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**Statement by
H.E. Mr. Kairat Umarov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Kazakhstan at the Seventh BTWC Conference
(Geneva, December 5, 2011)**

Distinguished Mr. President,

I wish to congratulate you on your election to this high post. I am confident that under your guidance our Review Conference will be crowned with success and that it will complete its work with noteworthy accomplishments.

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Republic of Kazakhstan regards the Convention on the Prohibition of Biological and Toxin weapons (BTWC) as one of the key elements of the global regime of the non-proliferation of the weapons of mass annihilation, of the disarmament process, and of the strengthening of security and stability.

Our country is fully committed to the aims and objections of the Convention whose provisions have been incorporated in their entirety in the national legislation.

We defend steadfastly the universalization of the BTWC. Considering the fact how insignificant may appear the transfer of biological material and technologies and what horrible consequences it may produce we are convinced that only participation in the Convention of all states of the world,

without any exception, will become a firm foundation of the complete ban on the use of biotechnologies for military purposes. It is regrettable that there remain around thirty countries of the world refraining from committing themselves to the prohibition of biological weapons. It is of special concern that there exist so called "gray zones" in the conflict or unstable regions of the world.

Kazakhstan recognizes the necessity to supplement BTWC regime with means of international control, to implement effective measures of verification and transparency on the multilateral basis, probably, within the framework of the United Nations. There remains another burning issue that of the international verification of the microbiological industries of various countries of the world to make sure that they have not been retooled for military production. Setting up of an effective verification mechanism would help strengthen mutual trust and security.

At the same time we would like to emphasize that the strengthening of the Convention mechanisms should not limit the right of every state to develop its biotechnologies for peaceful purposes. The Republic of Kazakhstan stands for the development of the international cooperation within the framework of the Convention provided also that biological agent is used peaceful purposes in line with the expansion of the national potential.

In our view, all those measures are fully justified as far as threats existing in our world are concerned. We believe no one has any doubt as to the existence of real aspirations among some terrorist groups to acquire biological materials, equipment and technologies.

The Republic of Kazakhstan is in full compliance with the **resolution 1540 of the UN Security Council** and with one of its central demand to set up an effective system of export controls. Kazakhstan maintains today a

national system of export controls for the transfer of goods and technologies that could be used for manufacturing of the weapons of mass destruction and of their means of delivery, or for other armaments and military equipment. That national system is in conformity with the best world standards and is constantly upgraded in view of new challenges and threats.

Kazakhstan has speeded up the process of adhesion to the main regimes of nonproliferation and controls of export. Last year we applied for membership in the Australian group. All checklists of the Australian group as well as those of the BTWC have been fully incorporated in our national legislation. We count on the broad support of the members of the Australian group for the candidature of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

In the last two decades Kazakhstan after acquiring its independence has been actively cooperating with the US and some other states of the world that are major players in the area of biotechnologies directing its efforts toward eliminating the biological threat. To rid itself of the "inheritance of the cold war" the Republic of Kazakhstan has unilaterally closed down the Aral biological proving ground, the Stepnogorsky facility and reoriented research institutions and industrial plants that were manufacturing dual purpose products (Almaty biocenter, Agricultural research institute and others).

One of the most vivid example of international cooperation toward achieving biological security is the project to build the Central Reference Laboratory that is being implemented in the city of Almaty with the participation of the US Program of reduction of the biological threat. The project aims to construct a modern lab designed to withstand a high-level attack and to provide a safe environment for handling pathogens; the lab will have unique equipment.

Under the decree of the government the Republic of Kazakhstan has set up a Committee on biological security. By the order of the Head of State "biological security" has been added to the Strategy of National Security of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Aspiring to strengthen confidence building measures within BTWC Kazakhstan submits annually to the United Nations information on its implementation. To our regret, today national declarations are being made by less than half of the participating states. We call upon those countries that have so far failed to submit their declarations reconsider their attitudes and present their declarations which will also serve to strengthen confidence-building measures.

The Republic of Kazakhstan intends to continue further efforts within the framework of the Convention and in close contact with all concerned states, international organizations, and regimes actively pursuing our goal to make the world more secure.

Thank you for your attention.