

Nursultan NAZARBAYEV



**THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF
THE ASSEMBLY OF THE NATIONS
OF KAZAKHSTAN**



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FOR PEACE AND ACCORD IN OUR COMMON HOME

Speech of N.A. Nazarbayev, the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan at the first session of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan

March 24, 1995

Dear delegates of the Assembly!

For many centuries Kazakh people had to fight for its independence and sovereignty. Thanks to its best qualities, ability to close the ranks and hold together in an hour of danger and not least because of the aspiration to live in peace and accord, good neighbourliness with other nations, it didn't vanish in a stream of history and within the decades succeeded in reviving its statehood. Let's pay homage to the generations of our ancestors, who in spite of difficulties, fallen to their lot, managed to secure future of their people, preserve the language, culture, traditions and freedom-loving aspirations. All that eventually brought to revival of Kazakh statehood.

Kazakh people, that stood the test of time, has eventful and difficult history. Today it must help all nationalities, inhabiting Kazakhstan, to better understand the roots of our unity and exclude any historical reproaches, as looking into the past, one must see the future. Our generation is assigned critical missions to preserve wealth of the ancestors, strengthen the revived statehood and pass to a qualitatively new level, meeting the demands of civilised international community. We must develop in each of us awareness of responsibility for the future of our country.

It means that preserving the memory of the past, we must be focused on the future, live in peace and accord with other nations, respect their culture, customs and traditions. As Kazakhs say, “Bereke basy – birlikte” – “We are strong in unity”.

Delegates of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan, empowered to represent legitimate interests of 120 nationalities, bear a great historical responsibility for the future of each ethnic group and the whole Kazakhstan people.

The initiative of the Assembly’s foundation comes from the roots of our society. According to this initiative great preparatory work has been carried out in the Republic. The most worthy people have been elected to the Minor Assemblies founded in the regions.

The first session of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan is convened with an aim to analyse the road we have covered and political and social processes going on, outline the best ways of pursuing national policy. For that we need extensive dialogue and your advice, representing interests of all the citizens of the Republic. We have to answer the following questions: how to keep and strengthen social stability, how to administer in the period before the next parliamentary election, how to accelerate social reforms. People must learn of the events from the competent authorities, directly involved in the development and realisation of the national policy, from the authorities currently working together with you, excluding any of the dubious sources.

We may say that we had already surmounted the most difficult part of the road and now are on the eve of the critical turning-point and economic upturn. But the past, the present and the future are so interrelated and interdependent that it would be difficult to reach real positive changes without re-examination of our own historical experience and the experience of other countries.

Ethnic problems of the present-day world

Human civilisation is a continuous chain of springing up, flourishing and leaving historical arena by the nations and countries. Often this process has the global character. Such events occurred at least three times in the course of the XX century. First-after the World War I, when as a result of the breakdown of a number of Empires, sovereign states such as Austria, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Poland, Finland, and others were formed. The second wave of the new states formation was related to the national liberation movement and collapse of colonialism. At that time, at the turn of the 50-60-s some former colonies placed a demand to review existing frontiers and openly declared of their readiness to use violent methods. Thus territorial disputes arose between Somali and Ethiopia, Ghana and Togo, India and Pakistan, Morocco and Algeria, etc.

Over 50 territorial conflicts in the Asian, African and Latin American countries in the period from the end of the World War II to the 90-s resulted in 15 million victims.

Nevertheless the time and tragic experience made us understand that in the environment of ethnic diversity peculiar to majority of the countries, the attempts to demarcate state frontiers in compliance with ethnic boundaries pose a threat to the existence of young states.

Gradually principle of frontiers inviolability and territorial integrity of the sovereign states prevailed, proceeding from the common sense that maintenance of the territorial status quo regardless of all the drawbacks is more preferable to bloody conflicts. Upon approval of such approach the states got the opportunity to set to solving vital problems of their development and to achieve first successful results. The rest of the countries, being unable to forget their mutual claims, keep draining their strength in disputes, exhausting their national resources and at

the same time narrowing down their own potentialities for international co-operation. Therefore, principle of sovereignty succession, i.e. taking frontiers as they are and waiver of their forced demarcation has no alternative.

Today the world is going through the third stage related to the breakdown of the socialist system. Disintegration of the USSR raised a problem of maintaining international stability. In this respect there appeared imbalance in the world geopolitics, which brought to increasing instability both within territory of the CIS countries and outside it.

The right of each country to choose its own future is indisputable. However exercise of this right must not violate the rights and interests of other nationalities. The events in Yugoslavia and tragic conflicts in some regions of post-Soviet countries testify to disintegrating, destructive trends posing a threat of explosions of formidable power. Their extreme manifestation is major and small wars on ethnic and territorial grounds, whether they are in Azerbaidzhan and Armenia, Bosnia and Tadjikistan, Georgia and Moldova.

Each stage of human progress is characterised by interethnic tension and various conflicts. And present outbreak of conflict in the post-socialist world is inevitable to some extent. It is related to the fact that many nations are undergoing the stage of mutual hostility. I am sure that this round of upheavals shall bring to the stability of a new quality in a while, and dissociated countries and nations shall understand actual cost of isolation and return to the course of integration.

Unfortunately the international community today is not able to prevent local disintegration. It failed to prevent a great number of suddenly broken out conflicts escalated into wars. Such was the case in all the flash points both extinct and still on fire. The tragedy of Karabakh, Tadjikistan, Trans-Dniester, Ossetia, Abkhazia, and finally Chechnya is the tragedy of not only na-

tions living there, it is our common pain. In Nagorniy Karabakh the number of refugees and displaced persons reached, say the least, 10 percent of the total population of Azerbaidzhan. Tad-jikistan, which had 5,6 million people before the war, lost over 300 thousand people in armed conflicts. According to some estimates total number of refugees and displaced persons makes over one and a half million people, half of which had to leave the country. A few thousands people were killed and about 150 thousand became refugees as a result of conflicts in Abkhazia. According to information available as of January this year the number of refugees in Chechnya exceeded 130 thousand people, and it is still difficult to establish the number of victims.

I don't think that such destructive trends have ever been so related to ethnic conflicts. Africa went through disastrous inter-ethnic wars. Suffice to say about collisions in Rwanda, which led to thousands of victims. Tension is to some extent characteristic of highly developed countries with the established democracy, where there are enough painful points too, such as Flemish problem in Belgium, Ulster in Great Britain, Corsica in France, Basque Provinces in Spain, Quebec in Canada, etc.

All that testifies to the absence of universal prescriptions to settlement of national problems. Sad experience of conflicts and ethnic wars of late years expressly speaks of limited capabilities of the international community in this sphere. Unfortunately, we live in a fragile and unstable world. Proceeding from this obvious fact, we must prevent our country from any conflicts. Otherwise any help from the outside won't do any good. Therefore we have to develop our own mechanisms of preventing such collisions.

D.I. Mendelejev in his time said of the existence of outer space, "world ether", which reacts on the evil on the Planet. Perhaps, the great scientist was right. Indeed, the most horrible natural disasters occur in those countries, where the blood of innocent people is shed.

The lessons of history of Kazakhstan

Study and re-examination of national policy, pursued in the former USSR is of vital importance. It is a delusion to think today that Soviet epoch has passed into oblivion and that we know it rather well. We have to admit that our ideas of history, especially at the level of social conscience, are illusory, fragmentary, screened through numerous severe sociological filters. Hence we run to the extremes in interpretations starting with the attempts to black out "blind-spots" to idealisation of the recent past. Both are equally dangerous for the new society, since it provides nothing to the people except irritation and it prevents them from taking responsible decisions and serves as the basis for various political speculations. Moreover, it is wrong to consider, that establishing of democratic institutions by itself, will improve the situation and solve the problems of interethnic relations.

So what is the fundamental historic mistake of the former system? In my opinion, it lies in the fact that under the banners of proletarian internationalism the entire nations have been forcibly driven into Procrustean bed of totalitarian state. In practice it led to pulling the wires of national self-consciousness. History once again showed that irrespective whether capitalist or socialist course of development the society chooses, the state-building is inevitably doomed to failure without establishing institutions of protection and development of national self-consciousness.

The whole Soviet history was full of numerous violations of human rights and facts of direct genocide. It was famine of the 20-30-s, when millions of citizens died. The population of Kazakhs was reduced by half, the Russians and other nations lost millions of good workers, well-educated men of enterprise. Many nations' genetic resources were undermined due to mass repression, shooting and killing of the best representatives of

the national culture, science, literature and social sciences, as well as mass deportation of the nations and liquidation of ethnic communities.

Owing to ill-considered economic policy and implementation of the “century’s projects”, serious ecological catastrophe descended upon practically the whole territory of Kazakhstan. A great damage was caused by the activity of military departments. For us it turned into the problem of Semipalatinsk test ground, tragedy of the Aral sea, biological test ground on the island of Vozrozhdeniye, test grounds in Western and Central Kazakhstan. Such policy encountered natural resistance, turning in a number of cases into overt actions in defence of public property and national values. Their ultimate aim was to gain true national equality.

Considerably aggravated contradictions in the ethnic relations at the end of the 80-s were the result of long-standing oppression of the people’s self-consciousness. That very sphere turned out to be the most sensitive barometer reflecting the society’s urgent problems, that caused open opposition of a number of the republics to totalitarian system. At that stage national and state inequality of nations has become the source of political split of the superpower. It could not endure natural aspiration of the nations for gaining real state sovereignty.

