



## **Kazakhstan’s Successful Two-Years Membership in the United Nations Security Council**

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In 2018, the Republic of Kazakhstan successfully completed its two-year membership of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Over this period, Astana acted as an honest broker, known for its effective balanced approach and neutrality against all international actors.

In just two years, representatives of Kazakhstan took part in more than 1,000 open and closed UNSC meetings, 38 informal events, and contributed to 115 resolutions and 48 statements of the Council Presidency.

The top event of Kazakhstan's UNSC chairmanship, in January 2018, was the high-level thematic briefing “Non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction: confidence-building measures” chaired by President Nazarbayev. The meeting demonstrated that confidence-building measures, as well as the strengthening of preventive diplomacy tools, can serve as a starting point for making progress on many critical issues that may not be resolved in a timely manner due to the political situation in relations among world powers. Following that

meeting, it was adopted a unique document – the “Statement by the President of the UN Security Council”, which was devoted to a comprehensive conflict prevention strategy. In this document, among other issues, Kazakhstan as one of the supporters of reform of the United Nations Security Council by expanding its quantitative and qualitative composition, urged the Secretary-General to continue his efforts “to make the United Nations more coherent and integrated, effective and efficient”.

According to Astana, it was necessary to make the Security Council truly representative by expanding its permanent and non-permanent membership by bringing in representatives from all regions of the world, including Africa, Latin America and South-East Asia. At the same time, the country advocated for the need of a package reform, which addressed the issues of the right of veto, the relationship between the General Assembly and the Security Council.

Kazakhstan was “challenged” to work in a deeply divided Security Council, in which China and Russia repeatedly clashed with

the United States. However, the Central Asian country demonstrated its diplomatic prowess and further solidified its status as a responsible member of the international community. For example, during its non-permanent membership of the UNSC, Kazakhstan, being convinced that nuclear disarmament requires a phased approach, patience, mutual concessions and good faith by all interested parties, refused the U.S. proposals for applying stronger economic pressure on North Korea and warned against a military solution to the problem. At the same time, Astana rejected Chinese and Russian calls on UN to ease North Korea sanctions. Instead of this, Kazakhstan proposed developing a roadmap for the phased denuclearisation of the DPRK with the provision of reliable security assurances from the nuclear powers in response to the full implementation by Pyongyang of all its obligations and a return to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Moreover, Kazakhstan took a similarly neutral position on the Syrian issue. Astana, on behalf of the developing world, did not support the U.S. resolution aiming to establish a new mechanism for investigating chemical attacks in Syria. But it also abstained on the Russian resolution which condemned “the aggression” against Syria by the United States and its allies.

Kazakhstan has remained committed to the peaceful resolution of the Syrian crisis. This is why Astana was originally offered as a platform for the talks under the Astana Process, which led to the Syrian government directly sitting down with the armed opposition groups for the first time. A total of 65 armed opposition groups (out of around 100 operating in Syria) have participated in the talks. The Astana Process has become an important supplement to the UN-led Geneva talks. As

of today, eleven rounds of negotiations have been held in Astana and the 12th will be held in March 2019. One of the most tangible results of the process has been the creation and effective functioning of the de-escalation zones. Despite the on-going violence, 2017 saw the lowest number of civilian casualties in Syria since the start of the conflict.

Another milestone of Kazakhstan’s membership in the UNSC – the Code of Conduct for the Achievement of a Terrorism-Free World- was signed by more than 70 countries from different regions of the world.

The creation of a regional zone of peace, security, cooperation and development in Central Asia was another priority for Kazakhstan during its UNSC membership. In this regard, Kazakhstan focused on providing diverse assistance to Afghanistan. During Kazakhstan’s presidency, the members of the Security Council visited Afghanistan for the first time in several years in order to gain a greater understanding of the situation on the ground.

Overall, Kazakhstan has impartially, openly and transparently worked on the UN Security Council, focusing on practical results and striving to make a constructive contribution to the Council on all issues on the agenda.

Taking into account the success of the events initiated by the Kazakh delegation and its constructive approaches, the presence of Kazakhstan in the Security Council showed that such countries could contribute not only by increasing the efficiency of conflict resolution processes, but in general, they might change the approaches to building a common understanding on a new world order.