

STATEMENT
by H.E. Mr. Mukhtar Tleuberdi
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan
at the 11th Conference on Article XIV
of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty
(25 September 2019, New York)

Designated Co-Presidents,
Executive Secretary Dr. Lassina Zerbo,
High Representative Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu,
Distinguished delegates,

First of all, allow me to congratulate **Algeria and Germany** for assuming the Co-Presidencies of the Conference and assure them of Kazakhstan's full support and cooperation in the discharge of their important mandate. I would also like to express our appreciation for the efforts of **Belgium and Iraq** in steering and facilitating the process of convening this conference.

We warmly commend and welcome **ratifications by Zimbabwe and Thailand of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) since the last Article XIV Conference in 2017.**

Dear Co-Presidents,

Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation have traditionally been considered as the highest priorities of our foreign policy. Kazakhstan, having gone through its uniquely tragic path of massive nuclear testing on its soil, is strongly convinced that disarmament is the most effective confidence-building measure.

The unprecedented decision on 29 August 1991 by the First President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, to close the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site, one of the largest in the world, made history. It was not long when other nuclear test sites followed our lead, which created an important momentum to ban nuclear testing as a global phenomenon. **This decision paved the way for the adoption of the CTBT in 1996.**

Therefore, Kazakhstan's commitment to the CTBT is unquestioned. We were the **Co- President of the 9th Conference on Article XIV of the CTBT**, and will support the incoming Co-Presidents of this Conference in every way to facilitate the speedy entry into force of the Treaty.

Dear Co-Presidents,

Kazakhstan believes that a **voluntary moratorium on nuclear testing** observed by some states, though an important factor of nuclear security, **cannot serve as an alternative to a legally-binding document**, the CTBT. Its entry into force, therefore, essential step forward towards a world free of nuclear weapons.

We once again **appeal to the eight remaining Annex II States to sign and ratify the Treaty** as soon as possible and without any preconditions.

The continued dangers and threats of nuclear weapons, including through testing, remain an existential threat that must be vigorously and tirelessly addressed. Until we manage to eliminate nuclear weapons, it is crucial that all **nuclear weapons possessing states reject the practice of subcritical testing and dismantle the infrastructure of nuclear weapons testing sites**. This would certainly be a very tangible confidence-building measure and a real contribution towards a nuclear weapons-free-world.

Dear Co-Presidents,

Kazakhstan supports the initiative by Executive Secretary Dr. Zerbo to engage heads of states, eminent diplomats, politicians, scientists and youth representatives in the process to facilitate the entry into force of the CTBT. Last year, **Kazakhstan hosted the first-ever CTBTO joint GEM and Youth Group International Conference**.

I also commend Dr. Zerbo, and the staff of CTBTO, for their tireless efforts and determination to promote the entry into force and universalization of the CTBT, as well as strengthen the Treaty's verification regime.

The CTBT's verification mechanism, known as **the International Monitoring System (IMS)**, is nearing completion. The progressive build-up of the IMS has resulted in a new and higher level of maturity and readiness which has already been demonstrated on numerous critical occasions.

We strongly support enhancing and making more effective the Treaty's verification regime. In addition to the five stations already installed in Kazakhstan, this year in cooperation with Canada, we plan to place **a noble-gas control station as a joint cooperative facility of the IMS**. We believe that it will help to considerably intensify the detection capacity of CTBT's monitoring system and are, therefore, pleased to make this as a voluntary contribution by Kazakhstan and Canada to the work of CTBTO.

This year, we all marked the Tenth Commemoration of 29 August - **the International Day against Nuclear Tests**. It was quite symbolic that on this day, **Executive Secretary Dr. Lassina Zerbo** and late Director General of the IAEA Dr. Yukiya Amano were **named laureates of the "Nazarbayev Prize for a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World and Global Security"**. The award was bestowed on them **to acknowledge their contribution to global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament**.

The same day, H.E. Beibut Atamkulov, then Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, and Dr. Lassina Zerbo issued **a joint statement calling for a world free from nuclear testing**, and urging those states, that have not yet signed and ratified the CTBT, to do so without delay.

Dear Co-Presidents,

To conclude, I would like to express our readiness to strengthen the CTBT so that it is an unshakeable foundation for the total and irreversible ban on nuclear testing. It is our moral responsibility, as stewards of this Earth, to give to our future generations a peaceful, secure and prosperous world free of nuclear weapons.

Thank you.