We must learn lessons from what had happened. In pursuing national policy, we must take into consideration ethnic composition of the population of Kazakhstan, as well as its formation process, which was rather difficult. By estimates of the experts 1 million 150 thousand people arrived in Kazakhstan from Russia, Ukraine, Byelorussia during colonisation of peasants in pre-Revolutionary period. During the time of collectivisation 250 thousand peasants, dispossessed of their property, from central region of the USSR were deported to Kazakhstan. 1 million 200 thousand people from all over the USSR, mainly

from its European part were resettled to Kazakhstan in pre-war period for industrial construction.

800 thousand Germans, 18,5 thousand Korean families, 102 thousand Poles, 507 thousand representatives of the nations of Northern Caucasus, as well as the Crimean Tartars, Turks, Greeks, Kalmyks and others were deported to Kazakhstan in different times against their will.

Owing to deportation of the nations, the population of the Republic increased by 1 million 500 thousand people. 350 thousand people were evacuated to Kazakhstan during the war period. 1,5 million people arrived to cultivate virgin lands and in addition closed military units received 150 thousand. And this is not counting other departmental employment of workforce and natural population migration to our Republic.

As a result from the beginning of this century 5 million 600 thousand people were resettled to Kazakhstan including 3,5 million over the last 40-50 years not counting those deported and evacuated.

On the other hand, grave consequence of criminal Stalin's collectivisation was the death of one and a half million Kazakhs. In the years between 1930 and 1932 1,3 million Kazakhs migrated from the USSR forever. Let me give you two figures, which demonstrate disastrous character of the repressive policy for the peoples of Kazakhstan. 5 million 873 thousand people lived in the Republic in 1930 and almost the same number of people was resettled here. By the year 1933 the number of population of the Republic dropped to 2 million 493 thousand people.

It's not through Kazakhs' fault that the XX century has become for them a century of tragic events, which turned them into a minority in their own homeland. And those, who nowadays allow to cast doubt upon the right of this nation to statehood, do not know or do not want to know about the background of its tragedy. I am convinced that Kazakh nation deserves the

statehood not less than any other nation. It gained it though suffering in its history.

Neither those are to blame, who found themselves in our country against their will. Therefore the reason of present-day migration lies not only in economic problems, but also in the fact that descendants of the forcibly deported Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Germans and others wish to return to their historical homeland and take part in building national statehood.

Being such a unique multinational country (based on the tragedy of many nations), Kazakhstan avoided sad fate of our nearest neighbours of the CIS countries plunged into fratricidal wars. And I am confident that we will manage to maintain peace and international stability in the state.

What is this confidence based on?

I think there are three approaches to the solution of interethnic problems. The first is when some countries pursue a policy of expulsion of foreigners, which was extrinsic to Kazakh people, who received the migrants fraternally. I believe, there is no need in explaining to you that any claims of one nation against other nation are useless and their consequences are dangerous, the policy of confrontation leads to formidable explosions and a great number of victims. The second is when the problems of interethnic relations are underestimated and there is hope that they will no longer arise. This is also not the way out. The only alternative is the third, the only reliable way that we adhere to, which requires hard and diligent work. It is a search for points of contact, reaching understanding and confidence between the nations in more and more aspects. We will not be able to solve the problems without policy of accord and reasonable national strategy.

Our main line must be based on the development of all the ethnic groups through quest for compromise and persistent consoli-

dating principles. One of the mechanisms, consolidating our society, must become the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan.

I, as the President of the country believe, that my basic mission is in ensuring social stability and interethnic accord. This accord is not given from on high, it is gained through hard work. I am indignant, I hope, just as you are, when some irresponsible politicians, using economic difficulties, almost directly call upon disunity in the society. Others come to the point of uttering an absurdity, saying that only Nazarbayev needs stability and accord. Indeed, I am for peace and order on our Planet. And primarily because this is what millions of Kazakhstani families need. I don't want mothers, grey with grief, to weep over the zinc coffins, I don't want children to become disabled, I don't want old people to sob at their own ramshackle house. Believe me, I have seen a good deal in my life, and I know that blood and chaos is initiated by irresponsible statements of political tricksters, striving for power, whom neither tears nor victims would stop. It's time for the society to give them uncompromising evaluation. I appeal to the members of the Assembly, all reasonable citizens of the Republic to express at last your opinion of those, who deliberately instigate the society to unleash interethnic conflicts. Not nations, but such figures are to blame in the fact that brother runs counter to brother and neighbour – to neighbour.

We must be vigilant and always remember that there is a real threat of various political intrigues, which may provoke not only interethnic conflicts, but also conflicts within the nation. As we may see, today's tragedies are often closely related to disunion of the nations themselves.

This fact proves that multinational population is not a panacea from all misfortunes. Fight between different clans, regional groups sometimes leads to the fight within the nation resulting in self-destruction. From the point of view of the observers,

it's going on today in Afghanistan, Tadjikistan and some other countries. I, as the nationally elected President, must proclaim my determination to clamp down on the attempts of those, who wish to split our people for one or another reason.

We must not disregard the cases of display of nationalism in the streets, bureaucratic indifference, rash statements of mass media. They might seem to be just individual cases, but can bring to grave consequences.

I would like to emphasise indisputable priority of the positive lessons of history, on which we should rely in our day-to-day work. I had already told you of the hopelessness of the sweeping slandering of the past. Despite the fact that totalitarian regime did irremediable harm to our nations, the processes of economic development, mutual enrichment of culture, science and education were going on even in those years. We should never forget that our nations jointly fought for their freedom and independence in the years of the World War II, rapidly rehabilitated ruined economy and explored the space. Many of the outstanding representatives of Kazakh science and culture received education in Russia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Baltic Republics. I hope also that people would never forget that in the years of Stalin's deportations Kazakh people rendered every assistance they could to Russians, Ukrainians, Koreans, Chechens and representatives of other nations, which were under repression.

Victory over fascism, the 50th anniversary of which we are celebrating this year, has become vivid manifestation of exertion of the nations and heroism of the people, who defended the country and protected their right to freedom and human dignity. Decision on joint celebration of this significant date, including decisions on decorating war veterans, citizens of the Commonwealth with Zhukov's order and medal have been approved at the last sitting of the CIS states Presidents. I made a suggestion to have governments provide veterans with free of charge jour-

ney to the places of former battles to meet their fellow soldiers. It was also suggested to have a group of representatives of veterans' organisations of the CIS member states visit Federative Republic of Germany on May 9, 1995 to pay homage to our people, who died during the years of the World War II. Council of Presidents of the CIS states approved these initiatives. I fully approve the idea of celebrating common victory jointly and pay tribute to the veterans.

Dear delegates!

Foreign policy of Kazakhstan is closely related to the domestic problems, including the issues of interethnic relations. My idea of forming Eurasian Union apart from other issues involves civilised solution of both interethnic and interstate problems and conflicts. One must treat these vulnerable issues with care. And in my opinion, the highest mission of any politician is in realising his responsibility for the destinies of the millions of people, who against their will and not through their own fault turned out to be in different countries. Integration of the peoples through sustaining political independence and ethnic identity of sovereign states is the only reasonable and civilised formula of peaceful development of Eurasia.

In no small part thanks to EAC project, integration processes in the CIS have been livened up. As you know, a number of major decisions on strengthening good neighbourliness between Russia and Kazakhstan have been taken at the end of last year. The ways of solving the most acute problems such as citizenship, military co-operation, formation of single customs and many others have been determined. Agreements for legal status of our citizens, living permanently in each of the countries, for simplified citizenship procedure are important steps, complying with the principles of international community, and solving the problems, common people face, in a civilised way. Now each Russian or Kazakhstan citizen, arriving to a new place of resi-

dence, if he/she) wishes, may become citizen of that state without bureaucratic delays.

Development of integration with our closest neighbours in the region – Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, with which we create one economic area is of great importance for our Republic. Moreover, all the states of Central Asia are jointly dealing with a problem of overcoming the effects of the Aral sea ecological catastrophe.

A number of problems have been solved during the meeting of the Presidents of the CIS states that was held in Almaty in February. I would like to lay special emphasis on the approval of “Memorandum on maintenance of peace and stability in the Commonwealth of Independent States” proposed by our Republic. We think neither of us must stand aloof from the problems existing inside the Commonwealth, especially related to the bloodshed, casualties, devastation, sufferings of peaceful populace. Memorandum is aimed at suppression of the existing and preventing from possible conflicts. Approval of this document once again proves the aspiration of the CIS member states for respect of territorial integrity and inviolability of frontiers, existing social and political system, and taking measures to prevent any manifestations of separatism, nationalism, chauvinism, and fascism.

We are taking the integration course with confidence. And I want to remind those, who are concerned in stability of our statehood, that Kazakhstan today can resist any expansion, whether it is a military intervention, political or economic pressure, separatism or national chauvinism. A great factor is a guarantee of security we were granted by the USA, Great Britain, Russia and China. Thus, independence of Kazakhstan has become a matter of history reliably secured by the international political, economic and diplomatic legal acts. We shall never waive our right to independence, territorial integrity.

