

**Statement by Mr. Alzhan Braliyev,
Vice-Minister of Environment Protection of the
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Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to congratulate you on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan on your election to the chairmanship of the 15th session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development and to express our confidence that your stewardship will allow the Commission to achieve successful results.

Sustainable development in the world is the process that, by well-known definition, should satisfy demands of the current generation without putting at risk opportunities open to the generations to come. And since we all live on the planet that has limited resources, it is important that each country should take practical actions on national, regional and global levels to ensure environment protection and sustainable development.

Transition of the Republic of Kazakhstan to sustainable development is a vital necessity. It is important because high economic growth in our country requires taking further steps in lowering irrational energy consumption by the national economy, improving environment in Central Asian region, and strengthening of Kazakhstan's actions along with international efforts to prevent climate change.

For that reason on the 14th of November 2006, the President our country signed the Concept of Transition of the Republic of Kazakhstan to Sustainable Development for the period of 2007-2024 and approved the framework of state policy.

The Concept of Sustainable Development is an important document since it addresses such issues as economy diversification, social and demographic situation, including measures to increase life expectancy, issues of ecology and environment protection, and gradual increase in the use of renewable energy sources. It provides a clear mechanism for institutional facilitation, economic stimulation, and development of a legal framework.

The Concept defines the vision of principles, goals, tasks and basic mechanisms for achieving sustainability in all sectors of the country's economy. That requires integration of economic, social, environmental and political factors of development and consideration of these factors as unified coherent process, aimed at improving quality of life of the people of Kazakhstan.

Despite the fact that fossil fuel-based energy resources continue to play predominant role in the energy supply of the country, Kazakhstan has the great potential for renewable sources of energy, such as – solar, wind, biomass, geothermal and others. Such a potential of using alternative resources will support all economy sectors development. These are the most important aspects of national economy development and a basis for the country's long term energy safety.

Economic growth due to exploitation of natural resources could be beneficial only at a certain stage of development. In modern conditions for achieving growth and development, advanced models of energy efficiency and environmentally clean breakthrough technologies are vitally important.

For the first time, the Concept of Sustainable Development provides targeted indicators till 2024. By that year no less than 5% of national energy consumption will be provided by the alternative sources. Kazakhstan is ready to establish regional centers for energy efficiency and renewable resources.

In December 2006, the Ecological Code was adopted, the first one in the Central Asian region. It encompasses all issues related to ecology and environment protection and we view it as the key instrument for implementation of the Concept of Sustainable Development. The Code was prepared in accordance with environmental legislation and norms of the world's most competitive countries and has various novelties such as incentives for using best available and clean technologies, basic principles of sustainable development, and mechanisms for preventing climate change.

Stability of water resources in the Central Asian region is vital as the key factor of sustainable development. Nowadays, water challenges show more and more inherent trans-boundary character. For that reason, the most significant national document – the President's Address to the Nation "New Kazakhstan in the New World" touches upon the idea of establishing trans-boundary zones of sustainable development by eco-basin principle. We expect to create one of the eight such zones in the Ilek River basin, which flows via China, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan and forms an ecosystem basin with the population of more than 5 million people. The example of our country could provide principally new approach to the territorial sustainable development on ecosystem level.

The role of Kazakhstan in ensuring environmental stability on Eurasian Continent is of great importance. Our country plays a connecting role in development of landscapes and ecosystems on the continent. Its territory, diversity of climate, and specific nature of regional water balance result in significant dependence of environmental situation in Eurasia upon environmental stability in Kazakhstan.

Our country is an active member of both processes of “Environment for Europe” and “Environment and Sustainable Development in Asia”. We are of the view that closer coordination and cooperation between these two processes could significantly contribute to environmental and sustainable development in Eurasian continent and, for that reason we propose to consider an idea of uniting them into one Eurasian process. That could give a tremendous impact to sustainable development on the continent. We would be honored if a decision is made to hold the next World Summit on sustainable development at the heart of Eurasia – in the new capital of Kazakhstan, Astana.

In conclusion, I would like to state that sustainable development process and all the related issues are thoroughly considered in Kazakhstan at the highest level. Pursuing a significant national strategic task of joining the club of 50 most competitive countries of the world, Kazakhstan will do its very best to achieve visible results and share important lessons learned and good practices with the world community.