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Letter dated 30 September 1996 from the Permanent Mission  
of Kazakstan to the United Nations addressed to the  
Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kazakstan to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to transmit herewith the text of a statement made on 30 September 1996 by Mr. N. A. Nazarbaev, the President of the Republic of Kazakstan, in connection with the opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

We should be grateful if the text of this letter and its annex could be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under agenda items 66 and 71.

ANNEX

Statement made by the President of Kazakstan, on  
30 September 1996 in connection with the opening  
for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-  
Ban Treaty

The opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty was greeted with deep satisfaction in Kazakstan.

Five years ago Kazakstan made a historic choice when it put an end to tests of the most dangerous weapons in the history of mankind. Thus the operating Semipalatinsk nuclear test site was closed - the first time in the world that such a decision had been made by a Head of State.

As a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Kazakstan complies strictly with its international obligations in that connection and consistently implements a policy of non-proliferation of other types of weapons of mass destruction. Recently the last nuclear missile launchers in the territory of Kazakstan were eliminated. Thus there are no longer any nuclear weapons in our country, which previously ranked fourth in the world in total potential nuclear-weapon power.

The people of Kazakstan have become fully aware of the enormous destructive power of nuclear weapons. In the difficult conditions of the transitional period, the wounds inflicted on our people by hundreds of nuclear explosions are healing. The infrastructure of the former Semipalatinsk test site is being eliminated.

After 42 years of nuclear-weapon tests, including tests in the atmosphere and underground, Kazakstan is still experiencing their consequences. Hundreds of thousands of people have been left maimed and sick, and the land is contaminated.

The Republic of Kazakstan is counting on the assistance of the international community to achieve the complete elimination of the effects of nuclear tests on the health of the people and on the environment. We believe that it is above all the nuclear Powers which must assume special responsibility for the rehabilitation of nuclear-test victims.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty was a consequence of the positive changes in the international arena in recent years. Kazakstan pays tribute to the enormous amount of work carried out by many States on the road to the Treaty. We note with satisfaction that our country, too, made its contribution to the preparation of what is one of the most important agreements of this century.

Nuclear weapons must never again, in any circumstances, become a means of destroying people and the natural environment. The halting of nuclear-weapon tests is a supremely noble goal for nuclear-weapon States.

(Signed) N. NAZARBAEV

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