



Nuclear Discussion Forum 2016 – Second Session

**Nuclear Security: The successful trilateral collaboration between
Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation and the United States, and
lessons for future international cooperation**

Opening remarks by

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Mr. Erlan Batyrbekov, Director-General of the Committee for Atomic and Energy Supervision and Control, Republic of Kazakhstan

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Russian TBC

And I want to thank my good friend Ambassador Kairat Abdrakhmanov and the Permanent Mission of Kazakhstan for hosting us today.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen

The number of States that have possessed nuclear weapons and chosen to give them up can be counted on one hand. Kazakhstan therefore represents an extraordinary example to the international community. It was a decision that has led to a long and distinguished resumé of disarmament and non-proliferation accomplishments.

Of all the states to renounce nuclear weapons, Kazakhstan is unique. Not only did it inherit some fourteen hundred nuclear weapons, but it was also left with the massive nuclear test site at Semipalatinsk, over one hundred ICBMs, and tonnes of insecure nuclear material.

It is remarkable that by 1995 all of the weapons had been repatriated and by 2000 the test site had been closed. All the ICBMs have been destroyed. Hundreds of kilograms of Highly Enriched Uranium and plutonium have either been transported out of Kazakhstan or placed under high security.

What could have been a safety, environmental or, worst of all, a security nightmare, became a post-Cold War success story.

Ladies and gentlemen

The lessons of those historic accomplishments remain relevant today.

First, the achievements show the importance of disarmament or arms control agreements as confidence-building measures. Confidence breeds cooperation. I firmly believe that the negotiations between Russia and the United States on the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, or START, laid the ground for the achievements in Kazakhstan.

Second, the successful outcomes were the result of an overarching, unprecedented spirit of cooperation between Kazakhstan and the world's two largest nuclear powers.

At a time of strategic uncertainty, the United States and the Russian Federation recognised common ground and worked together to reach a shared objective.

The spirit of cooperation led to joint efforts under the aptly named Cooperative Threat Reduction program – also known as the Nunn-Lugar initiative, and brought about the destruction of hundreds of missiles, the deactivation of thousands of nuclear warheads and the dismantlement of large amounts of nuclear infrastructure, such as missile silos.

Ladies and gentlemen

Today the same spirit of cooperation was shown between Russia and the United States to effect the removal and destruction of Syria's declared chemical weapons programme. And the same spirit has seen both powers work together to build transparency and confidence-building measures for the peaceful uses of outer space for a possible third item at the UN Disarmament Commission.

We need the same spirit in bridging the gap in approaches on nuclear disarmament.

We need the same spirit in mitigating CBRN risks and associated terrorism threats.

We need the same spirit to tackle emerging security challenges such as cyber and outer space security.

When we work together with the same spirit, nothing is impossible in our journey for a world without nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction; a world safer, more secure and better for all.

We need the same spirit now more than ever.

Thank you.