

10 September 2015

**United Nations General Assembly Informal Plenary Meeting
on the International Day against Nuclear Tests**

In its resolution 64/35, the General Assembly established the 29th of August as the International Day against Nuclear Tests.

Since then, the annual observance of the International Day against Nuclear Tests has been devoted “to enhancing public awareness and education about the effects of nuclear weapons test explosions or any other nuclear explosions and the need for their cessation as one of the means for achieving the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world”.

The recently held 2015 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) has highlighted the stark reality of the increasing divisions between the States parties over the future of nuclear disarmament. It is now time to bridge the gap and work with more resolute political will to ensure that the NPT continues to remain the cornerstone of global security.

In order to commemorate the Day, the President of the General Assembly will convene an Informal Plenary Meeting. The event will feature a high-level panel discussion on the theme, “Towards Zero: Resolving the Contradictions”.

The informal meeting, organized in cooperation with the Permanent Mission of Kazakhstan, will take place on 10 September 2015 from 10:00 to 13:00, in the Trusteeship Council. A complete programme of the event will be circulated in due course.



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

17 August, 2015

Excellency

Reference is made to my letter dated 24 July, 2015 inviting you to take part in an informal plenary meeting of the General Assembly to commemorate the International Day against Nuclear Tests scheduled to take place on 10 September 2015 from 10:00 to 13:00, in the Trusteeship Council.

The informal plenary meeting to mark the Day will include a high-level panel discussion on the theme, "*Towards Zero: Resolving the Contradictions*".

A copy of the programme of the event is herewith attached.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sam K. Kutesa', written in a cursive style.

Sam K. Kutesa

All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York

Provisional Programme

Informal Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly

to mark the 2015 Observance of the International Day against Nuclear Tests

Theme: "TOWARDS ZERO: RESOLVING THE CONTRADICTIONS"

Venue: Trusteeship Council, United Nations Headquarters

Morning	Thursday, 10 September, 2015
10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	<u>Opening remarks:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• H.E. Mr. Sam K. Kutesa, President of the United Nations General Assembly• H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations• H.E. Kairat Abdrakhmanov, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the United Nations in New York
10:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	<u>High-Level Interactive Panel</u> Moderator <ul style="list-style-type: none">• H.E. Ambassador Dina Kawar, Permanent Representative of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the United Nations in New York Speakers <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Kim Won-soo, Under-Secretary General and Acting High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs• H.E. Ambassador Rose Gottemoeller, Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, US Department of State• H.E. Dr. Lassina Zerbo, Executive Secretary, Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization• Ms. Tracy Brown, Acting Director of New York Office of the International Atomic Energy Agency on behalf of Director General Dr. Yukiya Amano.• H.E. Ambassador Vladimir Drobnyak, Permanent Representative of Croatia to the United Nations in New York• H.E. Ambassador Makurita Baaro, Permanent Representative of Kiribati to the United Nations in New York• Dr. Ira Helfand, Chair, Security Committee of Physicians for Social Responsibility, and Co-President, International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War. Discussion

10 September 2015

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa,
President of the 69th Session of the General Assembly,
at the 2015 Observance of International Day Against Nuclear Tests**

**Excellencies,
H.E. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General
Distinguished delegates and panellists,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

I am pleased to address this meeting of the General Assembly as we observe the International Day against Nuclear Tests. I would like to thank the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan for its leadership on this issue and the Permanent Mission for co-organizing this commemorative event.

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the first nuclear weapon test, carried out in New Mexico in July 1945. In the months following that test, the General Assembly adopted its first resolution, calling for the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction.

In 2009, the General Assembly went on to adopt resolution 64/35, declaring 29 August as the International Day against Nuclear Tests.

Since then, this day has been devoted to important reflections on the effects of nuclear weapons tests and explosions and the need for their cessation as one of the means of achieving a nuclear weapons-free world.

**Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,**

Nuclear tests and weapons constitute an existential threat to humanity and contradict some of the fundamental principles of the United Nations.

Nuclear testing and explosions have been carried out underground, underwater and in the air, with profoundly negative, long-term consequences. The fallout from nuclear tests has resulted in disease, the contamination of elements of the food chain and water supplies as well as the destruction of ecosystems.

In spite of the grave impacts of nuclear testing on human lives, the environment and international peace and security, the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), opened for signature nearly 19 years ago and ratified by 164 States to date, has still not entered into force.

In its current session, the General Assembly reiterated its firm commitment to the Treaty. I would like to use this occasion to stress the importance and urgency of realizing the CTBT's entry into force without further delay.

The 2015 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) highlighted the stark reality of the increasing divisions between the States parties over the future of nuclear disarmament. We should seek to bridge those gaps and work together to ensure that the NPT can continue to serve as a vital element of global security.

**Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,**

Today's commemoration of the International Day against Nuclear Tests provides a unique opportunity to raise awareness around the world about this critical issue. Indeed, education can play a key role in building mutual understanding, promoting peace, and advocating for disarmament.

We should also make use of this occasion to engage with civil society, the media and academia to identify opportunities to work together towards a world free of nuclear weapons.

I hope the wide range of expertise that will be shared by today's panel members will serve to enrich our broader discussions and advance our thoughts on the way forward.

I encourage Member States, in collaboration with civil society, academia and the media, to intensify efforts towards ending nuclear weapons testing and achieving the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

I thank you.