

Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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Twenty-fifth anniversary of the accession of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Working paper submitted by the Republic of Kazakhstan

1. Twenty-five years ago, on 14 February 1994, during an official visit to the United States of America, the first President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, submitted documents on the ratification of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons by the Supreme Council of Kazakhstan to United States President Bill Clinton, as Head of the depository State of the Treaty.
2. From that time, Kazakhstan officially acceded to the Treaty as a non-nuclear-weapon State. This was preceded by consistent work related to the carefully considered and forward-looking decision of the first President, Nursultan Nazarbayev, to close the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site, renounce nuclear status and have all nuclear weapons inherited following the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics removed from Kazakhstan.
3. Together with Belarus and Ukraine, Kazakhstan accepted the obligation to accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty as a non-nuclear-weapon State on 23 May 1992, having signed the Protocol to the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START I).
4. The accession of Kazakhstan to the Non-Proliferation Treaty was an important step in the implementation of the country's foreign policy, which is based on strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime and striving to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons.
5. The Non-Proliferation Treaty is the cornerstone of international efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and, ultimately, to eliminate them. It also promotes the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and remains the most universal multilateral agreement in the field of disarmament.
6. As a consistent supporter of nuclear disarmament and the strengthening of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, Kazakhstan supports strict compliance by all States parties with the provisions of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.



7. Kazakhstan supports the new disarmament agenda presented by Secretary-General António Guterres in his report entitled “Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament”, and his proposed practical measures across the whole spectrum of disarmament issues, including weapons of mass destruction, aimed at identifying new perspectives and areas where serious dialogue and collective efforts by Member States are needed.

8. As an active participant in international processes, including in the field of international security, Kazakhstan makes a real contribution to strengthening all three pillars of the Non-Proliferation Treaty – disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Disarmament

9. Kazakhstan voluntarily renounced the world’s fourth largest nuclear arsenal, which, at the beginning of 1991 included 1,216 nuclear warheads for intercontinental ballistic missile and heavy bombers.

10. Between 1949 and 1989, 468 nuclear explosions were carried out at the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site. One and a half million people suffered from the effects of the tests and a vast amount of territory was exposed to radioactive contamination.

11. The Semipalatinsk nuclear test site was closed by decree of the first President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, on 29 August 1991.

12. The historic Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia, which entered into force in 2009, was signed in Semipalatinsk (Kazakhstan) in 2006 and entered into force in 2009. An important component of the Treaty is the Protocol on negative security assurances, signed on 6 May 2014 in New York by representatives of the nuclear-weapon States – China, France, the United Kingdom, Russia and the United States of America. To date, four of the five nuclear-weapon States (the exception being the United States of America) have ratified the Protocol.

13. Kazakhstan believes that a deliberate and gradual movement towards the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones contributes towards the building of trust among neighbours in a region and lays the foundation for peace and cooperation, including in the Middle East, North-East Asia and Europe.

14. Kazakhstan believes that the establishment of new nuclear-weapon-free zones could expand the geography of the nuclear-free world so that our entire planet Earth becomes one large nuclear-weapon-free zone. In this context, Kazakhstan has put forward an initiative to strengthen cooperation among all existing nuclear-weapon-free zones and, to that end, to hold a meeting of representatives of the States members of such zones in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan, in August 2019.

15. At its seventieth session on 7 December 2015, the General Assembly, at the initiative of Kazakhstan and for the first time by a majority vote of Member States, adopted resolution [70/57](#) entitled “Universal Declaration on the Achievement of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World”, which expressed the determination of States to move, step by step, towards a world free of nuclear weapons. The number of supporters of the resolution increased in 2018 (General Assembly resolution [73/58](#)) and work continues on its universalization.

16. Problems related to the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, the further implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on the nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the termination of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles, and the non-adherence of the nuclear-weapon States to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, adopted

by the General Assembly on 7 July 2017, pose a serious challenge to the complete freedom of humankind from the nuclear threat.

17. Kazakhstan intends to continue implementing initiatives to achieve a world free of the nuclear threat by the one hundredth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations in 2045.

Non-proliferation

18. The main pillar of the foreign policy of Kazakhstan is to strengthen the regime for the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. In 1992, Kazakhstan began implementing the international joint threat reduction programme, also known as the Nunn-Lugar Programme, under which a series of projects were carried out to destroy and decontaminate the infrastructure and facilities of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons remaining on the territory of Kazakhstan following the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the gaining of independence in 1991. Such projects included dismantling strategic offensive weapons, establishing an export control system and improving the management and control of nuclear materials.

19. As a country with a firm and consistent policy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and also as a world leader in uranium mining, Kazakhstan is fully committed to the implementation of Security Council resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#). The country is taking decisive steps to further improve its system for combating illicit trafficking in nuclear and other radioactive materials. Kazakhstan supports the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#) in order to help build the capacity of States to counter modern threats to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

20. Kazakhstan was among the first countries to sign the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in 1996, which it ratified in 2001, and supports its early entry into force.

21. For its part, Kazakhstan has been making a tangible contribution to the establishment of an effective verification regime under that Treaty by working closely with the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization to establish the international monitoring system, which includes five stations in Kazakhstan that are used to continuously monitor natural and induced seismic activity in the region.

