Statement
by H.E. Mrs. Byrganym Aitimova, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the United Nations at the First Committee thematic discussion on “Nuclear Weapons”
(14 October 2009, New York)

Mr. Chairman,
While the political atmosphere is the most favorable it has been in a decade for making progress toward a nuclear-weapon-free world, that progress is far from assured. States still possess thousands of this deadly type of weapons and the risk of their proliferation and acquisition by non-state actors persists.

Kazakhstan, strongly committed to the global processes of disarmament and non-proliferation from the very first days of its independence, considers the NPT as the main instrument of nuclear non-proliferation regime, based on three mutually reinforced pillars.

We stand for steady and gradual nuclear disarmament through the implementation of commitments by all NPT state parties - both nuclear and non-nuclear. Efforts should be consolidated at the NPT Review Conference in 2010 in order to agree upon concrete proposals that ensure the effectiveness and universality of the Treaty.

We support the urgent call upon all states to start as early as possible negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile materials, and the need to ensure the earliest entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

One of the considerable contributions made by Kazakhstan and the Central Asian states to the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament was this March’s entry into force of the Treaty on the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in our region. The First consultative meeting of the state parties of the Treaty will take place on 15 October of this year in Turkmenistan. We count on the support for the Central Asian zone, firstly, from the nuclear powers, meaning a possibility of providing negative security guarantees. Kazakhstan welcomes the convening of the Second Conference of States parties and signatories of the treaties that establish nuclear-weapon-free zones in New York in 2010.

Mr. Chairman,
Recognizing the right of any nation to develop nuclear technology for peaceful purposes under strict international control, Kazakhstan stands for peaceful resolution of the conflict situations that have arisen recently concerning nuclear programmes through diplomatic efforts and negotiations. In this regard and also taking into account a growing global demand for nuclear energy, we support the multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle and has expressed its readiness to host a nuclear fuel bank on its territory under the IAEA auspices.

Such a storage facility would enable countries to purchase nuclear fuel, decreasing the need for individual nations to develop their own enrichment programmes, and therefore contributing to the strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. We are convinced that Kazakhstan has all rights and prerequisites for this notion as one of the leading producers of natural uranium, and the state, which voluntarily refused to have nuclear weapons and fully implements its obligations under the provisions of the NPT.
Mr. Chairman,

Almost every single nation in its statements, including nuclear-weapons states, shared a vision of a nuclear-weapon-free world, the path to which may be long and hard but realistic. As the Secretary-General stated: "A world free of nuclear weapons is a global public good of the highest order."

In this regard, I have the honour to introduce a new draft resolution entitled "International day for a world free of nuclear weapons," contained in document A/C.1/64/L.14., under agenda item 96, on behalf of Belarus, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. The main objective of this draft resolution is to raise public awareness around the world about the threats and dangers of the existence of nuclear weapons and the need to consolidate global efforts towards this goal. It invites various actors to commemorate in an appropriate manner the International Day, especially through all means of education and public awareness-raising.

The draft resolution does not call upon states to disarm now, but rather will help everybody in moving towards this noble ideal. The significance of the date chosen for the International Day cannot be overestimated as it is the date of the closure of the world’s second largest nuclear test site on 29 August 1991, which also initiated a process of voluntary renunciation of one of the large nuclear arsenals in the world. A real life experience stands behind this date; 40 years of nuclear tests had been stopped on this day and set a stage for safe disposal of 104 SS-18 intercontinental ballistic missiles we had inherited from the past, each tipped with 10 nuclear warheads. The actions of such unprecedented scope, as well as the nature of consequences that could follow otherwise, do seem to deserve global recognition.

It is our sincere hope that the resolution will receive full support of member states, which will prove the real desire and will of the international community to attain "a world free of nuclear weapons" goal.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.