



**Remarks at the signing ceremony of the Protocol to the Treaty on a
Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia**

By

Angela Kane

High Representative for Disarmament Affairs



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I have the honour to open this signing ceremony of the Protocol to the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia. It gives me great pleasure to have been invited here today to address you on this occasion.

I would like to thank the co-organisers of this event, the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan, Ambassador Kairat Abdrakhmanov, and the United States Assistant Secretary for International Security and Nonproliferation, H.E. Mr. Thomas M. Countryman, for your kind invitation to open this ceremony. My appreciation also goes to the Treaty's depositary, Kyrgyzstan.

The 2010 NPT Review Conference concluded with the adoption by consensus of conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions. These included a call for the further establishment of zones as well as for constructive consultations and cooperation to bring about the entry into force of the protocols on negative security assurances to the treaties.

Among the five existing NWFZ treaties, however, the Treaty of Tlatelolco is the only one that actually had its security-assurance Protocol signed and ratified by all five nuclear-weapon States.

Therefore, today's signing of the Protocol to the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia marks an important milestone for reinforcing both regional security in Central Asia and the global nuclear non-proliferation regime.

I would like to welcome the tireless efforts by the Central Asian States and the nuclear-weapon States that have made possible today's signing of the Protocol.

I strongly urge all of today's signatories to proceed with their internal ratification processes with a view to achieving the Protocol's prompt entry into force.

As we look ahead, we need to be mindful that much work remains of ensuring that the Protocol's legal commitments are reflected in domestic laws, regulations, and policies.

It is my strong hope that we will see additional progress with respect to the ratification of the Protocols of treaties creating other nuclear-weapon-free zones, consistent with the action plan of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. Together, these activities would strengthen the synergy between global and regional efforts to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world.