



KAZAKHSTAN

Please, check against delivery

Statement
by H.E. Mr. Kassymzhomart Tokaev,
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan,
during the general debate at the sixty-first session
of the United Nations General Assembly

New York
22 September 2006

Madam President,
Mr. Secretary-General,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to congratulate you, Madam President, on your election to this high office and express confidence that under your skilful stewardship the sixty-first session of the United Nations General Assembly will be successful and fruitful.

Last year's World Summit has reaffirmed the role of the United Nations as an indispensable and universal forum for taking important action on today's burning issues. The Summit's decision to carry out the United Nations reform, the most radical in its history, is a case in point. We are now in a position to give a preliminary assessment of the work in that area. The results, unfortunately, are mixed.

On one hand, helpful decisions have been taken to establish new elected bodies within the United Nations system – the Peacebuilding Commission and the Human Rights Council. They have been set up thanks to intensive efforts of all delegations, which have been able to reach a compromise through negotiations.

On the other hand, lack of any progress on the issue of reforming the work of the General Assembly and the Security Council seriously impedes the institutional reform of the Organization. In our view, further delays in that process might have a negative impact on the United Nations efforts in the areas of international stability, security and development.

For the delegation of Kazakhstan the current session is, in a way, an anniversary session – we are taking part in the work of this forum for the fifteenth time. Consistently advancing its national interests at the international arena, my country is firmly committed to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

The establishment in Asia of a mechanism of cooperation to enhance regional security and stability, known as the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA), has been one of Kazakhstan's first initiatives, put forward from this rostrum in 1992. We can safely claim that the initiative has proved its viability and has become an important factor of international relations at this juncture, as evidenced by the outcome of the second CICA Summit, held in Kazakhstan last June. The documents adopted by the

CICA, such as the Catalogue of Confidence-building Measures and the Agreement on the Establishment of the CICA Secretariat, create propitious conditions for regional cooperation and multilateral dialogue in Asia.

Kazakhstan invariably calls for an enhanced nuclear-weapon non-proliferation regime. This position is rooted in the sufferings of our people, who are still reeling from negative effects of nuclear explosions at the Semipalatinsk nuclear testing ground, shut down exactly 15 years ago by a decree of President Nursultan A. Nazarbayev. This position has been supported by a historic decision of my country to voluntarily renounce its nuclear arsenal, which used to be the fourth largest in the world.

We want that step to serve as a commendable example in the light of the ongoing large-scale crisis that has struck the global security system. Regrettably, lack of any results at the last NPT Review Conference and the United Nations Disarmament Commission remains a major challenge for the international community.

It is time to take coordinated efforts to overcome that crisis. The process in that direction has already made a good start. The Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia, signed on 8 September 2006 in Semipalatinsk, is a demonstration of political will of five Central Asian States – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The signing of that milestone instrument could become a catalyst for the process of enhancement of the NPT. We believe that tangible progress in that area is possible if all Member States comply with their obligations regarding nuclear disarmament and vertical and horizontal proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The Central Asian States are ready to continue consultations with the permanent members of the Security Council on the issue of that Treaty's entry into force.

In our view, the States concerned should strictly comply with their commitment to a moratorium on nuclear test explosions and work to ensure the entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. All peaceful nuclear programmes should be carried out in a transparent manner, under the control of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

It is a matter of great concern that the crisis has extended not only to strategic but also to conventional weapons. Regrettably, Member States have so far failed to devise common approaches to the Programme of Action in this area.

We have to step up efforts to tighten national export control mechanisms. I refer, first and foremost, to dual-use materials and technologies, as well as to

missiles and means of delivery of weapons of mass destruction, with full and strict compliance with the provisions of a Security Council resolution adopted in 2004.

The possibility of weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of terrorists is a matter of grave concern. To prevent such a scenario, we have to push for the accession of all United Nations Member States to the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

We live in a world where tensions between States and armed conflicts are still very much part of everyday life. The crisis in Lebanon has highlighted yet again the need to use effectively the United Nations capacity to maintain international peace and security. Since the early days of the conflict, Kazakhstan has called for the strengthening of the Security Council role in the settlement of that crisis.

The deployment of a strengthened contingent of United Nations peacekeepers in the conflict zone was the only viable solution to that large-scale crisis.

Regrettably, lack of an effective mechanism to prevent the break up and spread of armed conflicts remains a serious problem. In our view, the establishment of a United Nations Preventive Diplomacy and Conflict Prevention Center in Central Asia remains a relevant proposition. That Center would focus on the provision of advice and expertise to the countries of the region, taking into account their national interests and security considerations.

It is vitally important to find out how belated adoption of the Security Council resolution on Lebanon agrees with the process of the United Nations system reform. Inefficiency of the institutional system of the United Nations and lack of broad understanding among Member States negatively affect global and regional stability and security.

The Security Council reform is taking way too long. The existing *status quo* is not in the interests of United Nations Member States themselves and that the final solution can be found only through constructive dialogue.

