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Address
by the Deputy Prime Minister
- Minister of Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Kazakhstan,
H.E. Mr. Murat Nurtleu
at the 1465th OSCE
Permanent Council meeting,
14 March 2024

**Madame Chair,
Madame Secretary General,
Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,**

It is a great pleasure to visit the historic Hofburg to address the **OSCE Permanent Council**. I am here to make a brief intervention on **current developments in and around Kazakhstan**, as well as to discuss our approaches to **pressing international challenges**.

Availing myself of this opportunity, I extend **sincere wishes of success to the Maltese Chairpersonship** and offer our full support in navigating the complex issues facing the OSCE.

Now, let me share **Kazakhstan's vision** regarding these topics.

At the Skopje Ministerial, I joined my fellow colleagues in highlighting the **Organization's indispensable role** in promoting **peace, security, and development** across our interconnected regions.

Throughout Kazakhstan's participation in the OSCE, and especially during **our 2010 Chairpersonship**, we have steadily advocated for **constructive dialogue and joint action**.

We firmly believe that amidst unprecedented global turmoil and geopolitical shifts, **the role of multilateral institutions is as crucial as ever**.

Kazakhstan is, therefore, deeply convinced that **preserving and strengthening the OSCE**, as a unique platform with geographically diverse representation, serves the **best interests of all participating States**.

It is in this spirit that we continue to work with and within the OSCE, including on current matters such as the **approval of its**

annual budget, the appointments for its top four leadership positions, and the selection of future chairpersonships.

Madame Chair,

Kazakhstan is a country **at peace with itself, with all of our neighbours, and with the rest of the world.**

Our commitment to the **diplomatic resolution of disputes** through constructive, mutually respectful dialogue and engagement is rooted in **historical legacy** of our nation.

This is the very foundation of the **multi-vector foreign policy** that Kazakhstan has pursued since its independence.

Against the backdrop of geopolitical upheaval and polarization, Kazakhstan remains **a strong supporter of the UN Charter and its principles**, upholding the **rule of law at the national and international levels.**

Within the OSCE's **politico-military dimension**, Astana supports multilateral efforts to achieve and maintain **Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security**, rebuild trust, resolve conflicts in the OSCE area, and ensure post-conflict rehabilitation.

Together with our **brotherly regional neighbours**, we seek to **transform this vision into reality in Central Asia.**

The Consultative Meetings of Central Asian Heads of State, launched in 2018, are a case in point.

The **6th regional summit**, set to take place later this year in Astana, is poised to approve several important conceptual documents, **advancing our regional cooperation** in trade, investment, and many other areas.

As the **regional coherence** of Central Asia grows, so does our **collective engagement** with the world.

This is evidenced by the dynamic work of **more than a dozen “Central Asia Plus” formats**, with partners, including EU, Russia, China, U.S., India, Japan, South Korea.

Kazakhstan’s constructive approaches also drive our efforts to promote cooperation within the OSCE’s **economic and environmental dimension**.

For instance, we actively engage within Central Asia to find mutually acceptable solutions to shared challenges like **climate change** and **growing water scarcity**.

In this regard, Kazakhstan is advocating for the establishment of the **UN Regional Centre for Sustainable Development for Central Asia and Afghanistan** in Almaty.

Moreover, our country will convene a **UN Regional Climate Summit** in 2026.

We are also **ready to host one of the future COP meetings**.

It is well known that Kazakhstan plans to achieve **carbon neutrality by 2060** and is leveraging its resources and diplomatic engagement to support the **global transition to green and renewable energy**.

We hope to benefit from the **support of our OSCE partners** in these important endeavours.

Dear friends,

Another important area of cooperation is **connectivity**, which serves as the **lifeblood of modern nations**, enabling economic growth and strengthening regional stability.

Kazakhstan and Central Asia broadly offer unique advantages **for connecting** distant markets and act as a continental bridge along the **East-West and North-South transport corridors**.

Together with our neighbours in Central Asia and beyond, as well as partners like the EU, Kazakhstan is **maximising our geographic location and geo-economic potential** to improve **land-based connections between Asia and Europe**.

From our point of view, the “**Global Gateway**” initiative will serve for the best of interest of our continent and well-being of our nations.

Let us **build bridges**, rather than walls.

This endeavour is increasingly relevant as global supply chains and maritime transport **face major challenges**.

Already, thanks to collective action, transportation along the **Transcaspian International Transport Route**, or Middle Corridor, **has more than tripled in the past two years** and is expected to **increase further** within the next **half-decade**.

The OSCE, through its institutions and initiatives in the second dimension, such as **green port certification**, can contribute to these efforts for mutual benefit.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Kazakhstan’s positive engagement with the world stems from and is grounded on on-going **political, social, and economic modernization**.

The **ambitious reform agenda** of President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev has launched **unprecedented democratic processes**, aimed at building a “**Just and Fair Kazakhstan**”.

In a short span of time, we have completely reset our entire **political system and national economy**.

Four comprehensive packages of political reforms have been successfully implemented over the past four years.

Following a successful **nationwide constitutional referendum**, the first since 1995, we initiated a **large-scale transformation** of all government institutions.

Our new formula of **“a strong President – an influential Parliament – an accountable Government”** has significantly strengthened the system of checks and balances.

Five electoral processes have taken place in less than a year, including presidential, parliamentary, and local elections.

The President’s term in office has been irrevocably limited to a single seven-year period, ensuring the succession of power.

For the first time in our history, **six political parties** entered the lower house of Parliament, including opposition parties.

Human rights protection mechanisms have been significantly improved by re-establishing the **Constitutional Court**, banning the **death penalty**, and enshrining the **status of the Commissioner for Human Rights in our Constitution**.

In line with our international commitments to ensure the right to life and human dignity, Kazakhstan has instituted a **zero-tolerance** policy against **torture, ill-treatment and corruption** and strengthened its **national preventive mechanism**.

As we implement our reforms, we appreciate the **support and involvement of the OSCE**.

For example, the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media conducted a **legal review of our draft law “On Mass Media”**.

Just recently, we also have launched the exchange of views on drafting the law on religious activities.

Following our **constructive dialogue** with international institutions, including the OSCE, we have incorporated their recommendations into several government **action plans** and a recent **presidential decree on human rights**, signed last December.

Let me mention that a significant component of the action plan involves collaboration with the **UN and OSCE** in implementing its measures.

Our nation's democratic path is clear, yet the journey is not complete.

My main message today is that **democratic changes in my country have become irreversible.**

Ladies and gentlemen,

Kazakhstan has taken on global responsibilities, including, for example, by **chairing the OSCE** in 2010, serving on the **UN Security Council** from 2017 to 2018 or initiating the Congresses of Religious Leaders to promote interfaith dialogue.

We intend to step up our efforts to strengthen multilateralism and engagement.

In June, Kazakhstan will host the second **Astana International Forum.**

This year's event will provide yet another critical opportunity for the international community **to unite amid mounting challenges** to global security, stability, and prosperity.

We are glad that the **OSCE Secretary General** and the **High Commissioner for National Minorities** will join leaders from around the world at the AIF for meaningful discussions.

The Forum will mark another contribution by Kazakhstan to global diplomacy, as our country is also chairing several **key international organisations** this year, including the CICA, the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea, Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, Organisation of Turkic States, Collective Security Treaty Organisation and Islamic Organisation for Food Security.

**Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

To conclude, I wish to reiterate that Kazakhstan is a country **at peace with itself, its neighbours, and the world.**

We intend to keep it that way, **engaging constructively** with our international partners.

The OSCE **features prominently** in these plans.

Thank you.