



KAZAKHSTAN

Please, check against delivery

Statement by
H. E. Mr. Erlan Idrissov
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan
at the General debates
of the 68th session of the UN General Assembly

New York
28 September 2013

**Mr. President,
Mr. Secretary General,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

On behalf of the Republic of Kazakhstan I would like to congratulate H.E. Mr. John Ashe on his election as the President of the sixty-eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly and wish him every success in his important assignment.

I would also like to express my gratitude to H.E. Mr. Vuk Jeremic, President of the 67th session of the General Assembly for his able stewardship, energy and dedication in finding solutions to critical international challenges, as well as, for his support for my country's initiatives during the last session.

Since we met here at the United Nations a year ago, the world situation has not improved, but on the contrary, has deteriorated, becoming more fragile and vulnerable to new risks and threats. A growing number of states in the Middle East and Africa, which were steadily progressing economically and socially, are witnessing regression. Some Asian states are facing similar risks of destabilization. The number of post-conflict countries is also on the rise, inevitably, affecting global development in an interconnected world. Never before has the need been more compelling for equal partnership and participation of all Member States, based on mutual respect and norms, as embodied in the principles of the United Nations Charter and International Law. The United Nations, by the power invested by its Member States, thus stands out as our unquestioned leading entity on the world stage.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Kazakhstan strongly condemns the use of chemical weapons in Syria as confirmed by the findings of an independent investigation by the UN Mission and regards it as a crime against humanity.

We support the adoption of a UN Security Council resolution on Syria that would stipulate strict compliance to a concerted decision on the elimination of chemical weapons in this country and the conduct of regular inspections of this process.

We express our hope that the accession of Syria to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction as well as placement of such weapons under international control will preclude the possibility of their repeated use and contribute towards the end of a longstanding and bloody conflict in Syria.

We call for earliest possible convening of an international conference on the settlement of the conflict in Syria with the aim to end violence and determine Syria's political future through dialogue and reconciliation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The current situation of the nuclear disarmament process also does not encourage confidence in a more peaceful future. While we participated actively in yesterday's High Level Meeting, we once again stress from the podium of the General Assembly that our country has a special moral authority to champion the cause of nuclear abolition. By closing the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site soon after our independence in 1991 and renouncing the fourth largest nuclear arsenal, Kazakhstan has made a unique contribution in the multilateral effort to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons.

We believe that the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which remains the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime, must reach full universalization with strict implementation of national obligations in accordance with the three fundamental pillars of the Treaty: non-proliferation; the peaceful use of nuclear energy; and disarmament, in a balanced way. We call on all countries outside of the NPT, possessing nuclear weapons, to sign the Treaty, and for State Parties not to withdraw. The entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty should become an important catalyst of the non-proliferation process and the effective implementation of the NPT. We urge those countries that have not yet done so, to sign and ratify this important instrument.

The General Assembly resolution, initiated by Kazakhstan, instituting 29 August as the International Day against Nuclear Tests, matches the goals and objectives for the entry into force of the CTBT.

The Treaty on the Establishment of a Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons in Central Asia (CANWFZ), which came into force in March 2009, is an important contribution of the Central Asian countries to international and regional security. It is the first nuclear-weapon-free zone established in the northern hemisphere and sharing common borders with two major nuclear powers, as well as the first such zone where nuclear weapons had previously existed. Kazakhstan welcomes the willingness of the P5 countries to hold a dialogue on the Additional Protocol and to provide the negative assurances in the nearest future.

Kazakhstan supports the early convening of the Conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction, under the aegis of the UN until the end of 2013, and calls upon all States in the region to actively cooperate to make this important deliberation possible.

To take further decisive actions to eliminate the nuclear threat, President Nursultan Nazarbayev of the Republic of Kazakhstan has proposed the adoption of a **Universal Declaration for a Nuclear Weapon Free World**, which will be an important step towards a Nuclear Weapons Convention, and thereby achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world. We count on the Member States to finalize and submit a draft resolution to the General Assembly.