The issue of an enhanced status of the General Assembly is still pending. Kazakhstan believes that through reform we have to strengthen the role of all States in making decisions on major international issues.

missiles and means of delivery of weapons of mass destruction, with full and strict compliance with the provisions of a Security Council resolution adopted in 2004.

The possibility of weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of terrorists is a matter of grave concern. To prevent such a scenario, we have to push for the accession of all United Nations Member States to the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

We live in a world where tensions between States and armed conflicts are still very much part of everyday life. The crisis in Lebanon has highlighted yet again the need to use effectively the United Nations capacity to maintain international peace and security. Since the early days of the conflict, Kazakhstan has called for the strengthening of the Security Council role in the settlement of that crisis.

The deployment of a strengthened contingent of United Nations peacekeepers in the conflict zone was the only viable solution to that large-scale crisis.

Regrettably, lack of an effective mechanism to prevent the break up and spread of armed conflicts remains a serious problem. In our view, the establishment of a United Nations Preventive Diplomacy and Conflict Prevention Center in Central Asia remains a relevant proposition. That Center would focus on the provision of advice and expertise to the countries of the region, taking into account their national interests and security considerations.

It is vitally important to find out how belated adoption of the Security Council resolution on Lebanon agrees with the process of the United Nations system reform. Inefficiency of the institutional system of the United Nations and lack of broad understanding among Member States negatively affect global and regional stability and security.

The Security Council reform is taking way too long. The existing *status quo* is not in the interests of United Nations Member States themselves and that the final solution can be found only through constructive dialogue.

The issue of an enhanced status of the General Assembly is still pending. Kazakhstan believes that through reform we have to strengthen the role of all States in making decisions on major international issues.

Structural reforms, carried out since its independence, have totally transformed Kazakhstan. Today, it is one of the most dynamic States of the world that has set ambitious goals to promote further development. Average growth of GDP over the last 5 years was at 10 percent. The World Bank has included Kazakhstan in the top 20 most attractive economies for investment. The Government works to ensure that Kazakhstan joins the ranks of the most competitive economies. To reach that target, we have developed an industrial innovative economic development programme and finance relevant projects through a special national fund. All basic development institutions have been put in place. Negotiations on Kazakhstan's admission to the World Trade Organization are in the final stages.

Programmes are being implemented to use the transport and transit capacity of the country and large-scale projects are being carried out to integrate the country's transportation infrastructure into the Eurasian transportation system.

Kazakhstan renews its commitment to the Millennium Development Goals. The UNDP report, issued on the eve of the 2005 World Summit, demonstrates that our country has made great strides in that area.

As a major exporter of energy resources, Kazakhstan will continue to pursue its policy to ensure their delivery to world markets through multiple routes.

With the growing economy the Government is consistently increasing social spending, primarily in health care, education, employment and other areas. The efforts being taken have made it possible for the World Bank to rank Kazakhstan as a successful State with a dynamically growing economy.

We pay close attention to the promotion of democracy, building of civil society and enhancement of interethnic and interfaith accord inside the country. Our accomplishments here are evident. My country, home to more than 100 ethnic groups and practically all religions, is a model of tolerance, accord and stability.

It is no accident that Kazakhstan has hosted a forum of leaders of world and traditional religions. The second congress has just completed its deliberations in Astana. Religious leaders adopted a declaration calling for an active dialogue among religions. We cannot allow the use of religious differences as an instrument of hatred and strife and we have to save humanity from a global clash

of religions and cultures. The Congress has become Kazakhstan's contribution to global dialogue among religions.

Kazakhstan carries out a balanced foreign policy based on our long-term national interests and aimed at the development of friendly ties with the neighboring countries and all interested countries of the world.

As the current Chair of the Commonwealth of Independent States, my country has devised a plan to reform that organization in order to enhance its capacity.

Kazakhstan has been working actively in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Eurasian Economic Community and supports the Collective Security Treaty Organization.

Leading the other post-Soviet countries in many areas, Kazakhstan has always assumed responsibility for the implementation of international initiatives, be it its decision to shut down the Semipalatinsk nuclear testing ground or to voluntarily renounce nuclear weapons or its initiatives to convene a regional security forum in Asia (CICA) or to hold a Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions or to host the first global conference on transit transport cooperation or to organize a session of the Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee away from Headquarters.

In 2007, Kazakhstan will host the sixty-third session of UNESCAP, which turns 60.

We express our appreciation to all States that have supported Kazakhstan's candidature for OSCE Presidency on 2009.

Kazakhstan will continue to be active on all key items of the global agenda and will contribute to the implementation of important decisions adopted at the United Nations.

In conclusion, I would like to quote a popular saying in my country: "Nothing can be farther than yesterday and nothing can be closer than tomorrow". A year ago, at the World Summit, we agreed to take action to reform the United Nations. We should not forget that humanity pins its hopes for better future on the United Nations as an indispensable organization. It is high time to take specific and effective action to raise the prestige of our Organization.

Thank you for your attention.