



KAZAKHSTAN

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STATEMENT

by

H.E. Mr. Kairat Umarov,

**Deputy 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 (CTBT)**

**23 September 2011
New York**

**Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Let me begin by extending my warm greetings to all of you at the annual meeting of countries that have chosen the path leading to a world free of nuclear weapons.

Twenty years ago, on 29 August 1991, we closed a tragic page in the history of our country, when President Nursultan Nazarbayev, by his unilateral decree, shut down the Semipalatinsk test site, one of the largest in the world.

From the very first day of its independence, Kazakhstan has demonstrated to the entire world its sincere commitment to a future that free of nuclear weapons, and we continue to make our case for the “disarmament race”. We reiterate firmly that we need to take further energetic steps aimed at lowering the nuclear threat.

A major step in this direction would be the earliest entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), which is a catalyst of the disarmament process and a guarantee for strengthening the nuclear weapons non-proliferation regime.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We welcome the progress made since 1996 when the Treaty was signed. Each year brings more international support to the ideas of disarmament and non-proliferation but, unfortunately, some countries that hold the keys to the CTBT’s entry into force, have so far refrained from signing and ratifying it.

Against this background we are encouraged by the fact that U.S. President Barak Obama is trying to give a fresh impetus to this process

I believe that we need to vigorously use all mechanisms and additional international arrangements, including the General Assembly resolution declaring 29 August as the International Day against Nuclear Tests, to mobilize all other stakeholders, such as media, civil society and “public diplomacy” to convince governments of states that have not yet joined or ratified the Treaty, to do so in the near future.

On the occasion of the historical significance of the 20th anniversary of the closure of the Semipalatinsk test site, and with a view to implement the resolution declaring 29 August as the International Day, to be observed annually, we held several events both in Kazakhstan and in other countries with a call to end nuclear tests and promote global disarmament.

On 30 August, the International Conference on Nuclear Safety and Non-Proliferation entitled, “Nuclear Dilemmas: Present and Future”, was jointly organized by us and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands in The Hague. In addition, on 2 September, the United Nations General Assembly convened an Informal Meeting of the General Assembly, in New York, to observe the International Day against Nuclear Tests.

In October, this year, Kazakhstan will host the International Forum for a Nuclear-Weapon Free World dedicated to the Twentieth Anniversary of the shutting down of the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site. Taking the opportunity of today’s conference, I would like to

invite interested states and international organizations to take part in the forum.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The voluntary moratorium on nuclear testing observed by the world's nuclear states is a very important factor but it cannot serve as an alternative to a legally binding instrument, such as the Treaty would.

We are confident that the Preparatory Commission of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) will continue to work more efficiently, and Kazakhstan is ready to pursue cooperation with all the states on the problems of CTBT's entry into force and its implementation at different levels.

I would like to note that we highly value the efficiency of the Preparatory Commission and that of Mr. Tibor Toth, its Executive Secretary, in conducting timely radiological and environmental evaluations after the nuclear power plant disaster in Japan. This is proof the promising potential of CTBTO and I am confident that the Organization we are trying to establish has a great future.

At present, Kazakhstan is engaged in cooperating actively with the CTBTO in contributing to the development and functioning of the International Monitoring System, whereby, our country has been able to set up one of the most modern national monitoring systems.

Promoting closer regional cooperation within the framework of CTBTO allows us, in our view, to focus on addressing specific issues which are unique for each region. These are the issues that we will focus on at the International Training Center for experts in seismic and nuclear testing monitoring activities, which was established in Kazakhstan with the help of the Norwegian government and the NORSAR Seismic Centre which was inaugurated, in Almaty in 2010.

We are grateful to the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the CTBTO for the close cooperation on this project, which makes the centre yet another joint contribution on our part to implement the Treaty's goals.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Conference today demonstrates that we are united in our commitment to find ways to remove all the obstacles for the CTBT's entry into force. We should continue to act together if we are to lower the nuclear threat and take another major step forward on the way to a world free of nuclear weapons.

Thank you for your attention.