



# Kazakhstan's Echo

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## Kazakh President Rallies for Participation of All States in Nuclear Nonproliferation

*On September 28, 2006, a dinner was held in Washington, DC, in honor of President Nursultan Nazarbayev and “Kazakhstan’s Nuclear Disarmament, A Global Model for A Safer World”, organized by Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI). NTI Co-chairmen Senator Sam Nunn and Ted Turner, members of the U.S. Congress Shelley Berkley (D-Nevada) and Eni Faleomavaega (D-American Samoa), U.S. Undersecretary of Energy Linton Brooks and Chairman Emeritus of the Eisenhower Institute Susan Eisenhower addressed the audience of more than 400 representatives of the U.S. Administration, Congress, think tanks and NGOs,*

*business circles and the news media. They noted Kazakhstan’s critical contribution to strengthening global security and its consistent leadership in the global nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction. President Nursultan Nazarbayev delivered the keynote address at the dinner proposing new initiatives to help solve the most complex problems of global disarmament and nonproliferation. Following is the transcript of his address.*



**President Nursultan Nazarbayev declares: “The problem of total and global disarmament will be resolved when and only when it is dealt with not by those who possess nuclear weapons, but by the international community at large, both nuclear and non-nuclear. It will be possible only if the solution is based on principles of collegiality and equality.**

First of all, I would like to express my gratitude to Nuclear Threat Initiative co-chairmen, Senator Sam Nunn and Ted Turner, for organizing this dinner in honor of our country. I also would like to express appreciation to Susan Eisenhower for kindly agreeing to serve as tonight's master of ceremonies.

I am sincerely happy to see Congresswoman Shelley Berkeley and Congressman Eni Faleomavaega, eminent activists of the nonproliferation movement and true advocates of strengthening the Kazakhstan-U.S. friendship. I am especially pleased to have with us Secretaries Sam Bodman and Mike Johanns, and many other American friends of Kazakhstan.

The decade and a half, which have passed since the collapse of the Soviet Union and Kazakhstan regained its independence in 1991, have been critical not only for us, but for the entire world. In the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century we have to acknowledge that the end of the Cold War, despite hopes of many people, did not lead to a safer world.

Our planet became less stable, and membership of the nuclear club has grown in the past decade. India and Pakistan joined the club. A number of very well known countries are nurturing nuclear ambitions. Moreover, the threat of the use of nuclear weapons by international terrorists has become a horrifying and real prospect.

The people of Kazakhstan experienced the horrors of nuclear weapons first hand. From 1949 through 1991, 456 nuclear explosions rocked the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site. They caused illness and suffering for hundreds of thousands of our people and contaminated vast areas with radiation. The test site itself occupied an area slightly smaller than the state of New Jersey, but irradiation of the land was recorded in an area much larger than that. It was comparable in size to the state of New Mexico.

Fifteen years have passed since the time when we shut down the Semipalatinsk test site forever. But the consequences of nuclear testing will be felt for many decades to come. That is why the people of Kazakhstan, like few others, know of the horrible consequences of nuclear tests. To this day, not only the unwilling witnesses of those explosions, but their children and grandchildren continue to suffer. This was one of the more tragic pages in the history of Kazakhstan.

After the break up of the Soviet Union, our republic inherited a considerable number of nuclear weapons including strategic missiles with multiple warheads, notoriously known in the West as 'Satan' missiles, long range bombers and nuclear and thermonuclear warheads for them. At that moment, this deadly arsenal was the fourth largest in the world.

At that time, Kazakhstan had 148 silos for land based intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs). These silos held 104 ICBMs with nuclear warheads. The load of these missiles was 7.6 metric tons; and each was capable of flying 12,000 kilometers.

We renounced this nuclear arsenal, and this decision laid the foundation for Kazakhstan's overall strategy for global security. Figuratively speaking, from that moment Kazakhstan became an 'epicenter of peace', a place where for the first time in history people who had possessed a destructive force voluntarily renounced it. As you would recall, a few years ago I wrote a book called *Epicenter of Peace*.

In the years since then, we have consistently worked to eliminate weapons of mass destruction and their infrastructure. We value highly our cooperation with the United States under the Cooperative Threat Reduction program initiated by Richard Lugar and Sam Nunn. Thanks to our cooperation, all nuclear warheads were removed from Kazakhstan by 1995.

Kazakhstan's contribution to nonproliferation continues and is manifested not only in our active antinuclear stance, but in new concrete deeds.

Earlier this year, Kazakhstan and Nuclear Threat Initiative concluded a unique international project in nonproliferation. Under this project, three tons of highly enriched uranium, enough to produce up to two dozen nuclear weapons, were blended down into low enriched uranium, that is into the fuel for peaceful nuclear reactors.

This project became another contribution by Kazakhstan to strengthening global security, an integral part and a shining symbol of the wide ranging cooperation between our countries in nonproliferation.

Today, one of the key elements for stability of the modern world is a sustainable system of global security.

In recent years we witnessed as agreements within the UN framework aimed at nuclear containment, nonproliferation and non-production of nuclear materials were not successful. This means the world needs to adopt a completely different solution from the one that exists now.

A paradoxical situation is taking place in the world which in essence runs contrary to principles of international law: some are allowed to have nuclear weapons and even modernize them, while others are forbidden from having them or even developing them. This is not right, unfair and not evenhanded.

