
Conference on Disarmament

14 September 2016

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Note Verbale dated 13 September 2016 from the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the Secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament transmitting the text of the Declaration “The Astana Vision: From a Radioactive Haze to a Nuclear-Weapon-Free-World”

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament and has the honor to transmit herewith the text of the Declaration “The Astana Vision: From a Radioactive Haze to a Nuclear-Weapon-Free-World” adopted during the International conference “Building a Nuclear- Weapon-Free World” which was held on 29 August 2016, in Astana

In this regard the Permanent Mission requests that the Declaration be issued and circulated as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament.

The Permanent Mission avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament the assurances of its highest consideration.

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The Astana Vision: From a Radioactive Haze to a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World

Adopted in Astana, 29 August 2016 at an international conference ‘Building a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World’ co-hosted by the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan and Parliamentarians for Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation.

On 29 August 1991, precisely 25 years ago, President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan, with the support of a popular movement of civil society against nuclear tests, closed down the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site, the first such step in the world history of disarmament.

The 456 nuclear weapons explosions conducted by the Soviet Union at the Semipalatinsk test site in eastern Kazakhstan have created a catastrophic impact on human health and environment, for current and future generations. The legacy from the nuclear tests around the world, including the Pacific, Asia, North Africa and North America, and the experience of the nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the risks of nuclear-weapons-use by accident, miscalculation or design - establish a global imperative to abolish these weapons.

We commend the leadership of President Nazarbayev and the people of Kazakhstan for voluntarily renouncing the world’s fourth largest nuclear arsenal, joining the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), achieving a Central Asian Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone, launching The ATOM Project to educate the world about dangers and long-term consequences of nuclear tests, moving the United Nations to establish August 29 as the International Day Against Nuclear Tests, initiating a Universal Declaration for a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World adopted by the United Nations in 2015, and advancing a Manifesto “The World. The 21st Century” to end the scourge of war.

We support the ambition expressed in the Manifesto that a nuclear-weapons-free world should be the main goal of humanity in the 21st century, and that this should be achieved no later than the 100th anniversary of the United Nations in 2045.

We commend world leaders for taking action, through the series of Nuclear Security Summits and other international action, to prevent nuclear weapons or their components from falling into the hands of terrorists. However, world leaders should join President Nazarbayev in placing a similar high priority on nuclear disarmament.

We deplore the continued testing of nuclear weapons by the Democratic Peoples’ Republic of Korea, and we express concern at the continuing modernization of nuclear weapons by all nuclear-armed States. With tensions growing among these states, an accidental or intentional military incident could send the world spiraling into a disastrous nuclear confrontation.

We recognize the special responsibility of the legislatures and legislators around the world for further advancement of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament at the global level and for the adoption of relevant legislation.

We congratulate Kazakhstan on the country’s election as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for 2017-2018. We are confident that Kazakhstan will work closely with other Security Council members to prevent nuclear proliferation and advance the peace and security of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

We support the initiative put forward at this conference for President Nazarbayev to establish an international prize for outstanding contribution to nuclear disarmament and the

achievement of a nuclear weapon free world, and the announcement of the Astana Peace Summit in 2016.

We welcome the progress made in the Open Ended Working Group on Taking Forward Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament Negotiations, and we urge governments around the world to do more.

We as legislators, religious leaders, representatives of international organisations, academics, scientists, medical professionals, lawyers, youth and other representatives of civil society - specifically call on governments to:

1. Sign and Ratify the CTBT, in particular the nuclear armed States, if they have not already done so, noting the symbolism of this conference taking place on the 25th anniversary of the closure of the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site and the 20th anniversary of the opening for signing of the CTBT;
2. Initiate negotiations and substantive discussions in accordance with the adopted 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Plan of Action, and the universal obligation to negotiate for complete nuclear disarmament affirmed by the International Court of Justice in 1996;
3. Establish a Middle East Zone free from Nuclear Weapons and other Weapons of Mass Destruction as agreed at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference, and call upon the United Nations Secretary-General to advance this mandate; and establish additional nuclear-weapon-free zones, such as in North East Asia, Europe and the Arctic;
4. Reduce the risks of nuclear-weapons-use by taking all nuclear forces off high-operational readiness, adopting no-first-use policies and refraining from any threats to use nuclear weapons;
5. Fully implement their treaty and customary law obligations to achieve zero nuclear weapons;
6. Commence multilateral negotiations in 2017 to prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons;
7. Support interim measures by the UN Security Council regarding nuclear disarmament, including to prohibit nuclear tests and nuclear targeting of populated areas;
8. Further develop the methods and mechanisms for verifying and enforcing global nuclear disarmament, including through participation in the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification;
9. Eliminate the reliance on nuclear deterrence in security doctrines, and instead resolve international conflicts through diplomacy, law, regional mechanisms, the United Nations and other peaceful means;
10. Call on all nuclear weapon states to undertake deep cuts to their nuclear weapons stockpiles with the aim to completely eliminate them as soon as possible, but definitely no later than the 100th anniversary of the United Nations.

We are ready to support and cooperate with governments to abolish nuclear weapons. The cooperation between different constituents at this international event provides a platform for building the global movement to achieve nuclear disarmament.

Deeply concerned for the future of all humanity, and encouraged by the example of Kazakhstan in the field of nuclear disarmament we affirm the possibility and necessity to achieve the peace and security of a nuclear-weapon-free world in our lifetimes.