About some measures on strengthening social stability and interethnic accord

Dear delegates!

We had a hard time ever since the state sovereignty and independence was declared by Kazakhstan. It compressed a great number of real deeds and events, which allowed to get the reforms off the ground, start overcoming economic depression and gain recognition of the international community. There were, of course, some miscalculations made.

But what is most important is that we managed to avoid errors in strategy. Even at the beginning while determining the priorities of foreign and domestic policy, we specially emphasised strengthening of stability, civil peace and interethnic accord. It was provisioned in the concept “Ideological consolidation of the society as prerequisite for progress of Kazakhstan”, formulating principles of state policy in the ideological sphere.

Even then in my speech on this concept the initiative was brought up to establish the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan called to become active political, uniting force of the society. Today it is founded and I believe, it must take the most active part in solving all the problems, further improving our national policy, including that at the level of state management and regulation.

In this connection the Assembly is given a status of the collective agency under the President and its regional branches - under the heads of administrations. You have hard work ahead of you and you should be aware of great responsibility you bear for it.

I believe that from now on the acts of state on the whole spectrum of social problems, particularly on the national policy must be approved taking into account the views and with direct involvement of the Assembly. Each act must be

reviewed by experts taking into account the interests of all the nations of the country. We must rest upon the rich experience of our Republic. In this a special role may be played by the National and Cultural Centres and Council of Veterans, which have become the main organising bodies of the Assembly.

Before we turn to some specific problems in the sphere of interethnic relationships and your participation in their settlement, I'd like to note two important, in my opinion, circumstances.

First, it has somehow become accustomed to write and speak more often about the relations between two nations: the Kazakh and the Russian. Why do we forget about the interest of almost 20 percent of the rest of Kazakhstan people, who have every reason to feel deprived under this circumstance?

We shouldn't forget that Kazakhstan in the full sense of the word is a multinational state. It is not proclaimed postulate, it is truth. That is why, it is a great challenge for us to preserve national and cultural values of all the nationalities living in Kazakhstan, irrespective whether they are "small" or "large". Each of them has its own roots, eventful historical past that we should value, our own great ancestors. We were inspired by the fact that the 150th anniversary of great Abai would be celebrated not only in the Kazakh land, but all over the world under the aegis of UNESCO. At the same time we shall celebrate the 1100th anniversary of Cyrillic writing, founded by the fellow-campaigners of literature Cyrill and Mephodiy.

I'd like to emphasise that each nation made its own contribution to the treasury of world civilisation, its intellectual potential and it cannot be valued only by the number of population. We will keep maintaining the aspiration of the nations of the Republic for preserving and multiplying this potential.

Second, not less important factor is that Kazakhstan in addition to being multinational state, is a state with many different

religions. Together with Moslems, constituting 60% of its population, here live Christians, Protestants, Buddhists, Catholics and representatives of other world religions.

It is a serious factor, contributing to maintaining stable social and political environment. After all, practically the same moral principles such as love for people, blame of immorality and forgiveness of sincere misconception, tolerance towards dissents form the basis of all the religions. In other words, irrespective of the religion, all parishioners in the Republic are equally tolerant, moral and peace-loving.

During the times of militant atheism all religions were under the equally strong state pressure. Therefore, learning the dogmas of their own religion, being governed by the commandments of their belief, people had compassion upon congregation of other religions equally persecuted and deprived of their rights. Hence, there is their striving for supporting fellow creature and rendering him assistance to go through the hardships.

The government of Kazakhstan has established good relations of mutual respect with hierarchs of the religions. Without giving preference to any of them, we try to meet the needs and aspirations of all the religious people. It would be good if similar good relations were established at the regional level.

We should bear all that in mind while doing our job. The Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan should take it into account too, since it is called upon to take an active part in solving numerous acute problems at present .

We must establish very close co-operation between Cultural and Educational Associations, National and Cultural Centres and educational system, mass media, publishing industry. It will greatly contribute to achieving many goals such as:

- **development of languages of all the nations of Kazakhstan;**
- **improvement of the system of national education;**

- **improvement of the functions of national mass media;**
- **reinforcement of the remedial device of ethnic culture.**

If to dwell upon this question, in the nearest future language development program is to be approved, which must fully take into account skills and perspectives of the students, aimed at real, not blue-sky goals, relying on the sound material and technical basis. Knowledge of two and more languages by the citizens shall be encouraged by the state in every possible way.

Also we need the programs of the development of education and health services, which under the acute budget deficit are in a difficult situation and forced just to fight in order to survive. And these are not only and not so much economic branches as sphere of life necessities of the citizens, which directly impact on the social and psychological environment. Apparently, it is high time to make amendments inspired by life to the existing laws, governing the function of educational and health institutions.

We will have to radically renew the forms and content of the national and cultural policy. The work you do propagating your national culture, customs and traditions undoubtedly serves as consolidating force. However, today it is already impossible to be limited only by aesthetic education and popular cultural events. I think, we have to start solving the fundamental problems of the development of culture, having in mind both national education and national mass media, as well as intellectual potential of the nation as a whole.

If the Assembly chooses to stipulate quotas for its own and quotas for its regional branches' entrants, Cabinet of Ministers and the heads of the regional administrations shall be commissioned with respective tasks.

Though the newspapers in Kazakhstan are published in eight languages, TV and radio broadcast in seven languages, teaching in some schools is conducted in several languages of the na-

tions of Kazakhstan, and teachers are trained at higher schools of Kazakhstan and abroad, we have to improve the quality in this field. I think it would be appropriate to start publishing a Republican newspaper in due course under the aegis of the Assembly highlighting the life of all the nations of our country. Republican TV jointly with the Assembly has to consider the ways of improving broadcasting in the languages of the nations of Kazakhstan.

By the way, there are no precedents in the world like those existing in Kazakhstan. For instance, our newspaper “Ukrainskiy noviny” is the only newspaper outside the Ukraine in the Ukrainian language financed by non-Ukrainian government. We may say the same about our oldest Korean periodical “Kore ilbo”. Almaty Korean theatre is the only one in the world located outside the historical homeland of the Koreans. We guarantee that any noble initiative of the Assembly, National and Cultural Centres, Councils of Veterans shall be supported by the government. In this connection the Government must develop the system of state financing of the activity of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan.

Much was told about the problem of migration. Unfortunately, we may not reject the fact that our fellow citizens are still leaving the Republic. However, in my opinion, it is naive to explain their departure by non-existent national discrimination. Frankly speaking, Russia and even so more other CIS states today are not ready economically to receive all the repatriates, and these repatriated people occasionally face such difficulties they cannot simply overcome without serious state support.

Indeed, absence of such support has become one of the reasons of quite a new phenomenon for us – remigration, when many people and whole families, unable to make themselves at home outside the Republic, return back to Kazakhstan. Ac-

According to the demographers only last year the number of remigrants made about 50 thousand. It is not surprising, since we didn't allow civil war to be unleashed; we have no strict laws segregating people into the first and second class; we do not arrest opponents; we have no censorship. The last events related to the past parliamentary crisis once again proved our compliance with the law.

Having overcome totalitarian heritage with its repressive ideology, we have set our course for democracy. I just want to remind you that during a short period of independence neither of the newspapers was banned in Kazakhstan, nor we had political prisoners. But the democracy and freedom must not serve as a shelter for criminals.

It was otherwise not long ago wasn't it? Many well-known figures of culture, science and art had to leave the Republic not through their own fault and seek happiness outside the Republic. Under the system of strong ideological oppression, they had not any chance to self-realisation. But we haven't heard bad language from the migrants about Kazakhstan. Quite the reverse, recollecting the Republic with gratitude and sincere affection, they emphasise invariably their Kazakhstan roots. While some of our voyagers, shirt-sleeve politicians, sitting with a cup of coffee offered by some foreigner, are ready to sell their Mother, while under Mother we mean Motherland.

But broadly speaking, **Kazakhstan must maintain more close and stable relations with Kazakh Diaspora in Russia, Central Asia, Turkey, Iran, China and other countries of far and near abroad.** After all over four million Kazakhs out of 12 million live there. Some of them, perhaps, do not determine the policy, but in any event succeeded in different spheres of human activity. And the image of the Republic in the eyes of the international community in many respects depends on the attitude towards them in Kazakhstan.

By the way, many of our fellow countrymen, who left for their historical homeland, do not want to break off relations with Kazakhstan, striving for informational and cultural exchange with former compatriots. This creates strong, figuratively speaking, “stability belt”. I consider that our National and Cultural Centres must in every way possible encourage this noble aspiration, **since spread of the truth about our country in the near and far abroad objectively increases the number of friends of Kazakhstan, supporters of the policy we pursue.**

Ministry of foreign affairs and our entire Diplomatic Corps must be actively involved in this job.

Today much emphasis is made on **“People’s diplomacy”**. I think, it would be helpful to organise visits of the members of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan to foreign countries for studying the experience of realisation of the national policy, as well as including them in the official delegations.

I would like to address directly to our political scientists and experts in social sciences. To my mind, the problems of interethnic relations may and must become the key problems in your present studies. The society is in urgent need in precise characteristics of the processes going on in this field not only in Kazakhstan but all over the world, in the knowledge of possible prospects for establishing interethnic relations. Finally, public institutions and government authorities need specific recommendations based on the results of the polls and making allowances for regional peculiarities in pursuing national policy. There are very few such studies so far made, scientific thought cannot get rid of stereotypes of the past, superficial, recital approach to the complex phenomena of our life. Though the reality itself gives much food for reflection.

