

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
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REMARKS

**Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton
and Kazakh Foreign Minister Saudabayev
at Press Conference after their Meeting**

Palace of Independence
Astana, Kazakhstan
December 1, 2010

MODERATOR: (Via translator) Welcome to (inaudible) Chairman of the OSCE, State Secretary and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan Saudabayev and U.S. Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton.

FOREIGN MINISTER SAUDABAYEV: (Via translator) (Inaudible), first of all, to thank you for your great interest in the work of this Astana summit, and wish you fruitful work in the capital of Kazakhstan.

A meeting of the head of our state, Nazarbayev, and the head of the U.S. delegation at this summit, Mrs. Hillary Clinton, has just finished. And, as President Nazarbayev stressed, the participation of State Secretary Clinton in this (inaudible) summit is one more testimony to the fact that our strategic partnership between our two countries has been further developed.

At the meeting there was a deep and detailed exchange of opinions on the most topical issues of this Astana summit, which was (inaudible) important political results. The two sides have agreed that Kazakhstan's effective chairmanship, including this first summit, OSCE Summit in the 21st century, is giving an impetus to the further development of cooperation in the OSCE space.

Another part of this summit is the response to transnational threats, especially from outside the OSCE area; above all, from Afghanistan. The situations in Kyrgyzstan and Central Asian countries has been discussed.

It was stressed that, in order to achieve stability and sustainable development of the region's countries -- thought through policies important and the rule of law, as well as implementation of human rights. The two parties agreed that development is only achieved through the rule of law with strong democratic institutions. As far as the humanitarian dimension is concerned, it was noted that Kazakhstan chairmanship was trying to achieve interaction with civil society, and through the participation of NGOs in OSCE work, also at this summit.

It was also stressed how important it was to normalize relations of the Islamic world with the West, and to achieve an effective dialogue between civilizations and to increase tolerance. These are issues that are always in the central focus of the Presidents Nazarbayev and Barack Obama. And Kazakhstan will continue to promote those issues.

As the chairman of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, we have paid a lot of attention to further development of the strategic partnership between our two countries, including in such areas like security, political independence, economic and trade relations, as well as promotion of democracy. We have reconfirmed our determination to continue our cooperation in the area of nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament, including the celebration of a Nuclear Security Summit.

At the meeting in Washington in April this year, at the meeting of the two presidents it was also stressed to take Kazakhstan in the economic area is contributing to the implementation of the joint initiative of the United Nations and the United States on global food security. And this connection of two countries has recently started to implement major projects for agriculture that would profit from the most up-to-date U.S. technologies. Nazarbayev also established a university that established good cooperation with the leading U.S. universities. And this opens up better prospects for technological cooperation.

Kazakhstan has highly appreciated the support provided for security in Afghanistan in -- the two sides also stressed an important contribution of Kazakhstan to assistance to Afghanistan.

Our country also hosts 1,000 Afghani students to complete their university studies at a cost of 50 million U.S. dollars. Fifty-five Afghans have already started their studies.

And Kazakhstan has now -- has joined the security forces, international security forces, in Afghanistan.

I am quite convinced that today's meeting between President Nazarbayev and State Secretary Clinton has given a new impetus to the entire development of the -- in the entire area of our bilateral relations.

Distinguished State Secretary, let me welcome you once again, from the bottom of my heart, in this capital of Astana. You, being an international personality and a great friend of Kazakhstan, we are very thankful to you for your consistent support and help that we have noticed in very specific ways during our chairmanship at the OSCE. And I would like to express my hope that we continue our fruitful and effective cooperation for the good of our peoples and countries. And I give you the floor. Thank you. (Applause.)

This applause is a sign of your support of our cooperation.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, let me begin by expressing what a pleasure it is for me to be here in Astana. And I want to thank the president, the foreign minister, and the

people of Kazakhstan for their hospitality and warm welcome. I fondly remember my first visit here in the 1990s, when Kazakhs were just beginning to chart their new course as an independent nation. I was proud that the United States was the first country to recognize Kazakhstan, and to welcome you into the community of nations. And today Kazakhs can be proud of all you have accomplished, and our two nations can be confident in the strength of our strategic partnership.

The relationship between the United States and Kazakhstan is rooted in mutual respect and mutual interest. Kazakhstan may be a young nation, but it is home to an ancient and rich culture, which I saw for myself at the museum in Almaty 13 years ago. America is still a relatively young country, yet we deeply respect the hopes of the people of Kazakhstan, and your aspirations for a better future, and we seek to broaden our partnership and to work with you to continue making progress toward developing into a stable, secure, democratic, and prosperous nation that is a leader in the region and beyond.