Saying that nuclear weapons must not be developed by other countries and must not be proliferated, the nuclear powers themselves should make an example by reducing their own arsenals.

I believe that within the United Nations, the solution to this issue must be reviewed with a new view for global actions and responsibility of all countries, primarily nuclear ones, in terms of reducing nuclear weapons and gradual elimination of their arsenals.

Today's realities demonstrate the need of a serious adaptation of the international security system. The outdated security concept of mutual deterrence between nuclear arsenals of opposing countries has fully proven its archaic nature.

During the Cold War, nuclear weapons were a factor of global balance in a bipolar world, and, respectively, a nuclear conflict was preventable.

Conflicting parties not only were on the brink of a nuclear war, but in some cases were in the state of a nuclear war. At that time, the world not only stood on the brink of total catastrophe, but on a number of occasions it was witness to a global nuclear conflict. In other words, formally, nuclear conflicts already took place. You may recall an instance when U.S. strategic nuclear bombers were already half way on the way to their targets in the Soviet Union. Yet, these nuclear wars used to end before actual conflict, that is before bombers or intercontinental missiles reached their targets.

At that time, parties in conflict were separated by large distances of thousands or even tens of thousands of kilometers, and were in the Western and Eastern hemispheres. For missile and air forces to fulfill their combat tasks, each needed 30 to 40 minutes on average. Moreover, at the time of global rivalry, a rather complex and developed system of early warning was in operation, and more importantly, there was a cross referenced system of confirmation of nuclear attack. A political infrastructure for solving global conflicts was also effectively functioning.

Yet, today the world is facing a phenomenon of a regional nuclear rivalry and its main characteristic is that a possible nuclear conflict would be irreversible. In a regional nuclear conflict, short and medium range missiles with nuclear warheads, rather than strategic intercontinental ballistic missiles, will play the role of a strategic weapon. Their range of destruction at 500 to 3,000 kilometers is sufficient enough for solving all strategic and tactical tasks connected with the use of weapons of mass destruction. At the same time, the flight time to their targets for short and medium range missiles is significantly shorter than the flight time for ICBMs. It is two to five minutes, which is only one tenth the flight time of an ICBM. During such a short period of time, it is completely impossible to execute the very complex sequence of actions which had made possible conflict during the global rivalry reversible.

This all encouraged a manifold increase in tensions and the excessive growth of many hidden illnesses of the modern world, primarily of terrorism.

Unfortunately, the international community is not of the same mind on the nuclear issue. Double standards are seen applied here and there which creates a situation of uncertainty and ambiguity with heavy consequences for security for the whole range of countries and regions.

Overall, in recent years, we witnessed how agreements within the United Nations framework were not implemented. The 2005 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty review conference failed to produce an agreement yet again. The Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty also failed coming into force because

of the refusal of a number of countries to ratify this important document. The disarmament conference in Geneva got bogged down in political rhetoric and diplomatic bureaucracy.

I would like to express a thought which, though speculative, should be implemented in real life: the problem of total and global disarmament will be resolved when and only when it is dealt with not by those who possess nuclear weapons, but by the international community at large, both nuclear and non-nuclear. It will be possible only if the solution is based on principles of collegiality and equality. Today, it has become a norm for countries without nuclear weapons to play the role of simple mutes in the processes of disarmament and nonproliferation without having a decisive vote. But, this is not right.

If nuclear armed states involve the rest of the world in all sorts of treaties and agreements which they initiate themselves, they should make the next step by creating equality and establishing the principle of equality of votes in these processes.

Mankind continues to search for new ways to significantly reduce the “centrifugal” force of nuclear weapons. New political instruments are needed which would take into account the need for a universal approach to nonproliferation and disarmament. Not only that, but they should also establish the principle of universality in actions.

This means that a mechanism is needed to ensure the nonproliferation regime as a main guarantor of international security for all countries, no exceptions. Such a mechanism should be based on three principles: nonproliferation through non-possession, nonproliferation through non-deployment, and nonproliferation through a test ban.

We are convinced that nuclear weapon states must adopt the course toward unwavering and gradual nuclear disarmament and the signing of arms control agreements which will call not just for dismantlement, but for its irreversibility. The states should also reconfirm their obligations to observe a nuclear weapons test moratorium and strive for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

Kazakhstan stands for ensuring tough control over armaments, especially dangerous materials and technologies as a key element of nonproliferation and the foundation for any security system. Our efforts are directed at making universal the international instruments in disarmament and nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction. We support the establishment of internationally recognized nuclear weapon free zones. Central Asia is already one such zone.

What Kazakhstan has proposed to the world, the return from the technical notion of deterrence to a humanitarian notion of trust, is very symbolic: material things are perishable, while moral notions, confirmed by the wisdom of generations, are eternal.

Trust is a key element which we put into the foundation of a new security vision. Trust imposes responsibility and is the primary condition of mutual understanding, friendship and cooperation. Based on the trust toward each other, we signed agreements with our neighbors about mutual weapons reductions along our borders.

I am reminded of a wise quote from Albert Einstein who said that “the release of atom power has changed everything except our way of thinking... the solution to this problem lies in the heart of mankind.”

Kazakhstan did away with its nuclear fears and freed all those who feared our nuclear arsenal from their fears. We have shown the path forward to a safer future. We strongly urge the entire world to follow the example of Kazakhstan and other countries which also chose the path of disarmament. This is the only way we can ensure a safer and more peaceful future for our children and grandchildren.

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