Summarising the problems of national policy I would like to emphasise that policy making will continue to be based on the clear and just principles, the major of which are as follows:

- **quest for compromise;**
- **social stability as the basis for equitable solution of the problems of interethnic relations;**
- **supremacy of the statute law;**
- **strengthening of state independence and active integration policy.**

In our reality, at the stage of social reforms, on the eve of which we are today, most likely every problem affects the interests of each citizens of the country. Therefore, I think that such a representative body as the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan may and must get involved in the settlement of other very acute problems of our society.

Implementation of reforms is common concern

As you know, according to legally set standards before the election of a new Parliament, I am empowered jointly with the heads of administrations with ancillary authorities. **I intend to exercise them in solving primarily economic problems, to reform the country's economy and getting the country out of the crisis.**

Representing all the regions of Kazakhstan, you, like no one else, are well aware of the situation at the local level, and the point is in the social and psychological environment, mass consciousness. Moreover, you are from now on a kind of two-way communication channel between the highest agencies of the state power and the people. And I rely on your direct involvement in implementing economic policy.

Our short-term goal is to ensure normal life to the families, all the citizens of the Republic. So that each Kazakhstan citizen could enjoy the fruit of his labour he must be provided with conditions for full self-realisation. Doing this, we shall provide our compatriots freedom in choosing labour activity, which is possible only in a socially unstratified society, where there is

no gap between the poor and the rich and income of the middle-class is more or less comparable.

We have deliberately chosen the course of reforms, required to improve our life. As the whole world experience testifies, the market is not a social utopia, it is a really operating system, which brought prosperity to many nations, including those, who do not possess even a small portion of the natural resources, which we do possess. This choice is dictated by life itself as no change of the system of economic relations would obviously doom our society to stagnation and decline. Medieval philosopher Foma Akvinskiy was right saying the following: "If the supreme goal of the sea captain were to preserve a ship, he would ever keep it on the berth".

Granted that I am fated to be at the helm of the state, I am obliged to keep the right sailing directions. Any stops and delays would be fatal to the country and the society. I should note that the burden of a leader is not so enviable whatever the appearances. At the critical stages of history any head of the state has to take tough position against lack of expertise, especially in making a choice of the model of economic and political development, and take unpopular decisions of vital importance. He has to lead the people sometimes against their will to objectively right place, where they may not want to go today. And since we are talking of the future, I made up my mind to be strict and even tough.

Such position is justified and already rewarded, as it was stated above, Kazakhstan has gone through the most complex part of its radical reforms, which showed first signs of economic revival.

I consider that the new Cabinet of Ministers, which is rightly called the Government of pragmatists, takes a competent approach in solving the matters and takes the lead. It is evidenced by having the accounts settled with villages for the products procured, some growth in the industrial production, drop of rate of inflation.

The government has developed the basis for the integrated policy in the industry and agriculture, consecutively introducing economic levers of operation in these vital fields of the national economy.

One of these days I am planning to approve corresponding document **on the considerable reduction of tariffs on power inputs for all the consumers**. This will allow to restrain inflation of the costs and promote economic revival.

It is vital for us to **improve tax system**, which so far does not encourage commodity producers at all. It is planned to reduce tax pressing for the commodity producers in the immediate future.

The time has come to attract investments in Kazakhstan economy without being stingy of tax privileges. Especially because capital investments are not inflationary. Meanwhile the capital is mainly concentrated in the intermediate trade.

Really, financial situation of many families today leaves much to be desired. And these difficulties should not be complicated owing to aggravation of the political problems. After all, a number of them may be solved upon achieving economic revival and ensuring decent life of the people. Many problems, which make us cross swords today, shall be solved then at the least costs to the people of Kazakhstan. Success and order in the economy shall strengthen social stability even more, solve the most acute problems.

In conclusion of this topic, I would like to note that in the process of reforms those “operators” and politicians, who are interested in economic chaos, drop in production and high inflation must be inevitably removed from the economic sector. We must make clear that, if under the mask of reformers, they seize power, they shall intensify speculative trends with the prejudice to the development of production, its restructuring. And it is equivalent to complete winding up of all transformations.

Dear delegates of the session, since I see my allies in you, let's solve all these problems jointly.

On the way to constitutional reform

It is not a secret that economic, political and social transformations have been and are still hindered by weak legal basis, improper judicial system, high criminal rate. However hard we try to handle individual matters in each of these spheres, we shall never get proper result until we take a major step towards constitutional reform.

It is really one of the paramount tasks in strengthening our statehood. It is clear that prime interest of the majority today is the fate of the Parliament.

It appears that only the **system of Parliament of two houses** is able to be engaged in qualified lawmaking activity, come to consensus upon thorough expertise and quest for compromise. Each governmental department must deal with their own affairs and not to "hit" each other. I would say that the Supreme Soviets of the previous convocation were rather the stage of political self-expression of the deputies than legislative body in direct notion of these words. All the efforts of parliamentarians have been put not to day-to-day consistent drafting of the law, but to sorting out their relationships with executive bodies. It gave rise to conflicts, which were presented as putting pressure upon the Parliament by the Government. Actually it was just the other way round, the executive power had to protect itself against infringements of the legislative power.

It is already obvious to many people that the Supreme Soviets of the last few years have been conducted by extremely talkative persons, putting it mildly, with excessive ambitions, far removed from the interests of the country. And in this confrontation with the executive power the whole opposition, rep-

resenting, strangely enough, diametrically antagonistic political trends, joined parliamentary majority with enviable permanence. It showed its peculiar qualities such as mimicry and being unscrupulous in choosing political allies. National patriots, chauvinists and communists are united in one block, when the matter concerns their group and private interests, which becomes possible only due to the lack of necessary know-how in democracy and parliamentary culture.

Practically, parliamentarians were willingly involved in bringing under their control the executive power and through this real power wanted to take part in allocation of credits, investments, funds, shortly, money. At the same time they started to seize judicial power too. It is clear that I am not talking of all the ex-deputies, but of the most odious persons, who ignored even the decision of the Constitutional court which carries no right of appeal.

As far as the direct functions of the representative power are concerned, we may give the example of the experience of France. Parliament's legislative activity is provisioned in full by the Constitution of this country, everything else beyond its limit is the exclusive rule-making prerogative of the executive power. If something like that happened in Kazakhstan, our shirt-sleeve experts would have incriminated violation of democratic standards and principles. But if you ask them of France, they will talk with admiration about triumph of democracy in this European state.

Judicial reform is a fundamental part of constitutional transformations. According to our Constitution, which has become a fruit of forced compromises, judicial power, including Constitutional court, is beyond any control of the society and institutes of the state power, including the President. It is clear that interference of the authorities in the proceedings is impossible. At the same time judges, that compromised them-

selves, must not render justice. Independence of the judicial power is essential, but it must not be reduced to absurdity making a fetish of it.

There are no also **checks and balances** in the Constitution, although this principle is declared in it. The point at issue is that under certain circumstances the Parliament should be able to terminate the term of office of the Head of the state and vice versa, the President should be empowered to dismiss Supreme Soviet. In the course of drafting the Basic Law, I insisted on including these principles, but they were rejected by the Parliament of the XII convocation. Though I am still convinced that such checks and balances are obviously required in the interests of the state and the society.

The main tool in carrying out the state policy in the regions is the **institute of the heads of administrations**. However, we have to clarify their status. The former status of the head of administrations satisfied the environment, in which the President was practically at the head of the executive power. Today this situation has changed fundamentally. As a result the Heads of Regional Administrations turned out to be in legal vacuum, on the one hand, they carry forward presidential power, on the other hand, they do not represent the highest executive power at the local level.

It is also required to revise the view on the local maslikhats. Kazakhstan is a unitary state, which is stated in the Constitution. That means that local representative agencies have no lawmaking powers and they actually perform functions of the executive power. Therefore, it would have been logical to impose full responsibility to the people according to certain procedures upon the head of administration and at the same time empower him with functions of the head of maslikhat.

This democratic standard would have satisfied existing realities. People should know, who bears personal responsibility for the

state of affairs locally, regional policy and its carrying out. By the way, these are the demands of the citizens themselves.

In short, we have to establish order locally, the sooner the better. After all, under the circumstance of strong regional power adventurers and criminals of all kinds will not feel comfortable as they do today, when local authorities duplicate each other and sometimes simply are not on terms.

On the whole constitutional reforms must lead to formation of the stable and balanced power both in the centre and locally. We must act in the interests of the society and I emphasise, interests of the Kazakhstan society, without copying recklessly and blindly foreign very special know-how applied in other states.

I believe all these problems may be discussed at the next session of the Assembly.

Moreover, I am planning to enforce law and order in the state, as well as crime control before the election of a new Parliament. I was intending to submit these proposals to the former Parliament, but with its known to you “efficiency” it was a question, when they would have brought them into force, most probably, increasing even more the crime rate by their delays and holdouts. Now this law and order must be established by the decrees of the President. We have already started doing this job. Recently by one of the decrees the legislation was amended fundamentally with the purpose of eradication of corruption. I assure you that I will do my best to curb the crimes. We must secure the society against the criminal world. Today the crime rate reached critical point. We must radically change the situation.

