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**Text of the video address
by President Nursultan Nazarbayev
on the occasion of Kazakhstan's assumption of
the Chairmanship of the OSCE
January 2010**

Your excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Kazakhstan is assuming the extremely important mission of the Chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) with a sense of great responsibility.

Our country will embark on its Chairmanship during one of the most complicated periods in modern history.

Because of the global financial and economic crisis, tectonic shifts are taking place in the global order, and this process is still far from completion.

The erosion of the regime of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism, humanitarian and ecological disasters, famine, poverty, epidemics, depletion of energy resources, conflicts based on interethnic and interreligious differences—such is a far from complete list of the challenges faced by modern civilization that call for maximum efforts by multilateral institutions of high standing like the OSCE.

There is no doubt that the current world situation makes even more arduous the test which Kazakhstan, as a country chairing the OSCE, will have to pass. However, the most pressing problems that the OSCE is now facing have always been at the heart of our foreign policy.

Since its independence, Kazakhstan has made a real contribution to strengthening regional and global security. The shutdown of the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site, the voluntary renunciation of the world's fourth largest nuclear and missile arsenal and the complete elimination of its infrastructure are historic decisions that our country has taken.

Recently, at Kazakhstan's initiative, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution proclaiming the 29th of August the International Day against Nuclear Tests.

Kazakhstan is fully aware of its role as a responsible player in regional and global economic processes. As a country exporting increasing volumes of hydrocarbons to the world market, our country makes a significant contribution to ensuring global energy security, including that of the European countries.

As a major exporter of grain and other foodstuffs, Kazakhstan is actively promoting the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in order to end hunger and ensure food security.

The Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA), convened at Kazakhstan's initiative, has now become a unique multilateral instrument for Asian security and co-operation.

Today, this forum, which is an OSCE analogue for Asia, brings together countries which account for one third of the world's GDP, with a total population of approximately three billion people.

The top priority for Kazakhstan is the sustainable development of Central Asia. The growth of our economy positively affects the region as a whole.

Together with other OSCE participating States, Kazakhstan fully supports efforts aimed at bringing the East and West together in order to develop a better understanding of the key issues confronting the modern world.

The multiethnic and multireligious composition of our population is a special trait of our country. Representatives of more than 140 nationalities and 40 confessions live together as one big family in Kazakhstan.

Our model of interethnic and interreligious accord is Kazakhstan's real contribution to the global process of interaction between different religions. At my initiative, since 2003, Astana has hosted three Congresses of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, which have created a unique forum for interfaith dialogue.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Against this background, we consider the OSCE, with its unique geographical coverage, its experience of interaction and the instruments it has developed, to be one of the key mechanisms for ensuring international security and co-operation. It is an organization that has played and continues to play an important role in maintaining the security architecture in the area from Vancouver to Vladivostok.

At the same time, the positive historical resources of the OSCE are limited. Today, it is not permissible to carry on endlessly drawing the so-called "red lines" and playing the "zero-sum games" which have diminished its credibility.

Improving the effectiveness of international organizations in meeting new global challenges has come to the fore. That is the precise task of the OSCE, which is a unique platform for dialogue bringing together 56 States located on three continents.

The decisive question for the OSCE in the future will be whether it can convert itself into a structure that recognizes the diversity of the world in the 21st century, or whether it will continue to be an organization segmented into blocs, where the West remains aloof from the space "east of Vienna"?

Stereotypes of the "former Soviet republics" continue to dominate the minds of some of our OSCE partners despite the fact of our almost 20 years of experience of integration into the global democratic community.

In this context, the trust bestowed on us by the OSCE participating States bears a special importance for Kazakhstan. Building a democratic society has been a conscious choice of our people, and we will pursue further political liberalization of our country and seek to improve the quality of life of the people of Kazakhstan. Our OSCE Chairmanship is looked upon in the country not only as a foreign policy success, but also as a valuable national achievement in its own right.

In accordance with OSCE traditions, we hereby wish to declare the motto of our Chairmanship, reflecting the symbolic identification of Kazakhstan as the chairing nation.

The motto of Kazakhstan's Chairmanship will be four Ts, namely, "Trust", "Tradition", "Transparency" and "Tolerance". The first T refers to the trust that is necessary for all of us. The second one refers to our commitment to the fundamental principles and values of the OSCE. The third one conveys maximum openness and

transparency in international relations, free from “double standards” and “dividing lines”, as well as a focus on constructive co-operation in order to address challenges and threats to security.

Finally, the fourth T reflects global trends towards a strengthening of intercultural and intercivilizational dialogue, which is gaining major importance in today’s world.

Kazakhstan considers expanding and strengthening the consensus base on fundamental issues of development to be one of the key tasks for the OSCE. The 10-year interval since the last OSCE summit is an illustration of the fact that the consensus base is in stagnation, if not in crisis. In this regard, we call upon the OSCE participating States to support Kazakhstan’s initiative urging the convening of a summit in 2010.

Such a meeting of OSCE leaders would afford an opportunity to celebrate the 35th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act, the 20th anniversary of the Charter of Paris and the 65th anniversary of the end of World War II.

The agenda of the summit could include topical security issues in the OSCE area of responsibility, as well as the situation in Afghanistan and issues relating to tolerance.

Now is the time when the leaders of the OSCE participating States should demonstrate their political will and focus on solutions to the difficult challenges facing our nations.

A summit would not only give a powerful impetus to adapting the OSCE to modern challenges and threats, but would also increase the confidence and respect enjoyed by the Organization itself among our peoples.

Finally, it is the direct responsibility of the Heads of State or Government to work towards strengthening security and co-operation for the benefit and prosperity of the people who elect them.

Meanwhile, the OSCE is an organization that cannot be replaced. Its stagnation or disappearance would create a volatile vacuum in the Euro-Atlantic area.

In this context, we suggest declaring August 1st, the day of the signing of the Helsinki Final Act, to be OSCE Day.

Kazakhstan will try to focus on achieving the optimum balance among all three OSCE “baskets”. Such an approach would make it possible to see problems in their entirety, and not only to effectively confront external manifestations of modern challenges and threats, but also to tackle their roots.

Kazakhstan as the holder of the OSCE Chairmanship is firmly committed to the fundamental principles and values of the OSCE. We intend to find mutually acceptable solutions in the interests of all the participating States of the Organization.

Kazakh folk wisdom says: “*Birlik bolmay tirlik bolmas* - Without unity, there can be no life.” Our country considers the OSCE in the 21st century as a single space of democracy, stability and prosperity for all the peoples living in it.

I thank you for your attention. I wish you every success in the New Year.