

Address by
Kassym-Jomart Tokayev,
President of the Republic of Kazakhstan
at the General Debates
of the 74th session of the UN GA
New York, 24 September 2019

**"Galvanizing multilateral efforts for poverty eradication, quality education,
climate action and inclusion"**

*Құрметті Президент мырза!
Жоғары Мәртебелі делегация басшылары!
Қадірлі ханымдар мен мырзалар!*

Қазақстан Республикасының Президенті ретінде / тұңғыш рет / Біріккен Ұлттар Ұйымының Бас Ассамблеясының биік мінберінен Үндеу жолдау – мен үшін / зор мәртебе.

Ұлттар Ұйымы / дүниежүзіндегі / барша адамзаттың мұң-мұқтажын қорғайтын / баламасы жоқ бірегей / Әрі әмбебап ұйым / және Әрдайым солай болып қала береді.

Адамзатты талай сын-қатер мен қантөгістерден сақтап келе жатқан Ұйымның негізі қаланғанына / келесі жылы / 75 жыл толады.

Бүгінде / Ұлттар ұйымы / ғаламдық даму және өркениеттер сабақтастығын қамтамасыз етуде / аса маңызды рөл атқарып келеді.

Бас хатшы / Антонио Гутерриштің / Әр адам мен мемлекет тағдырын ортақ құндылық деп тауып, назардан тыс қалдырмау идеясын / Қазақстан толық қолдайды.

Алайда, қазіргі таңдағы / геосаяси және геэкономикалық өзгерістерге қатысты алаңдаушылығымызға / толық негіз бар.

Бұл жағдай / 2030 (жиырма-отыз) Күн тәртібін жүзеге асыру мақсатындағы / бірлескен іс-әрекеттеріміз үшін / **күрделі сынақ** Екені айқын.

In my view, the alarming new global reality is influenced by the following major trends:

First, a growing number **unresolved conflicts and tensions** in various parts of the world have revived old dividing lines and created new ones, bringing world powers on the verge of full-scale military stand-offs.

Second, we all suffer from the **lack of trust** among global and regional actors. It leads to an erosion of the current security and arms control architecture, resulting in a renewed arms race. These are aggravated by restrictive sanctions, trade wars, an intense rivalry in space, cyber technology and artificial intelligence. All of the above represent alarming facets of the deepening fundamental crisis.

Third, the widening social, economic and technological inequalities, growing disparities between the North and South, together with the emerging global debt crisis, **are distorting the existing world economic landscape**.

Consequently, we are witnessing the rise of protectionism and nationalistic policies, which undermine international partnerships and cooperation.

Fourth, **environmental degradation** has become one of the most destabilizing factors globally.

The impact of climate change in Central Asia, particularly, will result in the dramatic existential challenges, like desertification, melting of glaciers and subsequent depletion of drinking and irrigation water.

In this complex environment, **Kazakhstan firmly pursues a policy of inclusive and sustainable development, comprehensive dialogue and peaceful endeavors**.

Mr. President,

Achieving a **nuclear-weapon-free world** remains a top priority for my country. This aspiration has become an essential part of the nation-wide identity of Kazakh people, giving us the moral right to be at the forefront of global movement to eliminate nuclear weapons.

We stem from the firm conviction that nuclear weapons are no longer an asset, but a danger to global peace and stability.

Unfortunately, some countries still rely in their strategic defense calculations on nuclear arsenals, prompting their rivals to consider acquiring asymmetric responses, but equally deadly types of WMD's.

Leading by example Kazakhstan works hard to alter these misperceptions.

Under the strong leadership of the **First President Nursultan Nazarbayev** Kazakhstan closed down the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site and voluntarily renounced the fourth largest nuclear arsenal in the world.

These acts were the first step in our long and successful journey towards a global championship in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Among our contributions to this noble cause I would mention **the establishment of the unique nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia**, hosting the **IAEA Low Enriched Uranium Bank**, adoption of the **UN General Assembly Resolution on the International Day against Nuclear Tests**, and the recent ratification of the **Treaty on Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons**.

We all should stand resolutely for the **Universal Declaration on the Achievement of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World** as our roadmap to a safer future.

We also aim for enhanced cooperation among nuclear weapons free zones and creation of new ones.

Kazakhstan believes that the current issues on Iran's **Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action** and **denuclearization of the Korean peninsula** should be settled only by political means, with due respect to each other's interests and concerns.

Distinguished delegates,

My country has always been a steadfast supporter of preventive diplomacy and mediation on the global stage.

As early as in 1992, Kazakhstan's First President from this rostrum proposed to convene the **Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia** as a platform for collective approaches to address security challenges. Over time, CICA has proved its expediency and viability. We are grateful to all our partners who have embraced this process.

The growing economic might of **Asia** demands a more integrated continental security architecture.

It is time to transform CICA into a full-fledged regional organization for security and development. As Chair of CICA in 2020, we will put our efforts to this end.

As a **non-permanent member of the UN Security Council in the previous two years**, we focused on strengthening security, non-proliferation and regional cooperation, confirming our commitment to the cause of peace.

Kazakhstan contributes to **UN peacekeeping by co-deploying with our Indian partners** a 120-strong unit to the UN Interim Force in Lebanon as well as by providing military observers.

