and quality performance when they had timely detected and located a nuclear explosion carried out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which will negatively affect the global non-proliferation process and constitutes a threat to regional

and international security. Kazakhstan, strongly condemning the nuclear test of 25 May 2009, calls upon the DPRK to take note of our positive track record of nuclear disarmament and successful peaceful development, in cooperation with the international community.

Kazakhstan has hosted, at the former Semipalatinsk test site, four on-site inspection exercises. The Integrated Field Exercise 2008 was unprecedented in its scope and outcomes. That exercise has provided a unique opportunity to test, in an integrated manner, most of the key elements of the on-site inspection system, in a short time span.

Kazakhstan intends to continue its cooperation with the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the CTBTO.

We also call upon all states to not delay the drafting of a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT), which will become an important step towards nuclear disarmament and prevention of proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Even more decisive steps have to be made in the area of non-proliferation. Our President has spoken in favor of a new universal treaty on general horizontal and vertical non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The configuration of a new treaty and its content will largely depend on the proposals of all interested Member States.

I would also like to draw your attention to the proposal of the President of Kazakhstan to proclaim 29 August as the International Day for a World Free of Nuclear Weapons. That date has a deep symbolical meaning. On that day, in 1949, the first nuclear weapon test was conducted at the Semipalatinsk testing ground and on the same day, but in 1991, that site was shut down, once and for all, by a decree of our head of state.

The significance of today's CTBT Conference cannot be overestimated. Kazakhstan expresses its readiness to cooperate with other signatories in the efforts to ensure CTBT's entry into force and its implementation at various levels. Only by working together will we be able to reduce nuclear threat and make yet another essential step towards a nuclear weapon-free world.

Thank you for your attention.