



CTBTO
PREPARATORY COMMISSION

COMPREHENSIVE
NUCLEAR-TEST-BAN
TREATY ORGANIZATION

**Joint Statement
by H.E. Mr. Yermek Kosherbayev,
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan
and Dr. Robert Floyd, Executive Secretary of
the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization**

Astana and Vienna, 29 August 2026

1. On this International Day against Nuclear Tests, established by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2009 at the initiative of the Republic of Kazakhstan, we reaffirm our commitment to achieving a world free of nuclear tests, and strive to strengthen our efforts to bring the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) into force.
2. 2026 marks several critical milestones for global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. On 29 August Kazakhstan will celebrate 35 years since the closure of the Semipalatinsk test site where, over four decades, more than 450 nuclear tests took place, providing a stark example of the dangerous consequences, human trauma, and environmental damage caused by nuclear testing. The closure of the Semipalatinsk test site sent a powerful political message and played a crucial role in broader global efforts that led to the adoption of the CTBT in 1996. Since then, Kazakhstan has consistently supported the Treaty and the build-up of its verification regime.
3. Thirty years ago, on 10 September 1996, the CTBT was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, and thereafter on 24 September opened for signature. Seventy-one states signed the Treaty on the opening day, and the number of signatures and ratifications has grown steadily ever since. Today, the Treaty has received 188 signatures and 179 ratifications and we continue to work towards its universalization and entry into force. We welcome the recent signature and ratification of the Treaty by the Kingdom of Tonga. Each additional commitment to the Treaty serves to reinforce the powerful norm that has been established against nuclear testing.
4. Further, 2026 marks the 20th anniversary of the Treaty of Semipalatinsk, signed on 8 September 2006, establishing the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone – a historic achievement and a testament to the region's commitment to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.
5. In this historic year, we welcome continued progress towards the completion of the CTBT's verification regime. With 308 facilities worldwide (293 monitoring stations and 15 radionuclide laboratories) now certified, the network is over 90 per cent complete. The International Monitoring System (IMS) is a unique global asset, contributing to peace and security, while also providing civil and scientific benefits for all.

6. Kazakhstan's practical contribution to strengthening the CTBT verification regime is reflected in the five IMS stations operated by the National Nuclear Center (NNC) of Kazakhstan. We commend the successful chairmanship of the Preparatory Commission's Working Group B by NNC Director General Mr. Erlan Batyrbekov for two consecutive terms.
7. In accordance with a decision of the Preparatory Commission for the CTBTO, four On-Site Inspection (OSI) field experiments were conducted in Kazakhstan, including at the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site, in 1999, 2002, 2005 and 2008. The 1999 field experiment in Kazakhstan was the first in the history of the CTBTO, while the 2008 exercise was the largest ever conducted and made a significant contribution to the refinement of OSI guidelines.
8. Building on these achievements, we look forward to the On-Site Inspection Integrated Field Exercise 2026 (IFE26), to be hosted by the Republic of Namibia in October 2026. IFE26 will be the third of its kind, following IFE08 in Kazakhstan and IFE14 in Jordan, and the first to be hosted in Africa. As OSI will constitute a vital component of the verification regime upon the Treaty's entry into force, IFE26 will provide a timely opportunity to demonstrate further progress in the development of OSI techniques and equipment, while strengthening national verification capabilities, and reinforcing confidence in the Treaty's verification regime.
9. We reaffirm the CTBT's role as a key pillar of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, alongside the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The CTBT represents an effective and practical measure in our pursuit of a world free from nuclear weapons tests.
10. Today, we extend an invitation to all States to participate in the high-level plenary meeting of the UN General Assembly to commemorate the International Day against Nuclear Tests, scheduled to be held at UN Headquarters in New York on 31 August 2026.
11. We call upon all States to uphold and reaffirm their existing moratoria on nuclear testing. Those States that have not yet signed and/or ratified the CTBT are encouraged to promptly do so. We urge the remaining Annex 2 States that are crucial for the Treaty's entry into force to demonstrate their commitment to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament by taking this significant step.
12. We welcome the messages of the President of the UN General Assembly and the UN Secretary-General on the occasion of the International Day against Nuclear Tests, and encourage all interested stakeholders, including diplomats, academia, media and non-governmental organizations, to raise awareness about the catastrophic dangers and risks of nuclear testing.
13. In this challenging time, the 30th anniversary of the opening for signature of the CTBT is a milestone to inspire and to motivate. The anniversary serves both as a reminder of what the global community has achieved, and as a call to action. To hold on to hard-fought gains. To renew momentum towards a world free of nuclear weapons. To bring the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty into force and to ensure a permanent and legally binding end to nuclear testing.