Once Byzantines said: there are two ways to gain the goal: the way of law and the way of wild animal. In the first place you and I must approve of [the first way, which is triumph and supremacy of law. Neither society may be stable and prosper-

ous without observance of law by the citizens. **The integral attribute of the democratic society is not just declaration, it is true supremacy of law. It is not riots and destabilising political slogans, subjective will of establishment, it is strict adherence of all the citizens to the rules developed and approved by the society.**

In connection with the last events regarding the decisions of the Constitutional court, one can hear exclamations that the dictatorship is coming. Indeed, dictatorship, but it is a dictatorship of the Constitution and law. And shout those, who are threatened by grave consequences of it.

Real dictatorship may be established if the chaos and criminal lawlessness reigns under the slogans of pseudo-democracy.

Very often they come out under the slogans of defending national interests. Misinterpreting the national idea and speculating on the public spirit, some politicians and criminals try to play this card in their own selfish ends. There were made the attempts without knowing the events in details to cast a colour of interethnic conflicts on the unconcealed criminal deals in Noviy Uzen, Ust-Kamenogorsk, Issyk. Kidnapping of the newly-made Cossack is of the same series. In short, the attempts to provoke interethnic conflicts by the world of criminals are not excluded.

I'd like also to draw attention of the law-enforcement authorities to the necessity to curb immediately and most strictly any slightest manifestations of racism, chauvinism, nationalism, anti-Semitism. I particularly emphasise the latter, since a number of publications nearly compete in anti-Semitic exercises. We had never had such in Kazakhstan before and I assure you we shall never have it any more. It is provisioned by the Constitution and the Act on press. Please, be good enough to comply with their letter and spirit.

Such a miserable ideology is nothing else but a heritage of totalitarianism, which dictated immoral relations with its peo-

ple, and which ruined more than any other regime in the world history. The system endeavoured through mass brainwashing to convince the people that it is shameful to be engaged in trade and at the same time it is not shameful to shoot and kill its own citizens and that it is prestigious to steal. Nonconformity was made a public phenomenon and the most obstinate dissidents were kept in prisons or psychiatric hospitals.

Dear delegates!

You personify Kazakhstan, its national diversity, cultural wealth, as well as aspirations of its people, who elected you to this Assembly, official body under the President of the state.

Using every good chance, I try to convince each Kazakhstan citizen that our main treasure in the environment of the last 10 years is social stability, absence of interethnic discord and bloodshed on this ground.

This persistence of mine is caused by the fact that, when war or death comes in your house, all the rest loses its value and significance such as well-being, squabbling, prosperity, personal status in a social pyramid, etc. Because war deprives of the main values: the life of a person, which is invaluable, habitual place of residence and turn people into restless refugees.

And thank God, we have survived this ordeal. For this I have to make a deep bow to our people, our citizens. At the same time it doesn't come by itself. It's the result of the days and nights spent in contemplation, making analysis and comparison, searching for an accord and feeling great responsibility for the multinational people, which put its fate in your hands. Wars bring huge, hard to compensate material damage. Only in this century such amount of funds was spent on wars, which would have been enough to provide the whole population of the Planet

with food free of charge during more than 50 years or 500 million people could have been given comfortable houses.

Just imagine, what's going on in Chechnya, Tadjikistan, Azerbaidzhan and other flash points of the CIS and the rest of the world and you will realise that the one, who doesn't value our stability, who tries for the sake of its own personal vanity or due to political delusions to destroy our peace and order, is our straight foe, betraying its own people. Therefore, people must be cautious, not fall for false promises of easy and pleasant life. There are simply no such ways.

I remember and value a vote of confidence given to me on December 1, 1991. And in order to justify it, I'm willing to give and to do anything in reason in spite of all the contending forces and factors. You may be confident in it.

I call upon you and all my compatriots to recognise special responsibility as it fell to our lot to live and act in the epoch of great transformations. Everything we do has not only far-reaching importance, but bears the stamp of history. Our descendants will judge us upon what we do today. It depends on us what awaits Kazakhstan in the XXI century and what fate our children have in store.

COMPREHENSION OF THE PAST AND FURTHER DEMOCRATIC REFORMS OF THE SOCIETY

**Speech of N.A. Nazarbayev,
the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan at the second
session of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan**

June 30, 1995

Dear participants of the session of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan!

At your initiative the first referendum in the history of the Republic was held in April this year. I am sincerely grateful to the whole multinational people of Kazakhstan and Assembly members for their deep understanding of the most acute problems of our society, undergoing radical reforms.

Being a realist by nature, I am well aware that voting for renewal of the President's powers till December 1, 2000, people voted for stability, interethnic and civil accord, which we managed to maintain preventing from sanguinary conflicts in Kazakhstan. You voted for carrying on the same political course, which guarantees preservation of peace we all need in the society, i.e. for the strategy pursued in the political, economic and social sphere.

Modifications, which started under the slogans of perestroika, brought to the collapse of the ideals and fates of the whole generation, serious disturbance of their pace of living, economic recession and, as a consequence, changing the life of thousands of people for the worse.

In a word, we went through many hardships, nevertheless the overwhelming majority of the participants of referendum an-

swered “yes” to the question in the bulletin. Isn’t it a paradox? By no means, I think, the results of plebiscite demonstrated confidence of Kazakhstan people in the future of our sovereign Republic.

Therefore I am grateful to the Assembly for its initiative to have this referendum held. By the way, it showed high prestige of the Assembly, which, in essence, has been turned from advisory body into active public institution, which expresses true aspirations of the people, having the multinational people of Kazakhstan united. Therefore, isn’t it quite reasonable to mention of it in a new Constitution?

Mass participation in the referendum, coincidence of their views and opinions laid foundation for political stability at the threshold of a new century, providing the head of the Republic with tactical and certain strategic space and giving a chance to comprehend the road covered and determine the guidelines for further progress.

Primary targets promulgated by me in 1992 in the “Strategy of formation and development of Kazakhstan as a sovereign state” and in 1993 in the work “Ideological consolidation of the society as fundamentals to progress of Kazakhstan” remain unchanged. I’ll remind you the priorities. They are as follows:

- ensuring stability and interethnic accord as inevitable political environment for succeeding in implementation of the reforms;
- establishing social market economy with state and private ownership;
- creating legal environment and practical base for realization of the principle of economic freedom of an individual;
- building the society, ensuring adequate level of well-being of all the citizens;
- strengthening ethnic identity and maintaining the ethnic and cultural diversity of Kazakhstan;
- deepening democratic transformations, ensuring pluralism in policy;

- creating deserved image of Kazakhstan in the international community on the basis of compliance with human rights and freedoms, attaining firm positions in the world economy;
- transformation of the state system of Kazakhstan into presidential democratic Republic.

We are steadily moving ahead in this direction. At this forum, I'd like to present my vision of the situation, give reasons for the policy based on the results of referendum in major spheres of social life, to present the plans we have to implement, in order to lay stable foundation of democratic legal state in the Republic in the immediate future. The matter at issue, primarily, is in the strategy of the market development and state-building.

Statehood: problems of building

Kazakhstan is going through a critical stage now, which is characteristic of all the CIS states. This is explained by the traditions of the nations to live together in one state with common mentality and political culture, a habit to solve social and economic problems within the framework of single national and economic complex, lack of the new level of division of labour and production specialisation.

In 1991-1992 at the initial stage of independence in Kazakhstan, as well as in the countries of the Commonwealth a utopian idea of rapid and easy transfer to a new stage prevailed. Hardships lying ahead of us and the level of responsibility for the outcome have been obviously underestimated. Many people, facing for the first time such phenomenon as freedom of press, freedom of democratic will of the people, freedom of consciousness and assemblies and other attributes of a democratic society, became confused. And some political leaders of that time, frankly speaking, purposefully tried to use this situation in their own interests.

What ideas, programmes and models of reforms in Kazakhstan, containing the latest concepts and theories, mainly of pop-

ulist character have not been proposed! All that was splashed over the people very often accompanied by tactless criticism of the existing government authorities and high-flown promises of the early benefits. Of course, if these leaders had held key positions in the state. The remark, made by Leo Trotsky in his letter concerning some statements of the socialists at the sixth congress of Comintern, in relation to the business, which he kept an eye on during his exile to Almaty, is very much to the point. He wrote to his friends: "One may present theoretical proof that the cloud on the horizon looks like a camel, and a fish too, and if prince wishes (i.e. the duty leader) – a socialism in a separately taken country, or any distinctive omelette after all". Such was the case with us, but in a different historical plane.

Many people then understood opposition as manifestation of violent confrontation between the government of the country and political leaders. Freedom of speech was understood as the opportunity to tell and write anything you like, even if it threatened to inflame interethnic and social contradictions. They didn't fight shy of even insulting the honour, dignity of the opponents. Election was regarded as the right to have their own candidates elected in their fractional interests.

Such misrepresentation of democratic principles was due to unpreparedness of the society to their comprehension, as well as hasty building of the democracy facade that gave rise to divergence of the ideas of democratic freedoms with their ugly realisation. This entailed heavy disappointment of the people. They were scared of becoming estranged from traditional state patronage, their rights bound up with obligations, necessity to determine their own fate independently.

