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Sustainable development and international economic cooperation

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Letter dated 15 April 2002 from the Permanent Representatives of Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On instructions from our Governments and in response to the letter dated 28 February 2002 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, which was circulated as a document of the General Assembly (A/56/850), we should like to set forth the position of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of Azerbaijan as follows:

Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan find the Iranian side's contention that the Agreement of 29 November 2001 between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of Azerbaijan concerning the delimitation of the bed of the Caspian Sea contravenes "existing legal instruments governing the legal status of the Caspian Sea" to be unfounded, given that no instruments having any bearing on the Caspian Sea, including the documents referred to by the Iranian side, contain any legal regulation of the question of the delimitation of the bed or depth of the Caspian Sea.

The above-mentioned Agreement, which was concluded by the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of Azerbaijan in exercise of their sovereign rights over the Caspian Sea, governs the principles of the delimitation of the bed of the Caspian Sea between these two countries and does not affect the rights or interests of other coastal States.

The conclusion a short time previously of a similar agreement between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation and the understandings reached between those two countries lay the foundations for a settlement of issues relating to the legal status of the Caspian Sea.

Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan consider that, in the light of the intensification of the negotiating process and the emerging rapprochement of the sides' positions,

such a groundless statement by the Iranian side does not promote constructive dialogue between coastal States.

Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan, as active participants in the multilateral and bilateral negotiations on the legal status of the Caspian Sea, are of the view that it is just such a complex approach that will make it possible to reach a general consensus among coastal States on all aspects of the legal status of the Caspian Sea, and they call upon all coastal States to take a constructive position to this question.

We should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda items 30, 97 and 98.

(Signed) **Y. Aliyev**
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan
to the United Nations

(Signed) **M. Jarbussynova**
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kazakhstan
to the United Nations