We are also proud that Kazakhstan has turned into a global center for dialogue of religions and civilizations. Since 2003, our capital has been honoured to convene the triennial **Congress of the Leaders of World and Traditional Religions** supported by the UN.

Ladies and gentlemen,

All of us are observing with alarm developments in the Middle East, the cradle of human civilization, which is plagued by mutual hatred and violence. We, therefore, stand ready to support bilateral and multilateral actions aimed at finding viable peace and confidence-building solutions.

As a good example of our commitment to inclusive dialogue, Kazakhstan provides a platform for **inter-Syrian negotiations**. **Thirteen such rounds** have taken place in our capital.

Thanks to the **Astana Process**, which complements the Geneva talks, the cessation of hostilities has been reached. The de-escalation zones with conditions for a safe return of refugees have also been established.

We all know that conflicts are devastating and give rise to **terrorism and extremism**. These can only be defeated by joint actions through a **Global Anti-Terrorism Network under the auspices of the UN**.

As a counter-terrorism measure, Kazakhstan initiated the **Code of Conduct towards Achieving a World Free of Terrorism** by the UN Centenary in 2045, and urge to join it.

This year, Kazakhstan successfully accomplished a special humanitarian mission, "**Zhusan**", in cooperation with our international partners. As a result, 595 Kazakh citizens trapped by terrorist propaganda, including 406 children, returned back home from the war zones in Syria. We are ready to share our experience with other countries and urge them to take similar actions.

Mr. President,

For decades, the **Central Asian** states had weak economic ties, which impeded their sustainable growth. Now, by sharing common interests and challenges, **our region has entered a next stage of its development**.

In this respect, close and constructive political dialogue among all five regional countries will be instrumental for trade, economic, investment and people-to-people interaction. New opportunities have emerged for the region after **the first informal consultations at the highest level** held in our capital last year.

I am fully convinced that Central Asia is becoming global stakeholder. We are strongly united by our common historic and cultural heritage, as well as, by a common future. Kazakhstan, as the largest economy of Central Asia, has a vital interest in further strengthening a mutually beneficial cooperation among all states.

The situation in Afghanistan has a direct impact on our region. We hope that the **Afghan-owned and Afghan-led** peace process, assisted by all key stakeholders, will produce a lasting peace and prosperity for this country.

Kazakhstan will continue to support the Afghan people to rebuild their nation. Enduring global and regional partnerships, long term investments and regional connectivity are vital to secure the peaceful future of this nation.

Distinguished delegates,

The United Nations' ability to deliver its core mission is facing a serious test.

Therefore, **a bold and clear vision by Secretary General on UN reform** deserves a wide support by all member-states.

We pay special attention to the full implementation of the **2030 agenda** as we strive to avoid notorious middle-income country trap.

SDG targets are integrated by 80% into our strategic government programs.

This May I opened a new **Building of International Organizations** in Kazakhstan. It hosts 16 UN agencies.

As the next step, we propose to establish in its premises a **UN Centre for SDGs** with mandate to assist countries of **Central Asia and Afghanistan**.

Being one of the largest transit and transport territory in Eurasia, Kazakhstan is set to play pivotal role in promoting transcontinental trade as a member of the **Eurasian Economic Union** and a reliable partner of "**One Belt, one Road**".

Ladies and gentlemen,

At these challenging times we shall continue along the path of comprehensive **transformation of our society under the motto "Continuity, Justice, Progress"**.

My formula for Kazakhstan's political system is that of a **strong and visionary President, an influential Parliament and accountable Government**. I firmly believe that this concept meets the basic needs of our nation and ensures its peaceful and sustainable future.

As the new President, first and foremost, I am committed to building a **modern welfare state**.

My ultimate goal is to ensure that millions of my country-fellows benefit from large-scale reforms and enjoy inclusive society, robust economy, high quality education and advanced healthcare.

Kazakhstan will not become a success story in its social-economic development unless profound **political transformation** is accomplished.

At the same time, one should keep in mind that democracy in Kazakhstan is a work in progress, requiring regular scrutiny. We are constantly looking for the way to improve it, building on the positive and learning from the negative experiences.

As part of my agenda, I launched the **National Council of Public Confidence** to promote a meaningful dialogue between government and society.

My vision is based on the concept of "**different opinions, but one nation**". It is through the exchange of views and dialogue that we should move forward.

Big changes will affect all law enforcement agencies and the courts to uphold the rule of law in every sphere and everyday life of our citizens.

Populism is about mediocre policy. I am not in a position of giving empty promises but pursuing concrete deeds.

I will be steadfast in implementing my reform agenda.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Next year, the UN family will mark an important milestone in its history.

This occasion should provide a new impetus to our joint endeavours in promoting comprehensive international cooperation to put an end to animosity, distrust and militancy.

I call on the international community and all our partners to get together to make the world stronger in its momentum towards security, cooperation and mutual trust.

We all must take care of our future generations to ensure their just and meaningful engagement in developing a new economy and technologies.

We must take care of the environment, promote scientific development, and ensure healthcare and education for all.

The destiny of our future generations deserves to be much better than we do have now in this fragile world.

As a responsible member of the global community, Kazakhstan will not cease to contribute to the collective action to promote peace and advance human rights, dignity and prosperity.

Thank you for your attention.