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**Informal Workshop on Good Practices and Lessons Learned**

**with respect to the Existing Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones**

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*Theme 3: How zones address transit, visitation and overflight; regulation of exclusive economic zones and the high seas*

*Topic: How the Central Asian nuclear-weapon-free zone treaty deals with transit and visitation*

**Distinguished colleagues,**

I would like to thank the United Nations Office on Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) for organizing such an important event and inviting me to speak as a panelist on several topics. I am confident that this workshop will substantially contribute to strengthening the cooperation between all of the nuclear-weapon-free zones. Let me briefly share our experience of creating a nuclear-weapon-free zone in our region.

The Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia(CANWFZ) was signed by five Central Asian States on September 8, 2006 in Semipalatinsk (Kazakhstan), which is deeply symbolic for the process of nuclear disarmament.

The Semipalatinsk Treaty has a number of unique features. It has established the first nuclear-free zonein the northern hemisphere and in a region, which once served as a ground for active deployment and testing of nuclear weapons, and where existed extensive uranium mining for military purposes. Therefore this zone lays down obligations for the ecological rehabilitation of uranium tailings and nuclear test sites. Moreover, among other NWFZs the Central Asia has the longest common land border with two nuclear power states. In addition, it is completely landlocked region.

We are actively working on strengthening the coordination within our zone, as well as promoting the “Treaty on cooperation in preventing illicit trafficking in nuclear materials and combating nuclear terrorism of the Parties to the Central Asian Treaty on the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone".

Regarding the topic - how the Central Asian nuclear-weapon-free zone treaty deals with transit and visitation, I would like to underline the following.

According to Article 2 of the Treaty, “the scope of application of a Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone is defined exclusively for the purposes of this Treaty as the land territory, all waters (harbors, lakes, rivers and streams) and the air space above them, which belong to the five states of the region *–* Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan".

The issues of transit, visits and flights under the Treaty are governed by the provisions of Articles 4 and 9. The legal actions of foreign ships, aircraft and land vehicles are reflected in Article 4, which states that “without prejudice to the purposes and objectives of this Treaty, each Party, in the exercise of its sovereign rights, is free to resolve issues related to transit through its territory by air, land or water, including visits by foreign ships to its ports and landing of foreign aircraft at its airfields."

Here, I would like to note that during the negotiations on the Treaty on prohibition of nuclear weapons (TPNW) Kazakhstan has repeatedly proposed to include ban on transit and transshipment of nuclear weapons.

Also transit mentioned in the interpretive statement made by Russian Federation at the signing ceremony of the NSA Protocol to the Semipalatinsk Treaty which includes the following: “possible failure to abide may be the entry into ports, landing or transit to the airfields of the Central Asian republics of foreign military vessels and aircraft with nuclear weapons”. Conceivably, such statement should be considered as an indirect prohibition of transit of nuclear weapons or nuclear explosive devices.

In terms of nuclear materialsthat are in the process of internal transportation and/or stored by one of the partiesto the Treaty, article 9 of the Treaty provides a clear obligation for the parties to “strictly apply physical protection measures with respect to such materials that are not inferior in effectiveness to the measures provided for in the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material of 1987, as well as in recommendations and guidelines developed by the IAEA regarding physical protection." The same obligations are defined for the international transport of nuclear facilities in the territory of one of the parties to the Treaty.

In this regard, when drafting the provisions of the Treaty on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other types of WMD in the Middle East or any other region of the world, comprehensive and explicit provisions on transit issues should be foreseen in advance.

I will be talking on another topic - how the Central Asian States navigated their partnerships with nuclear-weapon States while successfully obtaining security assurances, in my next presentation at the following session.

**Thank you for your attention.**