At that time practically everyone was Jacobean keen on the complete demolition of the old society. There was an illusion of public unity, belief in democratic leaders capable of solving all the old problems at one stroke.

Many people had a euphoric dream of establishing adequate market without any problems, rapidly increasing people's liv-

ing standard, forming legal community with highly developed political freedoms within a short period of time. It seemed the moment you wished something it would become true.

However, expectations of all the CIS states that with liquidation of old regime, the civil society and democratic state, like western democracies, would be built within a short period of time, proved to be utopian.

Today it became obvious that there is no direct and short way from totalitarian society to it. In revolutionary impulse we forgot about objective laws of history. We also forgot that it took centuries to have western civilisation built. It took many decades to have national market established, serious fight went on for democratic rights, also it has not been very easy to build parliamentary system, it took a long time.

Our hope for rapid transition to market proved to be an illusion. The market often turned out to be primitive rag fair; privatisation of property didn't lead to its efficient operation due to the lack of the owner of the property; state budget was the source of credit speculation. Democracy as power of the people was often substituted by the race for power of various influential groups, strengthening regionalism.

Frequently benefits of freedom are enjoyed by criminal and destructive elements of all kinds, not by ordinary citizens. It is sad to admit, but a chance of immoral enrichment united unscrupulous representatives of state administration, law-enforcement authorities, financial, banking, commercial entities and criminal authorities in those troubled times. As you know, vicious fight is put in action against these people today.

The reasons of social crisis, we are going through, are rooted not so much in still weak political forces as in contradiction between progressive democratic process, on the one hand, and conservative forces embodying old mentality, on the other hand.

The dramatic effect of the situation is that the first impulse of the people to the reforms and freedom didn't find real economic, social and political support. We keep living in the environment

of the eroded society, which represents an odd combination of huge blocks of the old system of state socialism and disconnected elements of the democratic system of life.

What caused these problems? Primarily, the fact that Jacobinic period of reconstruction has fundamentally shaken confidence of the people in the reforms, in the notion of the democracy itself. One of the shrewd foreign experts of our former system expressed the atmosphere of that time just to the point: "Almost everything is possible, but nothing happens. Almost everything is solved, but next to nothing can be done".

The point was that the government of the Union then had not any programme of radical social, economic and political transformations. Neither of the fundamental principles of the Soviet system, such as the leading role of the CPSU¹, state ownership monopoly, ideological dictatorship was placed in question. Though, they had to become the main aspects of transformations. As a result, instead of reforming the system, we had its logical breakdown.

After well-known events of August 1991, the time of building new independent states and general passion for the idea of sovereignty as some panacea from all the present and future problems had come. Everyone was silent, but had in mind that declaration of independence and proclamation of the course to democracy and market was enough to leave all hardships behind. That was the case with Kazakhstan.

The reality turned out to be much more severe. It showed that there is a long way to go between the declaration of independence and achieving true sovereignty. This became obvious in 1993-1994. By that time polarisation of social groups has taken place. It turned out that there was no unity in the society, but quite different groups of the society with their own interests and understanding of its future system.

At that time there appeared numerous small groups that were called parties and movements under the leadership of the peo-

1 CPSU - Communist Party of Soviet Union

ple, who were driven by excessive ambitions and pursued, by no means, public interests. Two parliamentary crises with well-known consequences and two resignations of the Cabinet of ministers have become the signs of the disease of statehood building.

Indeed, it was the time of people's disappointment in the reforms and deep social and political stress. But it was also the time of sobering, gradual understanding of difficulties of the course of reforms.

I am telling all that not only for the sake of stating the facts but realising our own mistakes. The only justification for that may be the fact that we were on an unexplored road acting by method of trials and errors. Many thanks to the people, who showed understanding of all that at the referendum on April 29 this year.

At the same time unobserved but very serious headway of fundamental character has taken place in the years between 1991-1994 in all spheres of life.

Let's take economy. The market that has become an integral part of our life perhaps is not full-fledged market. But it has its own rules making allowances for domestic and interstate economic relations. For instance, we often touch upon the problem of revival of the former economic links within the CIS economic territory, rupture of which has become a serious factor of deepening the crisis of production. In the past these relations have been governed by the state from above, today they already start to be governed by market system from below. Or one more thing I'd like to emphasise is that such a market attribute as competition with its derivatives, such as quality of the goods and their real prices, is to our benefit. At the same time some elements of market infrastructure was in process of development, there appeared a strata of domestic entrepreneurs. The system of ownership was changing rapidly, foreign trade liberalised and national currency strengthened.

We shouldn't forget that from the moment of introduction of Tenge in November 1993, we practically started to keep finan-

cial and economic processes under control as well as the course of reforms in the country. At that very moment we actually started building our statehood. Kazakhstan has become known to the world, its image as a peace-loving state was growing. Political stability has become the chief guarantee to foreign investors, that was the major reason why they believed and came to us.

During the succeeding period we had overcome social collisions on the basis of Constitution and the law. In comparison with recent past it is important instead of former practice of dissidence and person suppression, to adhere to political method of problem solution and peaceful evolutionary transformations.

I would qualify it as distinctive feature of Kazakhstan version of building a new state. We managed to prevent from having political squabbling escalated into bloody conflicts, our parliamentarian crisis was not attended by tanks in the streets. We were neither drawn into the civil wars, nor let escalation of tension related to separative aspirations.

Many hardships had fallen to our lot, but in comparison with what other countries experienced, we avoided many horrors of transitional period and have the right to be proud of it. Therefore, we must value and protect our accord, stability in the state like the apple of our eye.

Today, I think, it's obvious to everyone that return to the former regime is impossible, since much has been changed in the economic system, psychology of the people and social system of the society. That is why looking at the road covered during the last 3-4 years, we may definitely say that by historical significance to the people and the state it is equal to the decades.

To real democracy, stability, spiritual revival

Our society is at the threshold of the new really democratic transformations. But if we seriously want to become legal state, we must strictly adhere to the Constitution, since no other

obligations may be superior to the law. Unfortunately, for too long and often our ideology covered up total lawlessness in regard to the society and each person by the necessity to protect their rights. Once the lawyer of the Renaissance Gugo Grotskiy warned: “The necessity, which infringes a law, is a great sanctuary of the human weakness”.

Today, when we are on the eve of the approval of the basic document for a long-term prospect, we must be beyond the situation, everyday difficulties and the “necessities of transit period” of all kinds.

Our chief goal is building a strong state, by no means as self-sufficing force, but as a tool of protecting citizens on the basis of commonly accepted democratic freedoms and values. And we see only one way to it, which is to limit to the acceptable extent the monopoly of the state ownership, develop other types of ownership and ensure each citizen with freedom of entrepreneurship.

In this connection we must reproach the Government, ministries and departments, which cannot outgrow “Soviet greatcoat” yet and keep behaving as advocates of interests of only state sector. They have to deal closely with other types of ownership, help private business. The laws not only permit, they urge to have it done.

The fruits of the tentative economic revival should be directed to satisfaction of the daily demands of socially unprotected strata, primarily the poor, disabled, pensioners and students. As far as the rest is concerned, the state is obliged to ensure economic independence for labour and creative self-realisation.

In order to perform all that, we must secure regular and reliable budgetary recharge. The decisive role in it should be played by reasonably adjusted tax system. We must not go beyond the limit, where tightened tax system starts to suppress economic activity of the people and reduce revenues. There is a golden postulate: a taxpayer is a partner of the state, not a game-bird, for which the hunt is announced.

To ensure economic growth and on this basis well-being of the people, I commissioned the Government to draw up a draft tentative plan of the economic and social development for the years 1996-2000 till November of current year. Without going into particulars, I would say that the document should determine required measures to increase living standards of the people of Kazakhstan minimum twofold, reduce annual inflation rate to 10 percent by 1998 and resume production growth by 1996.

This work-in-process shall include creation of the environment and infrastructure for efficient operation of small and medium business, development of private entrepreneurship. Great attention shall be attracted to optimisation of the system of social security of the people, including efficient division of responsibilities between the agencies of the state administration and transfer to the local authorities of the functions of rendering services to the people, which earlier fell under the competence of the enterprises and farms.

Broadly speaking, declared democracy without free economy is the ground for giving rise to dictatorship, irrespective whether it is dictatorship of one person, a group of people or a party. When the society is not yet structured, adequately stable, there might be any contingencies and any turn of the events.

Recently we have celebrated the 50th anniversary of Victory. The world owes its present day to the unfadable act of courage of the Soviet people. But hadn't Hitler, who launched the war, come to power with the aid of democratic elections. Aren't extremist elements of all kinds today eager to get the power without being covered up by the people's interests here and there? We are obliged to learn the lessons of the past and the present.

In Kazakhstan there are all the required political guarantees of democracy. I am convinced that we have chosen the right way of development. Only the facts that we have guaranteed multiparty system and freedom of press speaks to that effect. Political orientation of the state power is aimed at the civil peace and interethnic accord.

Unfortunately, some people do not realise yet actual irreversibility of transformations that had taken place. There are no parties in Kazakhstan, having adequate mass support and this deprives the state power of the objective indicators of public opinion. But the time shall pass and there will be built civilised political system, influential parties will be formed in the society with comprehensive programmes and qualified personnel, coming of which to power shall be normal and, what really matters, beneficial for the society.