We support the immediate political and diplomatic settlement of the situation around the Iranian nuclear programme on the basis of strict compliance with the provisions of the NPT and the IAEA regulations.

In order to ensure continuation of the dialogue between the group of international mediators and Iran, Kazakhstan hosted two rounds of negotiations in Almaty in 2013. Specific agreements have yet to be reached, but we are confident that a mutually acceptable outcome is possible. . We believe that concrete actions by Iran to ensure the transparency of its nuclear program will advance the settlement of the problem rather than relying on sanctions alone.

We express our grave concern about the situation of North Korea's nuclear program. Attempts to deal with the secret development of nuclear weapons in violation of international obligations cannot be justified by any circumstances. At the same time, Kazakhstan is against a military solution of the problem, since we are convinced that only the peaceful settlement of the crisis, within the framework of the six party talks, can ensure peace and stability in Northeast Asia.

Kazakhstan is also interested in the sustainable and stable development of Afghanistan through its transformation into a politically stable and economically steadfast state, in keeping with the decisions of the Istanbul process and Almaty forum in 2013. We support the rapid integration of Afghanistan into regional structures for its speedy social and economic recovery.

The Asian continent is transforming itself into a global power house for the 21st century, with its production of more than 57 % of global GDP – and this trend is expected to increase.

However, this growth could be jeopardized by an aggravation of existing conflicts, illegal migration, drug trafficking, territorial claims, separatism, religious extremism and terrorism. To cope with these challenges, Asia needs a regional security architecture. Kazakhstan, as the initiator of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (or CICA), is striving to maximize forums for joint decision-making on security and cooperation in Asia.

Mr. President,

Kazakhstan is committed to the fundamental principles of international law, among which, the respect of **human rights and freedom** impartiality, and non-politicization are deemed pivotal for a sustainable, universal and effective global architecture for protecting human rights This requires appropriate budgeting and strengthening of the **UN Human Rights**

Council and its special procedures of the Universal Periodic Review and the institution of Special Rapporteurs, as well as supporting the capacity and authority of UN human rights mechanisms. We need to implement civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights at national, regional and global levels, paying particular attention to vulnerable groups.

Kazakhstan as a multi-national and multi-confessional country facilitates a comprehensive dialogue between civilizations, within the United Nations, and various international and regional organizations. The Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, which Kazakhstan convenes every three years, contributes to global and regional security, by garnering the spiritual and moral potential of world religions to facilitate international conflicts, and to prevent confrontation between confessions and cultures.

Additionally, at the initiative of Kazakhstan, the General Assembly proclaimed 2013-2022 as the International Decade of the Rapprochement of Cultures. Its official inauguration was held in Astana last month, paving the way for cultural diversity and tolerance. Kazakhstan calls on Member States to actively participate in the events of this Decade and to support synergy between the Alliance of Civilizations and the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The consequences of the global financial and economic crisis have led to the conclusion that the world needs a common policy of global governance. Kazakhstan therefore welcomes the adoption of the General Assembly resolution on the UN and Global Economic Governance, which recognizes the value of cooperation and interaction between the United Nations and various regional and sub-regional groups.

Over the years, Kazakhstan has been hosting the Astana Economic Forum, now a reputed international platform, covering the most pressing and ever expanding issues of the world economy. The First World Anti-Crisis Conference was held as part of the Forum in May 2013 in Astana. The Astana Declaration, the recommendations of the Forum to G20 leaders and the main road map of the World Anti-Crisis Plan were adopted as outcome documents.

The Second World Anti-Crisis Conference, which is to be held 20-21 May 2014, will draft the World Anti-Crisis Plan, to combat the financial and economic crisis to ensure long-term sustainable economic growth.

Mr. Chairman,

We are pleased to note the commendable work of the United Nations in implementing the agreements reached at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development Rio +20, and Kazakhstan is actively contributing to that work. The National Concept of transition to a "green"

economy has been developed with programmes in key sectors of the economy: energy, water, utilities, agriculture, industry and biodiversity.

