



**The Executive Secretary  
of the Preparatory Commission for the  
Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization**

**Dr. Lassina Zerbo**

**Building a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World  
Astana, Kazakhstan**

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- Excellencies, Distinguished diplomats, Ladies, and Gentlemen,
  - I wish to thank Ambassador and Chairman of the Senate, Mr Tokayev, and Ambassador and Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr Idrissov for inviting me to this special event. Kazakhstan has demonstrated unrivalled leadership over the years in the promotion international peace and security, and it is my pleasure to participate in this important conference.
  - Today, 29 August, is the International Day Against Nuclear Testing, and there is no better place to commemorate it than here, in Kazakhstan. As the head of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, this day reminds me of what we have accomplished so far. After all, nuclear testing has almost come to a complete stop because of the CTBT. But it also reminds me of all that we must still take steps to make the global ban on nuclear testing permanent, legally binding, and fully universal.
  - This year we are also commemorating the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the CTBT. With its adoption, a no-test norm was established, resulting in only one country having violated the norm in the 21st century. We have come a long way but, even after 20 years, the Treaty has yet to enter into force, and the global risks of nuclear testing are not completely eliminated.
  - The CTBT has contributed to moving toward the ultimate goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. And the example and goodwill of Kazakhstan has played an important part in progress on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.
  - 25 years ago, President Nazarbayev not only permanently closed the Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test Site, but also voluntarily renounced the fourth largest nuclear arsenal in the world. Thank you, President Nazarbayev, for your leadership and vision, showing us the way to a better world.

- Kazakhstan has always been a close friend and promoter of disarmament and the CTBT. In 2008, the CTBTO held an unprecedented on-site inspection (OSI) field exercise in Semipalatinsk. The lessons learned have proven to be essential in the build-up of our OSI capabilities and readiness. Kazakhstan is also co-coordinator of the CTBT Article XIV process, leading global efforts to advance the Treaty's entry into force.
- Today also reminds us of the lasting effects of nuclear testing. The people of Kazakhstan have suffered from these effects and understand the risks and consequences of nuclear test explosions. This makes it all the more regretful that the CTBT has not yet entered into force. The Treaty now has 183 States Signatories. 164 of these have also ratified. I'm also pleased to report that we've recently been informed by the Permanent Missions of Myanmar and Swaziland that their respective Parliamentary procedures for CTBT ratification have been completed. But we still need ratifications by 8 remaining countries listed in Annex 2 to the Treaty before the nuclear test ban is a legal reality.
- I cannot say enough about the unique contributions from Kazakhstan to advance the idea of a world free of nuclear weapons. But one that especially moves me is The Atom Project. The ATOM Project is an expression of the strength of the people of Kazakhstan: in suffering, they found determination; in despair, they found awareness; in tragedy, they found firm conviction to promote the vision of a better world.
- We are near the finish line of achieving a nuclear-test-free world, an objective that many thought would not be possible. We must finish what we started. In today's world, there is no room for any further nuclear tests. Let's bring the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty into force. We owe it to ourselves and our future generations. With the determined leadership of Kazakhstan and all of our other friends and partners, we can make this dream a reality.