

**Remarks by H.E. Erlan Idrissov,
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan,
to the Conference on Disarmament
(Geneva, March 4, 2015)**

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

First of all, I would like to congratulate Mr. Vaanchig Purevdorj on his new role as the President of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and to commend the efforts made by former Chairman Jorge Lomonaco. It is important to build on the momentum of the start of 2015 to complete the adoption of the agreed Work Program.

As Mr. Ban Ki-moon, the UN Secretary-General said in his message to the Conference, *"this forum was established in order to conduct negotiations, not discussions, and the only measure of success is to conclude agreements in the field of disarmament"*.

We fully agree with these words, since our inability to start substantive negotiations on all the important issues on the agenda year after year has led to justified criticism of the Conference.

But we must also remember the previous successes of this Conference. This forum has great potential and can make a significant contribution to the process of disarmament. In this regard, I would like to express my hope that Member Parties will demonstrate their political will to overcome divisions in order to start the practical work of the Conference.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today the world is experiencing a major transformation. We are witnessing the growing friction between major powers over so called zones of influence, markets, control over energy and other resources. This growing instability can lead to conflicts and foster a dangerous trend where states use power rather than diplomacy in world politics. As a result this can lead to an arms race, as well as the use of military force and other forms of coercion when protecting national interests.

The Republic of Kazakhstan considers the Conference on Disarmament as an **indispensable multilateral negotiating forum** in the area of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

As we have repeatedly stated before, **changing the rules of procedures and systemic reforms on CD** in favor of early adoption of the Work Program is inadmissible. **The Consensus Principle** that underlines the workings of the conference must remain unaltered. This principle has for many years served the interests of states regardless of their size or any other criteria. Consensus is at the core of the Conference and is essential to ensure universal agreement.

In this regard, **increasing the membership** in CD is also welcome. Increasing the number of states that can engage in the process of disarmament will add a new impetus to the whole Conference.

In general, we support the engagement of civil society in the work of CD.

However, we believe that this issue requires a balanced approach.

NGOs should be able to attend meetings of CD as observers and find their own ways to express their expert opinion. However, we believe that NGOs should not directly interfere with the work of CD. It is states that are represented at the conference where they conduct negotiations on issues directly affecting their national interests.

Unfortunately I must note that the Conference on Disarmament has been unable to conduct any substantive negotiations on disarmament since the adoption of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) by the UN General Assembly. We welcome efforts to revive the activities of the Conference, including the **establishment of an Informal working group** in the framework of the Work Program.

Key issues on the agenda for us are **nuclear disarmament** through the adoption of a legally binding, non-discriminatory and universal instrument, development and signing of the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT), prevention of **an arms race in outer space**, and **negative security assurances** to states that do not possess any nuclear weapons.

It is important to start negotiations **on all four key issues of CD** as soon as possible.

Nuclear disarmament is one of the most important and pressing issues facing our planet today. The complexity of the issue means that small but concrete steps will need to be taken to achieve the goal. The President of Kazakhstan proposed in 2010 to adopt the **Universal Declaration of the United Nations on creating a world free from nuclear weapons**. This would be an important step towards adopting the **Convention on complete and comprehensive ban of nuclear weapons** – an initiative that was drafted by Costa Rica and Malaysia. It is time to stop talking and start acting by taking measures to remove nuclear stockpiles, including from those countries that are not part of the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Kazakhstan believes it is time to take action on Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) as soon as possible. The signing of the FMCT will help minimize the possibility of development of illegitimate military nuclear programs, significantly improve the conditions for the control over the existing materials, as well as reduce the risk of nuclear terrorism. To facilitate this process, we have supported the establishment of a group of government experts (GGE) on preparing negotiations on FMCT. I am sure that their recommendations would serve as a benchmark for implementation of substantive negotiations on FMCT at CD.

It is also vital to have further discussions on the issue of **Prevention of an arms race in outer space (PAROS)** by involving other international bodies that are engaged in this issue. To facilitate the start of these negotiations, we support a draft Treaty on preventing placement of weapons in outer space prepared by China and the Russian Federation.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Kazakhstan is a nation that voluntarily got rid of the fourth largest nuclear arsenal in the world. We are home to Baikonur, the world's largest space launching site, which is making a major contribution to the peaceful use of outer space. We believe it is vital that a resolution calling on the ban on placement of weapons in outer space (NFPWOS) is adopted. This resolution is supported by 126 States in the First Committee of the UN General Assembly.

Having established a nuclear weapons free zone in Central Asia together with our neighbours, Kazakhstan also believes it is necessary to start the development of an international, legally binding instrument on **provision of security assurances to non-nuclear-weapons states by nuclear-armed countries**. Only such a guarantee can discourage non-nuclear-weapon states from seeking nuclear weapons, which they see as necessary for their own security.

We have already achieved significant progress towards this ambition for our region. On May 6 2014, representatives of the five nuclear-weapon states: the United Kingdom, China, Russia, the USA and France, signed **the Protocol to the Semipalatinsk Treaty** at the UN Headquarters in New York. Kazakhstan, being the chair country during this process, made every effort to encourage the signing of the Protocol, which ensures that nuclear powers are now committed to not using nuclear weapons against the five Member States of

the Semipalatinsk Treaty. We would like to thank the Governments of France and the United Kingdom for ensuring the completion of internal procedures for ratification of the Protocol. We look forward to other partners completing this work at the earliest.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) still remains the foundation of international security.

The 2015 NPT Review Conference will mark the 20-year anniversary of the NPT's indefinite extension agreed to in 1995. We call on all Member States that have signed the Treaty to continue with the work that lies ahead.

Kazakhstan is concerned at the continued delays in progress towards establishing a **Middle East Zone free from nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction**, as agreed upon during the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

We strongly believe that the ratification of the **Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty** is one of the most important conditions required to achieve nuclear disarmament.

The moratorium on nuclear testing, announced by some nuclear-weapon-states, is a positive step but it is not an alternative to a legally binding document.

A few days ago Kazakhstan and Japan have become co-chairs of the Conference according to the Article 14 of CTBT. It is a symbolical moment for us. This year the world will mark the 70th anniversary of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings in 1945, one of the darkest pages in our human history. Kazakhstan has also suffered terribly from the impact of nuclear weapons. During Soviet times, the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site was the scene of more than 450 nuclear explosions. The UN General Assembly adopted a resolution put forward by Kazakhstan in December 2009 to declare August 29, the date of the official closing of Semipalatinsk nuclear test site, as the **International Day Against Nuclear Tests**

Due to our shared history, Kazakhstan and Japan have a moral right to demand progress on a comprehensive nuclear test ban. We are determined to work together during our co-chairmanship to push for the ratification of this treaty.

In support of our common efforts, Kazakhstan initiated **The ATOM Project** (*Abolish Testing. Our Mission*). The objective of this initiative is to mobilize the international community to raise awareness of the nuclear threat and to press for action to end it. Already, around 100,000 people from more than 100 countries have signed The ATOM Project's online petition to global leaders demanding progress in CTBT ratification.

We recognize the high importance of the process, which began with holding Conferences on humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons in Oslo, Nayarit and Vienna.

As a nation that has experienced disastrous consequences of nuclear explosions, Kazakhstan fully supports this initiative and hopes that this effort will lead to a new and powerful impetus to our common efforts to the complete prohibition of nuclear tests and the eventual removal of the deadly weapons from our planet once and for all.

Mr. Chairman,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Finding compromise has never been easy and requires political will. Nevertheless, I am sure that together we can make a significant contribution to our common goal of achieving and maintaining peace and prosperity for everyone on Earth.

Thank you!