Kazakhstan has also initiated the transition to a "green" economy in Central Asia within the framework of the regional Intergovernmental Commission on Sustainable Development.

The Rio+20 Conference supported the "Green Bridge" Partnership Program (GBPP) as a voluntary mechanism for mutually beneficial cooperation between the developed and developing world in the interests of sustainable development. Next Monday, on 30 September, Kazakhstan will host the International Conference on "Green Bridge" Partnership Programme in Astana with the participation of regional countries, ESCAP, ECE and other stakeholders. At this conference, the programme will be institutionalized and its Secretariat established.

Kazakhstan has made voluntary commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions within the framework of the United Nations Convention on Climate Change, by reducing CO₂ emissions and investing in low-carbon development, all of which are the concrete contribution of Kazakhstan to the Secretary-General's global initiative, Sustainable Energy for All and other processes aimed at sustainable development.

I am pleased to inform you that Kazakhstan's capital, Astana, will host the international exhibition, EXPO-2017 titled "Energy of the Future", which is designed to promote the dissemination of best practices in the field of sustainable energy.

On the basis of national consultations, we have developed a number of recommendations on development goals for the post-2015 agenda and submitted them to the UN. We believe that the Millennium Development Goals all of which are not reached must be included into the post-2015 agenda, in conjunction with the objectives of sustainable development. International partnerships must be strengthened for South-South and triangular cooperation, to complete the ODA activities. Strengthening resilience to withstand external factors, such as climate change, financial and food crises will have to gain priority in this new agenda.

In this regard, Kazakhstan's chairmanship of the last and symbolic 20th session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, made the official transition and hand over to the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on sustainable development. The establishment of the HLPF is historic as a universal platform to meet current realities, closely linked with global security, which justifies the rationale for direct connection between the HLPF and Security Council over issues of food, ecological, energy and water security.

Mr. President,

For the first time since the establishment of the United Nations, Kazakhstan has announced its candidature for a **non-permanent seat in the Security Council for 2017-2018,**

based on the principles of fair and equitable geographical rotation and adequate representation of all Member States of the Asia-Pacific Regional Group.

The experience that we have gained from recently chairing a number of regional and international organizations and fora such as the OSCE, OIC, CICA, CIS, SCO, CSTO and others, gives us unique access to a wide and diverse range of experiences and approaches to solving international security problems addressed by the UN Security Council.

If elected, Kazakhstan will unfailingly be united with others to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security, and will support efforts to reform the Council, transforming it into a more representative and transparent body that can effectively address the full range of challenges and threats facing the world today. We therefore count on the broad support of Member-States to our candidature to the Security Council for the period 2017-2018.

Mr. President,

Last year Kazakhstan celebrated its 20th anniversary of accession to the United Nations, and this year, the 20th anniversary of a UN presence in our country. Our government and people greatly support the United Nations in all its programmes. Kazakhstan acts as a geographical and political bridge between North and South, Europe and Asia. For this reason, it is ideally suited to foster cooperative initiatives in this vast regional landscape. Promoting Kazakhstan to the status of a middle-income country represents both challenge and opportunities for the development agenda, shifting the focus from being a recipient country to that of a regional development partner.

Regional cooperation is critical in order to guarantee national and regional security. Persistent conflict and instability in Afghanistan also have an effect on Central Asia. Poverty, unemployment and growing disparities in economic and social development in the countries of Central Asia are strong factors indicating the potential for new mass population movements, instability, ecological degradation, drug trafficking, religious extremism and terrorism, all of which must be addressed through regional cooperation. Such collaboration can be facilitated through the creation of a United Nations multi-country centre in the city of Almaty, as a hub for promoting regional development, security and stability. Kazakhstan is ready to bear all the costs for the construction, equipment and establishment of this large UN Office.

The 20 years of Kazakhstan's membership and cooperation with the United Nations have been characterized by the highest dedication to the ideals and principles of the world organization. We will continue to play the role of an engaged and responsible Member State, ready to take on increased responsibilities and consistently implement them in full.

Thank you for attention.