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PROTECTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN, AT THE  
OSCE CHAIRMANSHIP CONFERENCE ON SECURITY  
IMPLICATIONS OF CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE OSCE REGION**

Bucharest, 5 and 6 October 2009

**Session 1: Climate change and security: challenges and opportunities in the  
OSCE region**

**Report to the Conference on the role of security in climate change in the OSCE region**

Kazakhstan: the impact of climate change and the measures adopted

Ladies and gentlemen,

Permit me to congratulate you on the opening of this Conference devoted to the role of security in climate change in the OSCE region.

I should like first of all to thank the Government of Romania for its hospitality and for giving us the opportunity to discuss our common problems and perspectives on resolving them.

There is no doubt about the relevance of the problems that are being discussed today. Global climate change has become one of the challenges facing all of humanity in the twenty-first century. It has led to the growth of nearly all of the dangerous hydrometeorological phenomena: floods, droughts, gale-force winds, heat waves and simply drastic changes in weather.

Kazakhstan is a country with an extreme continental climate which is very vulnerable to global climate change. We consider this problem as a likely constraint in terms of water supply and the use of transboundary watercourses; depletion of rangeland and arable land is possible, and deglaciation will lead to a change in water flows, especially in southern Kazakhstan. In addition, global climate change will affect and is already affecting the economic interests of the State as an exporter of energy and raw materials. While the problem of climate change is relatively new to Kazakhstan, the Government is already taking steps to counter it.

It is highly probable that moisture conditions in Kazakhstan will worsen. Based on the climate scenarios, it is expected that the borders of the humid zones will shift northwards by 100 to 300 km. All northern districts of Kazakhstan will be in the semi-arid zone, and the arid zone will occupy a wider territory. The steppe climate of the Zailiyskiy Alatau piedmont steppe will be transformed into a semi-desert and desert climate; this threatens to create food problems not only for Kazakhstan, but also for those countries which import grain from our country.

Climate change will have an effect on Kazakhstan's agriculture, timber industry and water management and on the health of the population. The spread of diseases which were not typical of our region is possible. The most critical problem is the degradation of mountain glaciation. On the northern slope of the Ileyskiy Alatau, glaciation may disappear by the end of the twenty-first century, and in the Zhetysuyskiy Alatau, within 40 years. Deglaciation will have an impact on river flows and lead to a shortage of water resources. In the estimation of Kazakhstan's glaciologists, if the pace of deglaciation is maintained, then in the next 10 to 15 years mountain river flows will decrease by 50 per cent and water resources may decrease by 20 to 40 per cent. Problems with water resources will undoubtedly have an impact on the region's food security.

Climate change will strengthen the processes of desertification and salinization and the erosion and leaching of organic substances from the soil; this has negative consequences, especially for Kazakhstan's agricultural sector.

As a country which has suffered harshly from environmental pollution, Kazakhstan knows from its own bitter experience about the consequences of ecological disasters, and it recognizes the need to combat global climate change, which has acquired the same priority as problems such as nuclear security and the evaporation of the Aral Sea. Kazakhstan has encountered such man-made catastrophes and needs to take measures to adapt to them and mitigate their consequences. As a gesture of good will, Kazakhstan has renounced nuclear weapons, thereby assuming responsibility towards humanity as a whole.

As a result of its consistent economic policy and the measures implemented by its Government, Kazakhstan is developing rapidly and participating actively in many international environmental initiatives and in the climate talks. Many of its ideas have been adopted by the parties and reflected in the rules and guidelines of the Kyoto Protocol.

