

Nations. We cannot meet new challenges and address acute problems of today, continuing to rely on old approaches. The central issue of international security is turning the United Nations into an effective tool designed to strengthen regional and global security systems and the regime of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and to manage globalization processes.

As a matter of principle, we consider it important to ensure a balance in the functioning of the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, as envisioned in the Charter of this Organization. We insist on the need to strengthen the role of the General Assembly in the settlement of the most important issues facing humanity today. In our view, the efforts of the international community to combat terrorism and settle armed conflicts can be more effective only on the basis of such an approach.

Kazakhstan has supported the Secretary-General's decision to establish a High-Level Panel on the United Nations reform. We believe that this Panel, with its broad mandate and large powers, should arrive at an acceptable solution to that crucial issue of today. Kazakhstan holds the view that, in its current form, the Security Council no longer reflects the realities of our world. I share the opinion of Prime Minister of Japan Mr. Junichiro Koizumi that the current Security Council is an important element of the reform. We believe

It is encouraging that the reform of the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the United Nations Security Council is gaining momentum. With the current escalation of international terrorism, the role of that Committee should become more important, otherwise global counter-terrorism efforts to address new challenges and threats would not be as effective, against the wishes of the peoples of the world.

Our country supports the United Nations peacekeeping effort and continued strengthening of its capacity in this area. In a situation of escalating humanitarian crises and armed conflicts, as effectively demonstrated by the developments in Darfur, the United Nations should pay special attention to the possibility of a broader participation of authoritative regional and subregional organizations in peacekeeping operations, which would allow to respond to emerging threats in a more effective and timely manner.

Yet a key issue is the prevention of conflicts and crises. For this reason, Kazakhstan is a firm supporter of preventive diplomacy and continues to believe that the establishment of a Chmehe Uns effy and

We believe that the negotiation process within the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva should be reactivated. In our view, the potential of that important forum is far from being tapped to the full extent.

The Government of Kazakhstan attaches great importance to the consistent implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons, as discussed at a regional conference in Almaty in March of 2004.

Mr. President,

For us it is very important that the Iraqi issue is again in the political realm of the United Nations. Emphasizing the need to ensure independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq, Kazakhstan welcomes the transfer of authority and responsibility for the administration of the country to the Interim Government of Iraq and calls on the people of Iraq to come together in the name of national unity and conciliation.

The participation of a unit of the armed forces of Kazakhstan in the multinational force in Iraq is a demonstration of our country's commitment to the implementation of its obligations in the maintenance of international peace and security.

drugs, illegal migration and surging religious extremism. Together with poverty, ecological degradation and the lack of water resources, these phenomena provide a breeding ground for international terrorism, which is gaining force in our region.

In view of that, Kazakhstan supports the activities of the United Nations Office on Drug and Crime in Central Asia, particularly the adoption of a regional plan of action to control the illicit spread of drugs in the states neighboring Afghanistan and the establishment of a so-called "security belt" around that country. We believe that the deployment in Afghanistan, under the auspices of NATO, of the International Security Assistance Force is an important factor in the restoration of peace and security in the country.

Mr. President,

Kazakhstan's initiative regarding the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building in Asia (CICA), already a fact of international life, is an effective tool designed to strengthen confidence and security in Asia. The first CICA summit, held in June of 2002, became a milestone in that process and paved the way for practical efforts to institutionalize the Conference. The draft catalogue of confidence-building measures and the draft rules of procedure have already been agreed and are expected to be adopted at a Ministerial Meeting of the CICA countries, scheduled to be held on October the 22nd in Almaty. The adoption of the catalogue will create a unique document encompassing a range of measures in the military, political, economic, cultural and environmental areas designed to strengthen security and confidence in Asia.

As a newly-independent state, Kazakhstan wants to contribute to global harmony and stability. The fact that our multi-ethnic state enjoys a large degree of inter-confessional and inter-ethnic accord says a lot; first of all, it is a confirmation that Kazakhstan has become an integral part of the civilized community. We categorically reject the concept of the "clash of civilizations," considering it to be counterproductive and harmful, because it serves as an ideological justification of international conflicts and barbaric actions of international terrorists. Kazakhstan firmly believes that a dialogue and harmony among civilizations are not only possible but also necessary. For that reason, the head of our state has initiated a congress of world religions, held in Astana in September of 2003. The success of that forum has strengthened our conviction that it is absolutely essential to establish a

dialogue and ensure peaceful coexistence between religions and civilizations, in the interests of peace and global security.

Kazakhstan reaffirms its strong commitment to integration and multilateral cooperation at the regional level. This approach, which promotes sustainable social and economic development of Kazakhstan, is fully in our long-term interests. Such institutions as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Eurasian Economic Community, the Organization of

and promising. We also attach great importance to the partnership between our region and the United States in order to create a zone of free trade and entrepreneurship.

The Almaty Programme of Action, adopted by the International Ministerial Conference on Transit Transport Cooperation, held in August of 2003 in our country, has provided to the landlocked Central Asian states an important tool for the solution of their trade and transit problems. We hope that the needs of inland states will be duly taken into account in trade negotiations in order to provide appropriate privileges and preferences to that group of countries.

It is a well-established fact that the transportation policy of many countries, including Kazakhstan, is closely linked to the delivery of hydrocarbons to world markets. As a country with a potential to become a major world exporter of oil and gas, Kazakhstan attaches great importance to the determination of the legal status of the Caspian Sea and to the signing of a Convention on that issue. An agreement by the littoral states on the use of the Caspian Sea exclusively for peaceful purposes has become an important accomplishment in the negotiation process. Kazakhstan holds the view that it is necessary to continue intensive efforts, in a five-party format, gradually overcoming existing differences in the search for solutions that would agree with the fundamental principles of international law and promote the final determination of the legal status of the Caspian Sea.

Kazakhstan is gravely concerned by the fate of another sea — the Aral Sea. The continued degradation of the environment of the region seriously affects the health and livelihood of the population. The situation in the Aral Sea region has acquired global dimensions: the salt from its seabed has long been present in the air in Europe and Asia and even over the North Pole. Yet the international community, unfortunately, is not fully aware of the grave ramifications of this environmental disaster: technical assistance and financial aid to the population of that long-suffering region has been sporadic. We believe that a special General Assembly resolution on the Aral Sea has long been overdue.

We also urge the international community to reactivate fruitful cooperation in the solution of social and economic problems facing the population around the former Semipalatinsk nuclear testing ground. The people of the region, unwittingly, have been victimized by some five

hundred nuclear-weapon tests conducted in the heat of the global arms race. We are grateful to the governments of Japan, the United States and other donor states for due attention being paid by them to this screaming problem: yet we believe that in this particular case multilateral cooperation would have been more effective. The framework for such cooperation is already in place in the form of a relevant General Assembly resolution, whose potential has not been used to the full extent.

In conclusion, dear colleagues, I would like to emphasize that Kazakhstan will continue to exert every effort to strengthen global and regional stability, fight terrorism and meet other challenges that we face today.

Thank you for your attention.