We also look forward to cooperating with the Kazakh private sector and NGOs that are working for free markets, the rule of law, and a vibrant civil society in which citizens can exercise their full range of human rights. These goals will take continued hard work. But America believes in Kazakhstan's promise, and we are committed to your future.

Today's OSCE Summit is a testament to both Kazakhstan's valued role in the international community, and the strong ties between our two countries. As the first former Soviet Republic to lead the OSCE as an independent nation, Kazakhstan has helped to focus attention on Central Asia's challenges, as well as its many opportunities.

As the foreign minister said, we have discussed security, the economy, the environment, democracy, human rights, and tolerance. The United States is committed to the OSCE, and we and our partners are working to empower it to take an even more effective role, including the encouragement of more transparency and cooperation between and among militaries, helping resolve long-standing conflicts, and standing up against attacks on civil society and journalists. Our discussions here in Astana have been constructive and substantive.

Last night, I met with many of the participants who took part in the independent conference of non-governmental organizations that ran parallel with the summit. I was impressed by their effort and energy on crucial challenges, including protecting fundamental freedoms. They know what we all know, that a thriving civil society is a vital building block of democracy, and that disparate, diverse voices must be heard and supported.

In the discussion that I had with both the president and the foreign minister, I thanked Kazakhstan for your support of the international mission in Afghanistan, and for all you are doing to help the Afghan people, particularly the very kind invitation for 1,000 students to continue their education here, in Kazakhstan. This will enable these young people to contribute to Afghanistan's development. I also thanked Kazakhstan for the

recently concluded air transit agreement that will help ensure the delivery of critical resources to Afghanistan, and I welcomed Kazakhstan as the newest member of the International Security Assistance Force, which now includes 49 countries.

We discussed our shared interest in curbing nuclear proliferation, and safeguarding vulnerable nuclear material. Kazakhstan has long been a leader on this issue, and the United States deeply values our partnership. Along with the United Kingdom, our nations recently secured more than 10 metric tons of highly-enriched uranium, and 3 metric tons of weapons-grade plutonium here in Kazakhstan. That is enough material to have made 775 nuclear weapons. And now we are confident it will never fall into the wrong hands. This is a milestone of our cooperation, and a major step forward in meeting the goals set at this year's Nuclear Security Summit of securing all nuclear material within four years.

I also shared with the minister and the president the discussions that I have had with civil society leaders. I expressed our continued interest in Kazakhstan's national human rights action plan, and reforms to electoral, political, and libel laws. I assured him that America's commitment to working with Kazakhstan and the other nations of Central Asia to advance democracy and human rights will not end when the summit is over.

On all of these and other fronts, Kazakhstan and the United States are making progress together. The bonds we are forging between our governments and our peoples are making both of our countries -- and, indeed, the region and the world -- more secure and prosperous. And surrounded by the energy and optimism that one feels in this new dynamic city, I look forward with confidence to a positive future for Kazakhstan and its people.

So again, Minister, let me thank you for your leadership and your hospitality.
(Applause.)

FOREIGN MINISTER SAUDABAYEV: (Via translator) Thank you very much. Please ask questions. According to the law of hospitality, first I give the floor to our guests.

MODERATOR: (Via translator) Mr. Burns, please.

QUESTION: A question for Secretary Clinton. Thank you. On Iran, now that the date has been set for talks in Geneva -- although it's not clear that the agenda itself has been agreed -- can you say what exactly it is that the United States hopes and expects to achieve? And also, given the outcome a year ago, when an apparent agreement unraveled rather quickly, is this really Iran's last chance? Thank you.

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, Bob, first, we are encouraged that Iran has agreed to meet in Geneva next week with representatives of the P-5+1. This is an opportunity for Iran to come to the table and discuss the matters that are of concern to the international community: first and foremost, their nuclear program.

The agreement you referred to that was a result of the negotiations of last fall, the so-called Tehran Research Reactor agreement, will certainly be discussed, but would have to be modified in order to take into account what is known through the IAEA and other sources of the developments in Iran's nuclear program since that agreement was first reached and then not implemented.

The international community has been very clear. Iran is entitled to the use of civil nuclear power for peaceful purposes. It is not, however, entitled to a nuclear weapons program. And the purpose of the negotiations will be to underscore the concern of the entire international community in Iran's actions and intentions. We hope that Iran will enter into these negotiations in the spirit that they are offered. We want to see Iran take a position as a responsible member of the international community. But in order to do that, it must cease violating international obligations, cease any efforts it is making and has made in the past toward achieving nuclear weapons.

So, that is what we will be focused on. And the agenda can be more comprehensive than that, but that is the principal purpose of the meeting in Geneva.

QUESTION: (Via translator) I have a question for Mr. Saudabayev. It is known that Kazakhstan is going to be succeeded as chairmanship, but will remain a member of the troika, of the threesome of the OSCE. Could you please tell us in which areas are you going to work next year?