A few words about the role of mass media in the formation of democratic society. As I have already told you, free and independent press has become invaluable democratic property in Kazakhstan. It is unusual to many people and they don't feel too good about it. Very often I feel like being pressured in regard to this matter from various sides. Nevertheless, I declare firmly that we shall continue to create the environment for ever existence of free periodical press in Kazakhstan.

Then we have to agree with the following: if the government creates normal environment for operation of press, the latter must act in compliance with the law and follow ethics of journalism. After all, any imprudent word may become detonator of the most unpredictable events. Perhaps, in chase of growth of editions some publications make express or latent attempts to play national or religious card. It has almost become a rule to discuss hardships of life and show only its black sides. Journalists must understand that it gives rise to feelings of frustration in the society, as well as social apathy and is far from being a help to an individual to have himself realised and be adapted in a new environment.

Dear Assembly participants!

Quite often in my conversations with people I am faced with the opinion that the reforms implemented lead to earthliness, that market psychology, whether we want it or not, gives birth to the worship of force, easy money and egoism. Perhaps, you too encounter grumbling that our young people lost moral orienta-

tion, scorn cultural sources and traditions of its people, have no respect for the elders. They are just mankurts, lost generation!

I think, flatness of these opinions is not the best argument in the eternal debate between “fathers and children”. Let’s make unbiased review of this problem. Major part of the youth today learn foreign languages, display interest to the culture, customs and traditions of other countries, try to understand spiritual roots of its nation, learn the fundamental of marketing and management and other wisdom. And, please note, they do it absolutely deliberately, fully understanding that new knowledge shall be useful in future. Isn’t it the way to true spirituality, to the springs of the world, which means national culture too?

On the other hand, to deny blank the danger of losing spiritual and moral heritage by the young generation is a serious mistake, to my mind. I agree, having the sluices opened, we have been faced with muddy stream of the so-called mass culture, which substitutes true morality with cheap surrogate in shining packing. Of course, with years the youth shall learn how to distinguish between real values and ersatz. You and I, people of elder generation must help them to find themselves in a complex world, to acquire spiritual orientation.

I am convinced that education of moral fundamentals of our multinational society must become a state policy. Or more precisely, we need a state policy in this sphere and thoroughly worked out short and long-term programme. I believe everyone would agree that the environment must be created in Kazakhstan for priority development of education, culture, arts, all those aspects of our life, which as world experience shows, proved to be quick-yielding activities. Investment in an individual, his studies, culture is the investment in the future of the state. Therefore, the Draft Constitution is oriented to the maximum on an individual and guarantees satisfaction of its spiritual and moral needs.

PUBLIC HARMONY IS THE BASIS OF DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT OF KAZAKHSTAN

**Speech of N.A. Nazarbayev,
the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan at the third
session of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan**

April 29, 1996

Dear delegates of the Assembly!

On April 29 we celebrated the anniversary of the nation-wide referendum for renewal of the President's term of office. And four months ago referendum was held for approval of the new Constitution of the country. Both historic events have been approved by the decisions of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan.

Therefore, before dwelling upon the most acute problems of today, I would like to thank the whole people of Kazakhstan, representatives of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan both those present at this session and working in every part of the Republic for the support rendered in those days of difficult 1995, which changed the political and legal environment in the country.

Usually we value only what we lose. Of course, policy does not know conjunctive mood, but let's imagine what we would have had today, if the first referendum hadn't been held a year ago in Kazakhstan.

First, we would have had two years of pre-election fight in store in the absence of parliament. We all would have had no time for economic reforms and social problems. The country would have been absorbed in long pre-election marathon, in the course of which unrealisable promises would have been made.

Second, we wouldn't have been able to adopt the new Constitution because without approval of the Presidents' course by the people it would have been wrong to propose fundamental changes in the state and legal system.

Third, consistent and clear integration initiative of Kazakhstan would have been impossible.

Our firm position in the problems of integration has become possible thanks to domestic political stability. This is precisely why Kazakhstan sinks neither into the integration utopia nor disintegration ambitions but remains peaceful and pragmatic in the matters of any agreements.

Finally, we must count external environment too. Due to various reasons pre-election fight in Russia and the decisions aimed at the presidential elections approved at the top level, including the State Duma, have an impact on the public opinion in Kazakhstan too.

It is clear that if today our Republic was at the height of election marathon, the supporters of the USSR restoration would have used the situation to the maximum to make it tense.

Therefore, I assure you that, the reason of approving this decision was far from being my personal considerations. Now, in my opinion, it is clear to many people.

As far as the Constitution referendum is concerned, it had fundamental consequences for the country. The former Constitution was extremely contradictory. Declaring a number of rather civilised principles, at the same time, it actually preserved Soviet system of economic and political relations. New Constitution, as a matter of fact, brought the whole state and legal system in its key points in conformity with real state of affairs in the society. Today, we have proper procedures for settlement of any debates by the system of state power. We must not forget that the first four years of independence the society was divided in the issues of language, character of the statehood, land ownership. In a new Basic Law of the country all these problems are

properly solved, and thanks to this tension related to the above mentioned problems has been removed.

Constitution has practically laid modern foundation for mutual relations between all the governmental departments, public institutions and the state.

These are all issues of great importance, but the main thing is that we succeeded in laying legal basis for establishing the market and building the legal state in time. Lowering down the tempo in implementation of the state legal reforms would have had heavy impact today.

If modifications in the legal sphere affect indirectly and not immediately, economic situation is promptly reflected in the life of the millions of our citizens.

Today quite often we hear nostalgic tones for socialism. But let's recall what we had at the turn of the 90-s, when we had just gained sovereignty. To make the comparison clearer, let's recall what was going on at the end of 1991 and beginning of 1992 in the economy, which was characterised as "economy of empty shopboards".

The economy was already chronically sick, irrational to the utmost. Money had meant practically nothing, inflation had burst through latent form into the open, the prices were beyond the administrative control, in spite of all the measures undertaken. Having money in their hands the people and the enterprises could not acquire required goods and products.

Long lines, fenced by the militia on duty, for bread-and-butter have become common everywhere and everyday. "Black" market flourished fully, as well as the system "of under the table distribution" of goods.

Old mechanisms of allocation of stock of goods continuously failed, the goods never reached many groups of the people. Discrepancy between the money supply and stock of commodities was threatened by the economic explosion. Could it be true to have such a short memory?

Today the situation is exactly the opposite, the market is full of various goods. Network of shops has increased greatly, no lines. No problem to buy food and clothes, electronic appliances and furniture practically from any part of the world.

If only we had money, which is a real problem today. We shall solve the problems related to the salaries and pensions to be paid from the budget. We need some time

But it is a problem for some people. It is a feature of fundamentally new quality economy, market economy, in which each person must realise that all consumption depends on its capabilities to earn, its enterprise, qualification and diligence.

We cannot fail to mention those achievements attained by the country in the last years in the process of macro-economic stabilisation. We should keep in mind that Kazakhstan is actually implementing its reforms for less than three years, i.e. from November 1993, the day of introduction of Tenge.

Significantly reducing the rate of inflation last year, we keep reducing it in current year. According to the results of the first quarter of current year it is the lowest in Kazakhstan compared to the inflation in the other CIS states. Bringing down the inflation rate, we attained the main thing, we activated the main lever of social security of the people with fixed income, mainly of the lower social strata such as pensioners, students, personnel of the budget organisations. Who was the first to suffer from inflation after all? Indeed, they were, since the income was growing at the rates incomparable to those of inflation.

Moreover, in current year in spite of difficult situation with budget, we almost doubled the wage of the personnel of budget organisations, as well as social benefits. And taking into account the assessed inflation, it means that real wage and income of the persons with fixed income increased by 50-60 percent.

Irrespective how hard it is, starting from current year we make indexation of money deposits and savings. We started this project from the least privileged groups of population, such as

the disabled, injured and war veterans. The Government is faced with the problem of paying pensions and next year it is starting to compensate losses from deposits to other pensioners.

We cannot also fail to mention the fact that real average wage in the country in dollar equivalent is steadily rising in an environment of stabilisation of the national currency exchange rate. Today Kazakhstan confidently ranks one of the first among the CIS countries in this index. And according to the plans of the Government, this index will grow steadily.

In many respects it promoted reduction of streams of workforce migration from our Republic to other regions, primarily Russia, ensuring stability at many enterprises located in the border area.

Encouraging fact of the economy is that for the first time we reached external surplus, fast growth of export, which in 1995 exceeded import by USD 1 billion 250 million, i.e. increased by 64 percent. Of prime importance is that an essential role in increasing export of products was played by agricultural and industrial complex, which has been subjected to cardinal reforms encouraging jump in domestic and foreign trade. Only Agrarian and Industrial Complex products export in dollar terms increased in 1995 approximately by 2,5 times compared with previous years, exceeding import for the first time by 1,7 time. All that works for stabilisation of the national currency, improvement of financial situation in economy.

In aggregate, with the reduction of inflation it will lead to growth of people's bank deposits, promoting capital growth, hence creating prerequisites for making investments in the production, transition from the "inflation" economy to the investment economy. Only in 1995 people's deposits increased from 5,4 billion KZT to 12,7 billion, i.e. doubled for one year.

