

## **Kazakhstan's input to the Secretary-General's report pursuant to resolution 79/241 "Comprehensive study of the question of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all its aspects" adopted by the General Assembly on 24 December 2024.**

1. Kazakhstan remains a consistent supporter of nuclear-weapon-free zones (NWFZ) as a founding member of the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (CANWFZ) and champion of the UN Secretary-General's Agenda Action 5 on strengthening nuclear-weapon-free zones. Nuclear-weapon-free zones are widely recognized as an essential part of the bedrock of the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation architecture under the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Article VII of the NPT affirms that there is nothing stopping states parties to the treaty concluding "regional treaties in order to assure the total absence of nuclear weapons in their respective territories".

2. Kazakhstan believes that the establishment of new zones – including in the Middle East, Northeast Asia, and parts of Europe – alongside national statuses, can meaningfully expand the global geography of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

3. On the occasion of the International Day Against Nuclear Tests, Kazakhstan, in cooperation with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, organized two events in Astana in 2019 and 2024, bringing together representatives of the Treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones in Latin America and the Caribbean (Tlatelolco Treaty), the South Pacific (Rarotonga Treaty), South East Asia (Bangkok Treaty), Central Asia (Semipalatinsk Treaty) and Mongolia as well as observers from relevant international, regional and civil society organizations for the purpose of contributing to the achievement of a world free of nuclear weapons by strengthening nuclear-weapon-free zones. Both meetings were also attended by the five permanent members of the UN Security Council. Kazakhstan believes that the Astana-based meetings of nuclear-weapon-free zones provide a good platform to strengthen inter-zonal cooperation while the traditional Conferences of Nuclear-Weapon-Free zones and Mongolia are unable to resume. Kazakhstan hopes that the Fourth conference of Nuclear-Weapon-Free zones and Mongolia can take place in 2026 ahead of the Eleventh NPT Review Conference, per past practice.

4. In order to continue international efforts to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world, foster cooperation among the nuclear-weapon-free zones to fully implement the principles and objectives of the treaties establishing those zones, to exchange relevant ideas and best practices in areas of mutual interest the following observations were made by the Republic of Kazakhstan in its national capacity as the Chair of the second Workshop on Fostering Cooperation and Enhancing Consultation Mechanisms among the existing nuclear-weapons-free zones convened on 27-28 August 2024 in Astana and reflects to the best of its knowledge what transpired at the workshop with regard to the matters discussed:

1. Representatives of the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones (NWFZ) States, their Secretariats and point of contacts, as well as other interested participants underscored the importance of continuing the tradition of holding such meetings, including retreat-style gatherings on the margins of the United Nations General Assembly, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). The Parties emphasized the value of regular consultations and exchanges of experience between zones to further institutionalize these efforts.

2. Representatives noted that other joint activities could be considered, including joint statements in relevant forums and an annual joint resolution at the United Nations General Assembly. It was noted that a joint resolution could assist in coordinating actions and presenting a united front to strengthen the regime established by the NWFZ treaties, including the institutionalization of regular NWFZ meetings. A resolution could also potentially support the creation of new NWFZs.
3. Representatives underscored the need to take steps toward further institutionalizing NWFZ treaties by establishing working/executive bodies or regional organizations where practical. The examples of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) and the African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCONE) are noted as successful models to this end.
4. Representatives noted positively the suggestion to establish a consultative group to regularly exchange information on zonal activities and coordinate positions. This group could be represented by focal points and secretariats as appropriate or delegates of Permanent Missions to the United Nations in New York or another agreed location. This was noted as a way to strengthen coordination of Parties to NWFZs in relevant forums.
5. Representatives welcomed the intention of OPANAL members to present a resolution on a second comprehensive study on NWFZs, noting that the last such study was conducted in the 1970s before most NWFZs were established and looked forward to receiving further details.
6. Representatives highlighted that the NWFZ portal operated by UNODA serves as a central platform for communication between zones, providing comprehensive information on NWFZs, its conferences and other joint activities. Parties to NWFZs were called upon to support UNODA in enhancing the portal, including by providing regular updates, ensuring that it remains current and continues to serve as an effective tool for strengthening inter-zonal cooperation, coordination, and educational purposes. Input from NWFZ Parties was underscored as vital to the ongoing success of the platform.
7. Representatives should continue the practice of inviting representatives from other NWFZs to regional meetings, following the successful example of cooperation between OPANAL and AFCONE. This practice was highlighted as a way to reinforce collaboration and mutual learning between zones.
8. Representatives emphasized the need for the signature and ratification of relevant protocols by the nuclear-weapon States to all NWFZs and for the removal of any interpretative declarations to those protocols, stressing that the provision of security assurances by the nuclear-weapon States is essential to the full of implementation of the zones. They called for continued diplomatic efforts, including in the capitals of concerned nuclear-weapon States, jointly where necessary or possible, to secure signatures and ratifications of the relevant protocols to NWFZ treaties by states that have not yet signed or ratified the protocols and for dialogue on interpretative declarations to the protocols. Joint outreach activities and demarches at the inter-parliamentary level were also discussed as a possible avenue for this purpose.
9. Representatives underscored the importance of intensifying efforts to promote the establishment of new NWFZs, with a special focus on regions

such as the Arctic, Northeast Asia, and Central Europe. In particular, the ongoing efforts to establish a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction highlight the critical need for regional cooperation and sustained diplomacy. The establishment of such zones, while complex, remains a key step in enhancing regional security and building global momentum for disarmament.

10. Representatives regretted the inability to convene the Fourth Conference of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia and noted that suggestion to organize a preparatory meeting in the margins of the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly that could help to address the obstacles to the convening of the Fourth Conference.
  11. Representatives welcomed calls for further outreach efforts to promote disarmament education, particularly among young people. The important role of civil society in promoting NWFZs was also welcomed. Support for research and analysis on key aspects of NWFZs, such as negative security assurances and interpretive Protocol declarations, to strengthen understanding and engagement was encouraged.
  12. Representatives underscored the importance of continued cooperation with both the IAEA and the CTBTO in ensuring compliance with non-proliferation commitments and promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy within the framework of NWFZ treaties. The IAEA's role in verifying the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the CTBTO's work in monitoring nuclear test bans were highlighted as essential to maintaining trust, transparency, and global non-proliferation norms. Collaboration with these organizations is emphasized as crucial for reinforcing the integrity of NWFZs and supporting international disarmament efforts.
  13. Representatives noted the complementarity between NWFZs and the TPNW and highlighted the potential for enhanced cooperation between NWFZs and TPNW States Parties and Signatories. It was suggested that joint diplomatic efforts, public awareness campaigns, and coordinated outreach to non-party States could be useful endeavours. The accelerated implementation of disarmament commitments was noted as key to strengthening the global norm against nuclear weapons and bringing about their elimination. It was also noted that the proposed TPNW International Trust Fund for victim assistance and environmental remediation from the consequences of nuclear testing, if established, could facilitate further universalization of the TPNW.
  14. It was noted that such workshops may be convened on a more frequent basis and participants were invited to consider this issue.
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