FOREIGN MINISTER SAUDABAYEV: (Via translator) Kazakhstan is going to continue being active as a member of the OSCE, and to contribute towards the search for solutions of problems, and the implementation of the decisions to be taken at this summit. For one year we will remain a troika member. And the processes that we hope to have been given an impetus will be continued further by our successors, and we will continue to work together in close contact with them.

And as to the internal life of our country, the processes have become (inaudible) as part of our further development of our country and the economic and social area, as well as the democratic development. As part of the implementation of the national program "The Way to Europe," this is also going to be continued.

MODERATOR: (Via translator) Mr. Andy Quinn is an American press member.

QUESTION: Madam Secretary, this trip has given you your first chance to meet personally with foreign leaders following the Wikileaks release over the weekend. I am wondering if you could tell us how much of a topic it's been in your discussions, what sort of responses you may have heard. And has anyone expressed any worry about U.S. trustworthiness, going forward?

And, for the minister, your government saw some embarrassing details also come to light in the Wikileaks release. What is your reaction to this? And do you feel that this

type of release will change the way the U.S. is perceived as a diplomatic partner, going forward?

SECRETARY CLINTON: Well, Andy, I have had the opportunity to meet with many leaders here at the summit in Astana. We have talked about many important issues, and the work that we are doing together to solve global problems. I have certainly raised the issue of the leaks in order to assure our colleagues that it will not in any way interfere with American diplomacy or our commitment to continuing important work that is ongoing. I have not had any concerns expressed about whether any nation will not continue to work with and discuss matters of importance to us both, going forward.

As I have said, I am proud of the work that American diplomats do, and the role that America plays in the world. Both President Obama and I are committed to a robust and comprehensive agenda of engagement. It's one of the reasons that I am here in Astana at the OSCE Summit. And I am confident that the work that our diplomats do every single day will go forward. And I anticipate that there will be a lot of questions that people have every right and reason to ask, and we stand ready to discuss them at any time with our counterparts around the world.

FOREIGN MINISTER SAUDABAYEV: (Via translator) I believe that what has happened is part of a normal cost, or a normal price, that one has occasionally to pay while we lead our work. That is why we will be able to live through this incident, as we have through others. And, as head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in my country, now declare that this will have no effect for our strategic partnership between the United States and Kazakhstan. Thank you.

MODERATOR: (Via translator) One question from the Kazakhstan members of the press.

QUESTION: (Via translator) I have a question to both the Secretary of State and Mr. Saudabayev. It has been mentioned that right after the meeting between the two presidents, Nazarbayev and Obama (inaudible). I still would like to know what is going to happen next, apart from the operation on the Nazarbayev's university and the plans for agricultural cooperation. Are there any other agreements or projects to be implemented between our two countries? And what could prevent them from happening? Any -- is there anything subjective that -- or personal -- that might affect those plans?

And one more question to State Secretary Clinton. It is known that some amendments to the act on cyber space have been adopted in the United States that would entitle the U.S. President to regulate the exchange of information in the Internet. I would like to know more about this concerning the amendments to the act on cyber space. Thank you.

FOREIGN MINISTER SAUDABAYEV: (Via translator) At this briefing, we don't have the opportunity to discuss prospects for general cooperation and specific areas of cooperation in our bilateral relations, because this is a huge area that has several

dimensions. I can only take note that we have, once again, reconfirmed that we both have a very optimistic outlook, as far as our bilateral relations are concerned, and we have a lot of potential in this area. Thank you.

SECRETARY CLINTON: And I would add we discuss not only the importance of our strategic partnership between our two countries, but how the United States and Kazakhstan can work together in the region and beyond. We value Kazakhstan's role and influence in the region. It was critical, after the events of last spring affecting Kyrgyzstan, to have Kazakhstan play a leadership role. The United States worked closely with Kazakhstan. The Minister and I talked several times about what Kazakhstan was doing to assist Kyrgyzstan, and we are continuing to work together and supporting Kazakhstan's influential position in trying to help stabilize Kyrgyzstan.

We discussed further what additional regional steps might be considered to better integrate the Central Asian nations. I believe that this is an important area of the world. Kazakhstan has done well, economically, and with its development. Now we need to see how to work together to assist the other nations in the region to develop more successfully and inclusively.

With regard to cyber security and cyber space, the United States is, like many nations, addressing the opportunities and the challenges and the threats that are posed in cyber space. We want the Internet to be a vehicle for the free exchange of information, yet we are well aware of the dangers that can be posed to the misuse of the Internet to all kinds of institutions and networks. And so this is not only a matter of concern for the United States; we think this deserves attention at the highest international levels, and that is beginning to occur.

MODERATOR: (Via translator) Thank you very much. That will be it. We don't have any time left. Thank you.