22. In December 2009, at its sixty-fourth session, the General Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution, at the initiative of Kazakhstan, to declare 29 August the International Day against Nuclear Tests. This decision reaffirmed the critical importance of maintaining the international community's focus on achieving a complete ban on nuclear testing.

23. Kazakhstan took a major step towards strengthening the international non-proliferation regime by joining the Nuclear Suppliers Group on 13 May 2002, in the light of increased efforts to counter terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and to strengthen controls over the use and movement of dual-use materials. During the forty-sixth meeting of the Consultative Group of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, held in Vienna on 12 and 13 November 2018, Kazakhstan was elected by unanimous decision of the States members of the Nuclear Suppliers Group to chair the Consultative Group for the period 2019 to 2020.

24. At the Nuclear Security Summit held in Washington in 2016, Kazakhstan issued bilateral joint statements with the United States of America on cooperation in the sphere of non-proliferation and nuclear security, with Japan on achieving the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and submitted a joint statement on the low enriched uranium bank being established by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Kazakhstan, which was joined by 18 countries

participating in the Summit. During the Summit, the first President of Kazakhstan unveiled his vision on matters of war and peace and the threats posed by nuclear war in a document entitled “Manifesto: the world, the twenty-first century” (A/70/818–S/2016/317).

25. During the presidency of Kazakhstan of the Security Council, President Nazarbayev, speaking on 18 January 2018 at a special briefing of the Security Council on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and confidence-building measures, emphasized the fundamental importance of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and proposed to make withdrawal from the Treaty more difficult and to develop a mechanism for applying stringent measures against the acquisition and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, using the powers of the Security Council for this purpose.

Peaceful uses of nuclear energy

26. In 1994, the Republic of Kazakhstan became a member of IAEA and concluded an agreement for the application of safeguards in connection with the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

27. Convinced that the system of safeguards is the most effective tool for upholding the nuclear non-proliferation regime, Kazakhstan has placed all its nuclear facilities under IAEA comprehensive safeguards, thereby demonstrating a deep commitment to the goals of the Agency and of the Treaty. It also signed, on 6 February 2004 in Vienna, a protocol additional to the safeguards agreement, which was ratified on 19 February 2007 and entered into force on 9 May 2007.

28. Kazakhstan is actively cooperating with IAEA through its technical cooperation programme and is taking part in nearly 50 regional and a number of interregional projects. Technical cooperation with IAEA has given Kazakhstan access to the latest technologies with applications in many areas of human activity.

29. Kazakhstan is a party to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Nuclear Facilities, the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident, the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency and the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage.

30. On 27 August 2015, in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan, the Government of Kazakhstan and IAEA signed an agreement on the establishment of the IAEA low enriched uranium bank in Kazakhstan. The bank facility at the Ulba Metallurgical Plant was inaugurated on 29 August 2017. By offering to host the bank on its territory, Kazakhstan has made an important contribution to the establishment of a new international mechanism for assuring the supply of low-enriched uranium to IAEA member States.

31. In September 2017, Kazakhstan and the United States of America completed the conversion of the VVR-K research reactor from high-enriched fuel to low-enriched fuel and removed spent high-enriched fuel from the Institute of Nuclear Physics of the Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Concerns of Kazakhstan regarding challenges and threats to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

32. With tensions running high worldwide and new challenges to international security, there is a marked lack of trust, dialogue and mutual understanding among States, which directly affects the viability of the global non-proliferation regime.

33. The basic elements of strategic stability are being dismantled. The situation is delicate with respect to the 1987 Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-range and Shorter-range Missiles, which is an important element in the nuclear disarmament process, in line with article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and also contributes to the preservation of international equilibrium and stability in the interests of the entire international community. The termination of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-range and Shorter-range Missiles could imperil the extension of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START-3), which is set to expire in 2021.

34. The world is on the verge of a major new arms race. We note with regret the increased use of force in world politics, the prominent role of nuclear weapons in national security doctrines of nuclear weapon States and the return to the bloc mentality of the Cold War era.

35. Kazakhstan continues to underscore the importance of maintaining the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on the Iranian nuclear programme, which is making a considerable contribution to the maintenance of peace and security, both regionally and globally.

36. Work must also continue towards ensuring the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We call on the States listed in annex 2 to that Treaty, on which the entry into force of the Treaty depends, to take steps to accede to and ratify the Treaty as soon as possible.

37. Kazakhstan welcomes the positive developments concerning the situation on the Korean Peninsula, which were achieved largely due to the political will shown by all parties involved. A political and diplomatic solution is the only reliable way to address such complex issues. The bilateral negotiations and meetings held in 2018 and 2019 between the leaders of the United States of America and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and of the United States of America and South Korea, are of great historical importance and help to build mutual trust and create the conditions for the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the normalization of relations between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the international community.

38. The lack of tangible progress on disarmament by the nuclear-weapon States under article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in the past two decades and the multi-year stalemate in the work of the Conference on Disarmament served as the impetus for the adoption in 2017 of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. With that Treaty, the overwhelming majority of the international community has sent a clear signal to the nuclear-weapon States that specific and practical disarmament measures need to be taken as soon as possible. This instrument should not create a divide between the nuclear-weapon States and the non-nuclear majority of the international community but should contribute to the establishment of a legal ban on the possession of this type of weapon of mass destruction in the future.