



Cooperation Between the U.S. and Kazakhstan Against the Threat of Weapons of Mass Destruction

Robert G. Joseph, Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security

Remarks at Ulba Blend Down Ceremony

Ust Kamenogorsk, Kazakhstan

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(As prepared)

Good Afternoon Mr. President. It is a pleasure to be in [Kazakhstan](#) and experience the warm hospitality of your great country. Minister Tokayev, Minister Shkolnik, Senator Nunn, Mr. Turner, distinguished guests. I am pleased to be with you today to commemorate another landmark in cooperation between the United States and Kazakhstan against the threat of weapons of mass destruction.

It is my particular privilege to present to you, Mr. President, a letter from President Bush, which underscores the importance he places on our continuing work together. Allow me to read that letter:

Dear Mr. President:

I send greetings to you and those gathered in Ust-Kamenogorsk to mark Kazakhstan's continued success in converting nuclear material to peaceful and productive uses.

Kazakhstan has been a leader in countering the threat of weapons of mass destruction. With help from the Nunn-Lugar program, Kazakhstan has eliminated the weapons of mass destruction and related infrastructure inherited from the Soviet Union.

More remains to be done, and I look forward to continuing our two nations' cooperation to eliminate trafficking in weapons of mass destruction.

Sincerely,
George W. Bush

The new downblending facility, which we saw today, is turning fuel that was to be used to breed weapons-grade plutonium, into low-enriched uranium to produce electric power. It is especially fitting that this same facility was the site of one of our greatest joint accomplishments: Project Sapphire -- the removal of over one-half-ton of highly-enriched uranium to make it available only for peaceful nuclear fuel, and not for the deadly purposes of terrorists or those who support them.

Mr. President, you and your government demonstrated from the earliest days of independent Kazakhstan that your real strength would come not from retaining deadly arsenals, but from cooperating with the world community to reduce and counter such threats.

Mr. President, you have ended the weapons legacy which you inherited from the Soviet Union. This is an important accomplishment for which we pause today to acknowledge. As we complete that work, we should seize the opportunity to cooperate more broadly against global proliferation. By transforming the facilities and expertise in your country, which once were used for weapons, you set the example for others of how to effectively transform weapons for peaceful purposes.

There is far more that we can and should do together -- bilaterally, with regional partners, and with the broader international community. I applaud Kazakhstan's endorsement of the [Proliferation Security Initiative](#), which is one tool in ending the trafficking of weapons of mass destruction. I look forward to ever closer cooperation to reduce and end the traffic in weapons of mass destruction related materials and equipment, and their means of delivery. Our cooperation of the last 12 years is a solid basis on which to build future counterproliferation efforts. The future of our strong partnership has never been brighter.

Thank you.

