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STATEMENT

by

H.E. Mr. Nursultan A. Nazarbayev,
President of the Republic of Kazakhstan
at the High-level Meeting on Nuclear Safety and Security

22 September 2011
New York
Mr. President,
Mr. Secretary-General,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

First of all, I would like to thank the organizers of this meeting and, personally, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for the invitation to attend it, and the opportunity to exchange views on issues of nuclear safety and security.

This theme has become a top priority for me in my work as President of Kazakhstan. In my view, nuclear safety and security poses a triple challenge.

First, we should protect humankind from nuclear weapons, which constitutes the military and political aspects of the issue.

Second, we should counter potential nuclear terrorism.

Third, we should ensure safety of nuclear power.

As for the first aspect, our position remains unchanged - the objective of historical significance is to move towards a nuclear-weapon-free world.

In the near future, it would be necessary to conclude a convention that would bind nuclear powers not to use, or threaten to use, nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapons states.

As we advance along the road to a nuclear-weapon-free world, an important challenge is to look for new approaches to nuclear safety and security.

In my view, it is fundamentally important to bring international legal norms in line with the reality of the existence of de facto nuclear weapons states.

Fortunately, the world has not yet been confronted with the problem of nuclear terrorism.

Still, in practical terms, one cannot hedge against such a threat.

Perhaps, the greatest risks of uncontrolled spread of nuclear threat are associated with those States that are involved in the "black market" of nuclear technologies.

It is not a matter of amending the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; rather, it is a matter of credible compliance with it by its State Parties.

The latest world events show that we have actually reached a fundamentally new stage in the use of nuclear power.

In this regard, Kazakhstan puts forward three universal principles of the safe development of nuclear power for peaceful purposes.

First, we have to improve global mechanisms for managing processes in the development of nuclear power.

There is a need to establish a more effective system that would ensure safety of nuclear facilities existing in the world.

It is imperative to develop unified, extremely strict and internationally recognized standards and criteria for the safety of nuclear power facilities.

Without strict compliance with them, not a single nuclear power plant in the world should be allowed to operate.
It would seem advisable to make it mandatory to conduct regular stress tests of nuclear power plant control and protection systems, under the auspices of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), with the involvement of independent experts.

Second, we need clear and universally recognized principles and mechanisms for crisis response to nuclear emergencies.

Increasingly, major human-made disasters in the world are triggered by natural cataclysms.

It would be advisable to introduce a global system for monitoring natural and anthropogenic processes on Earth.

For that, we would have to develop crisis response scenarios for each region of the world, taking into account the local terrain, logistics and demographic map.

Third, it is necessary to make sure that the international community is fully and instantly informed about even the most insignificant incidents involving nuclear facilities.

Against the backdrop of global radiophobia, it is critically important to boost public confidence in nuclear power, based on truthful and fair information.

Nuclear power should be guided by the old legal principle which says: "one should tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth."

Ladies and gentlemen,

Twenty years ago, on 29 August 1991, I signed a decree for shutting down the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site.

I would like to express appreciation to the United Nations General Assembly for its support of Kazakhstan's initiative to declare that day, of the closure of the Semipalatinsk test site, as the International Day against Nuclear Tests.

All nuclear facilities in our country are under the full control and safeguards of the IAEA.

As we continue to develop our nuclear power industry, we plan to set up a vertically integrated company with a full nuclear fuel cycle, from mining uranium to producing nuclear fuel.

Kazakhstan is ready to step up its contribution to strengthening the non-proliferation regime through the establishment of an International Bank of Low-enriched Uranium, under the auspices of the IAEA.

I reiterate Kazakhstan's commitment to host such a Bank and hope that our initiative will be embraced.

We welcome the Secretary-General's idea to convene this High-level Meeting and express the hope that the proposals put forward today will enhance the global nuclear safety and security system.

Thank you for your attention.