Pursuant to resolution 78/23 entitled “Relationship between disarmament and development” adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 4 December 2023, Kazakhstan presents information regarding measures and efforts to devote part of the resources made available by the implementation of disarmament and arms limitation agreements to economic and social development, with a view to reducing the ever-widening gap between developed and developing countries

Kazakhstan has been working step-by-step towards Sustainable Development since the first days of its independence, and at the same time, been an effective advocate of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, convinced of the close nexus between disarmament and development.

Kazakhstan, impacted by the disastrous consequences of four decades of nuclear testing, has been a proponent of nuclear abolition since its independence in 1991. On 29 August 1991, Kazakhstan made the historic decision to close the Semipalatinsk nuclear weapons test site. Kazakhstan has also abandoned the fourth largest nuclear arsenal in the world. These crucial decisions were a precursor for the closure of other similar sites in regions across the globe.

Having acceded to all international treaties on disarmament, such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), Kazakhstan is striving to universalize them for their effective implementation. The TPNW will, in fact, accelerate momentum for fulfillment of Article VI of the NPT, and make possible the early entry into force the CTBT. It is significant that the TPNW strengthens our collective hope for a world free of nuclear weapons, which Kazakhstan believes possible to achieve by the UN’s Centennial in 2045.

Kazakhstan consistently follows the formula: "Nuclear weapons have no place in our world." They guarantee neither victory, nor safety and only result in the total destruction of life. By our example, we have demonstrated to the entire world that it is possible to co-exist peacefully, cooperate and progress collectively. We therefore strive with all Member States and stakeholders to benefit and preserve our planet for future generations.

To facilitate recovery from the devastation caused, Kazakhstan tabled a UNGA Resolution on international cooperation to rehabilitate the population, restore the environment and foster economic development in its Semipalatinsk region adopted by the UN General Assembly on 18 December 2023.

On 22 December 2023 at the initiative of Kazakhstan the General Assembly also adopted the resolution entitled “Addressing the Legacy of Nuclear Weapons: Providing Victim Assistance and Environmental Remediation to Member States Affected by the Use or Testing of Nuclear Weapons”. This document, inter alia, recognizes that the implementation of victim assistance and environmental remediation constitute meaningful steps toward the achievement of nuclear disarmament and the Sustainable Development Goals.
Both these resolutions are a precursor for the effort to implement Articles 6 and 7 of the TPNW to assist victims of nuclear weapons testing in several regions of the world, which is currently being actively discussed by Member States.

Kazakhstan promotes United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres’ Agenda for Disarmament, and the New Agenda for Peace, both of which aim for the total abolition of nuclear weapons, as prerequisites for Agenda 2030. Kazakhstan supports the UN system’s extremely vital stewardship for global anti-crisis approaches by reinforcing a stable system of mechanisms of international relations, multilateral cooperation, and development for peace and security.

Simultaneously, Kazakhstan is committed to a people centered development through its Kazakhstan Strategy 2050. It has worked closely with the UN system, IFIs, and multilateral development banks, private sector and civil society at the national and regional levels to make progress in reaching the SDG targets. It ranks 66th out of 166 countries in the SDG Index, and has a score of 71.6 /100, as indicated in the 2023 Sustainable Development Report. Some 87 crucial SDG indicators are fully integrated into national projects and regional development programmes by 2025, investing its resources on Human Security rather than on production of lethal weapons of warfare. Moving ahead, the country will focus on the remaining SDGs of Zero Hunger, Affordable and Clean Energy, “Climate Action,”, “Life on Land,” and “Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions”, with increased budgetary allocations.

Furthermore, the ravages of the COVID-19 pandemic and thereafter, together with other threats of conflicts, mass scale food and supply chain shortages, soaring prices and the debt crises have highlighted the imperative to strengthen the nexus between economic recovery and international security. Disarmament is a thus an integral part of justice, sustainable development and environmental protection to adequately address our contemporary unprecedented challenges.

Kazakhstan has submitted two Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) on Sustainable Development Goals thus far (2019 and 2022), which reaffirm its commitment to the SDGs. We have succeeded in harmonizing our budget in line with the principles of SDGs, prioritizing on gender, youth, children and different categories of vulnerable populations. We have taken into account national SDG indicators up to 2030 while developing national strategic policies and programmes for enhancing higher living standards of food and nutrition sufficiency, education, employment, health and psychosocial wellbeing.

Together with the UNDP and the European Union, a regional SDG Knowledge Sharing Platform for Central Asia was launched to facilitate the achievement of the SDGs in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan by integrating efforts through the SDG monitoring and financing process. We are also endeavouring to build climate resilience. Kazakhstan strengthens its work in the field of environmental protection, aiming to reduce carbon emissions by half in 2050. In 2019, the Ministry of Ecology, Geology and Natural Resources was founded together with the Water and Energy Consortium for Central Asia. Likewise, regional cooperation in the Aral Sea basin under the Blue Peace Central Asia Initiative has seen much progress.
Kazakhstan is ready to provide all possible assistance in finding mutually acceptable solutions on border issues. The Treaty of Friendship, Good Neighborliness and Cooperation for the Development of Central Asia in the 21st Century, initiated by Kazakhstan, will certainly facilitate this process. We will reinforce measures critical for the successful and secure development of the region, and the proposed creation of a model zone of peace, security and cooperation in Central Asia. Initiatives such as the International Aral Sea Fund and the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia support this idea, and Kazakhstan will sustain efforts towards their effectiveness.

Our regional security and stability are intertwined with the fate of Afghanistan and all others in an interconnected world. We will continue to support sustainable economic and social models, and stable political structures to fight poverty, violent extremism and terrorism, drug-trafficking, organized crime and illegal migration as Afghanistan’s sustainable development crucial for the entire Central Asian region.

Kazakhstan continues to support the reform of the UN development system by interacting closely with the UN agencies, governments, civil society, academia and businesses, and thus transforming the region into a zone of peace, security and sustainable development.

The proposed Regional Hub Centre for Sustainable Development Goals for Central Asia and Afghanistan, located in Almaty, will strengthen the revamped regional approach and strategy to for sustainable development, stability and resilience, through national and regional cooperation. This will be made possible as Kazakhstan invests in peace and stability instead of engaging in an arms race.

Kazakhstan is convinced that a strong sub-region will further lead to regional and global stability. Considering the current developments in geopolitics, we are cooperating with our brotherly Central Asian States, based on the principles of equity and mutual benefit, in diverse spheres ranging from trade and investments, transportation, water management to culture and education. We will continue to seek new opportunities to strengthen cross-border cooperation, trade growth, mutual investment, and developing systems that support and streamline the greater movement of services and labour.

The world needs renewed resolve, political determination and wisdom to put the interests of humanity over narrow national interests. Kazakhstan will stand with the United Nations in its pursuit of peace, development and stability through a stable system of international relations and multilateral cooperation to prevent their further erosion, by holding steadfast to the principles of the UN Charter.