In acknowledging responsibility for its use of energy resources and mineral wealth, Kazakhstan voluntarily undertook quantitative commitments to reduce atmospheric emissions. Kazakhstan is adopting laws and regulations which require our enterprises to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. The Oil Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan prescribes the compulsory utilization of associated gases by extraction industry companies, a measure that will significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

On 4 July 2009, the President of Kazakhstan signed the Law on Support for the Use of Renewable Sources of Energy. This law removes a number of organizational and financial barriers to the development of renewable energy sources and helps them to compete with traditional energy sources. The law will also help regional networks to reduce their losses and cut project costs. Work is under way on a draft law on energy efficiency and energy conservation. This law will promote the introduction of energy efficient technologies, make it possible for enterprises and the communal sector to save energy, increase production

efficiency, and help make Kazakhstan's economy more effective and consistent with the environmental standards of the leading countries of the world. There is great potential for saving energy in Kazakhstan. We intend to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the energy sector by modernizing traditional energy branches and making use of thermal waters and wind turbines as well as resource-saving and clean technologies. In 2006, in terms of purchasing power parity Kazakhstan spent the equivalent of 0.524 tons of oil per 1,000 United States dollars to achieve its gross domestic product (GDP); this is twice the average for economically developed countries.

Since Kazakhstan's energy sector is very much focused on coal, it is responsible for a large share of the country's greenhouse gas emissions. Kazakhstan's economic growth was due among other things to access to cheap coal and large reserves of carbon fuel. We now, however, understand the need to develop a low-carbon scenario. This kind of development will presuppose minimal emissions, while there will also have to be a severalfold increase in production efficiency. We are currently confronted with an imminent climate crisis, which is creating new challenges and which ultimately will change the face of energy around the world. As we see it, Kazakhstan must take into account the need for sustainable development and harmonization of global environmental protection policy. The transformation of the energy sector, the pursuit of a low-carbon policy, the adoption of urgent measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the implementation of measures to adapt to and prevent climate change processes – this is what is needed to deal with the problem of climate change.

On 4 May 1995, Kazakhstan ratified the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and on 26 March 2009 it ratified the Kyoto Protocol.

At the international level, three important decisions have been adopted regarding Kazakhstan:

- The Marrakesh decision, which identifies us as an Annex 1 country for the purposes of the Kyoto Protocol;
- The Nairobi decision, which sets 1992 as the baseline for Kazakhstan;
- The Poznan decision, in which Kazakhstan assumes voluntary quantitative commitments not to exceed the 1992 level of emissions during the period from 2008 to 2012.

According to the results of the annual national greenhouse gas inventory, our total greenhouse gas emissions in 1992 stood at an equivalent of 323.64 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub>; despite a considerable reduction in emissions during the period of transition to a market economy, beginning in 1998 a steady increase in the GDP was observed and, accordingly, in greenhouse gas emissions. As a country with an energy-intensive economy, Kazakhstan has nevertheless succeeded in reducing the carbon intensity of its GDP almost twofold by streamlining production structures and increasing market effectiveness. Our country will continue to work on introducing new technologies and renewable sources of energy to help us reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. Kazakhstan's aim of joining the 50 most competitive countries creates a stable trend towards low-carbon development in the long term.

At present, work is under way on a draft law on energy efficiency and energy conservation. This law is intended to promote energy efficient technologies, make it possible

for enterprises and the household sector to save energy, increase production efficiency and ultimately help to make Kazakhstan's economy more effective and consistent with the environmental standards of the world's leading countries.

Steps are also being taken in Kazakhstan to adapt to climate change, especially in the agricultural sector. Kazakhstan has recently begun to employ a system to insure crops against adverse weather conditions and fires. This system is a clear example of adapting oneself to climate change.

Sadly, mankind will hardly be able to completely prevent the predicted changes to our climate. We can, however, try to alleviate the effects of climate change and curb the rate at which temperatures rise so as to avoid dangerous and irreversible consequences in the future.

I am convinced that our joint solutions will open before us a new concept of the future. This must take the form of dynamic economic development in harmony with nature, development to ensure a worthy life for humanity. We are obliged to learn to use resources carefully and not push nature's patience to the limit.

We wish the participants in this Conference fruitful and successful work.

Thank you for your attention.