Outlined stabilisation processes in the production, as well as tightening of the financial discipline in all the spheres of the economy contributed to solving social and political problems.

Strict measures in reforming enterprises and privatisation allowed to revive the production in a number of areas, which seemed to be hopeless.

Such non-standard form of the revival of enterprises as transfer in trust with follow-up privatisation promoted not only attraction of foreign investments and workforce, but allowed to solve the unemployment problem, increase wages, increase the volume of production and export of products. Thanks to the policy of reforms pursued, foreign companies invested over 2 billion dollars in the economy of Kazakhstan within a few years, which will give us its results this and next year.

Moreover, the policy of reforms implemented in a number of large enterprises had a good impact on the macroeconomic, social and political situation in the country.

It would be naive to deny complex and ambiguous problems, existing in the social and economic sphere, the mistakes and subjective defects made, problems related to the debts in pension and wage, crime control and so on. But at the same time to deny the achievements and call upon archaic economic management methods with reconstruction of State plan and State procurement system shall mean just lack of understanding of what is going on in the present-day world.

I am telling that because stabilising and consolidating role of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan in our contemporary political history is apparent. Therefore the problems of great social importance such as development of Eurasian integration, democratisation of the society and forming a new citizen identity must also be discussed at the present top-level forum.

Just at the beginning of the 90-s in most of the Commonwealth states people were of the opinion of joining big Europe and big Asia within a short period of time. In some CIS states aspiration for rapid integration with West and East, hope for assistance from abroad overshadowed the necessity of sustaining already existing and developed for decades economic relations.

This was the reason why in early spring 1994 the idea of Eurasian Union was put forward. In spite of the open opposition of different forces to this idea, starting with supporters of the accelerated disintegration of the post-Soviet territory to the emotional adherents of the USSR revival, it turned out to be the most realistic model of the integration process in a huge Eurasian territory.

Today it's not so important whether a new integration will be developed under the term of Eurasian Union or not, the point is not in the verbal medium of expression, but in the essence and process itself.

We have an agreement between Byelorussia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, which I call "4N" agreement for short. Central Asian Union, Customs Union, bilateral community of Byelorussia and Russia. What is it, if not reflection of multi-levelled integration?

Another condition of our understanding of integration is integration of independent states. I unambiguously declared at most diverse levels that Kazakhstan is ready to agree to the integration that wouldn't infringe its political independence. Our Republic primarily on the basis of our Constitution will never agree to formation of any type of the former unified state.

We may speak of only close, friendly integrated relations between the states in all spheres of life of the people. But these are the relations of the independent states, not parts of any mysterious and utopian federation.

Any irresponsible speeches in regard to the USSR revival and joining Kazakhstan to other state is an appeal to liquidation of the statehood of Kazakhs that causes just indignation of the people and leads to serious confrontation.

Such acts are anti-constitutional and illegal. For some reason nobody calls upon joining Russia to Kazakhstan. It is clear. Where does this disrespect and arrogance towards Kazakh people and its statehood come from? I would like everyone to mind it.

Upon signing the agreement of four states on March 29 in Moscow, many people were concerned about this question, whether Kazakhstan's sovereignty is going to be infringed or not. I may definitely say: no. The point is in a new quality of integration, but no more than that. We laid mechanisms of deepening integration in economic and humanitarian field, created new, in my opinion, more constructive standards and agencies of integration.

This is the point of approach. At the same time, integration means everyday hard work, which must be carried out for many years, maybe decades. And its results shall affect the people not tomorrow. The example of such thoughtful and co-ordinated integration is Europe. Therefore there is not any euphoria about signing integration documents. I agree, we laid the foundation, but hard and most serious work is ahead of us.

Speaking of integration, we must bear in mind not only economic aspect. There is also human dimension of integration. I agree that integration meets the interests of the whole people of Kazakhstan, but we have to understand psychological, emotional nuances too. As for me, the President of the country, one third of the population of which are Russians, keeping cultural, informational, humanitarian relations with Russia is of no small importance. Today I shall be honest with you, they are the citizens that I am primarily concerned of, when I want to accelerate integration process.

The Government of Kazakhstan made every possible effort to keep relations with Russia, taking into account the interests of a considerable part of the citizens of its country. Agreements signed in March in Moscow provision for real mechanisms of co-operation in education, science and culture. Our proposal to simplify citizenship procedure in all the states, which signed the agreement, has been approved. By the way, it has already been ratified by Russian Duma.

Working visit of the President of Russia Boris Nickolayevich Eltsin last Saturday to Kazakhstan has been marked by adoption of the most important resolutions on our co-operation in the Caspian region, joint activity in oil and gas section and at cosmodrome Baikonur.

I cannot refrain from telling about other event of obviously, historical character, it is signing of an Agreement for enforcement of trust in military field in the border area by Kazakhstan jointly with Russia, China, Kyrgyzstan, and Tadjikistan, which took place last week in Shanghai. It is the first step of such a great political importance taken in the Asian and Pacific ocean region, which shall evidently have positive impact on the maintaining peace and stability both in the region and in the whole planet.

We must value such foreign political acts, all our integration measures to become closer with neighbouring Central Asian republics, Russia, China, other countries, and remain unprovoked by ignorant politicians, who doing nothing in the process of drawing closer our nations, only thanks to doubtful tricks all of a sudden become press and TV heroes.

Restoration model of integration present the greatest danger today. We have seriously counted this factor not only because it may lead to unpredictable political consequences, but also because restoration is popular to a certain extent with some groups of population.

We have to understand that sovereignty and independence of the CIS states have become political and legal reality, confirmed by the international legal documents at various levels. They are now independent states.

However, another historical subject matter stands behind all that: "What is in fact proposed to restore?" Without going deep into the problem, I'll only say that breakdown of the USSR was caused by a number of reasons, not by the wish of some or other leaders. I am convinced that former Union's geopolitical failure

was caused primarily by strategic and technological lagging behind. I will not give boring figures, but it was clear to all the people of sense even at the beginning of the 80-s that technologically and economically we could not withstand competition with western countries. At full strain we managed to maintain strategic military parity. Huge resources, which could have been allocated to modernisation of the economy have been spent on arms race.

Today many people forget simple historical fact that the idea of major reconstruction of the system was put forward before 1986. It was Khrushchev, who wanted to start it, as well as Kossygin under Brezhnev time. And the reason for that was even then sober estimate of the system weakness.

Another reason was in organic incapability to solve the problem of interethnic relations. Declaration that we have settled the problem of interethnic relations once and for all and there was formed single Soviet people turned out to be a bluff.

Also the fact is committed to oblivion that bloody interethnic conflicts took place in the territory of the still existing USSR, as well as rising of interethnic conflicts in geometric series, not to mention ethnic genocide dramatically affecting the fates of all the nations at an earlier stages of the Soviet history.

People, who do not know the details of the economic history of late years of the USSR, cannot imagine what a chaos and mess was established in the country at the turn of the past and this decades. Annual wracking of the plan, economic depression, shortage of equipment, construction materials, food, unprofitable agriculture, collapse of economic relations and breaking up of the single economic territory. We all remember it.

Political system of the country fell to pieces before our eyes and the process of making the territories sovereign went beyond critical line. The attempt of forced reintegration in August 1991 only speeded up the process of breakdown. The whole point is not so much in the fact that the country passed into nothingness, but in the fact that a certain system has been ruined.

The whole truth is that the former regime was not of national, it was specifically of social-totalitarian nature. Total number of Russians, victims of the regime makes millions and millions. One of the greatest European cultures, Russian culture sustained grievous losses in the course of the physical extermination of thousands of the most educated people.

Several millions of its best representatives had to emigrate from Russia, simply escape. They were those, who afterwards made an important contribution to science, culture and economy of the West, not Russia. Great ethnic and demographic crisis of Russian nation caused by killing millions of the best peasants called “kulaks” inflicted a strike to Russian people incomparable even with world wars.

Starvation of the time of socialist transformations in Ukraine, according to the estimates of experts, caused a death of 3 to 5 million Ukrainians, there were even more victims in Russia.

Each of you perhaps has read horrible documents published about the activity of the so-called “special three”, who were granted the right to pass sentence of death. It was a kind of competition between infernal machines in the number of political prisoners. For instance, Kazakhstan CCCP(b)² applied for increasing the number of political prisoners by 600 people under the first category (sentence to be shot out of court and without right of appeal) and by 1000 people under the second (concentration camp). This is per month.

Can you recall where and when in the history a regional division of the political party applied to its headquarters for a permit to kill people by 600 units more than the limit?

Such limits have been established by the system, as if they were referring to killing any excessively bred animals, not alive people, our fellow citizens and compatriots. To keep alive, a son had to lodge information against his father, brother – against

2 CCCP(b) - Central Committee of Communist Party (of bolsheviks)

brother. Thus the system destroyed centuries old principles of humanity.

In this conference-hall there are representatives of all the nations, which have been deported to Kazakhstan under socialist power. The ancestors of the people present in the congress-hall were brought to Kazakh steppe as cattle in goods wagons, pulled off the home land, within twenty four hours shifting the whole nations.

According to the data provided by the MIA³ of the Republic, only during the war years there were deported 393 thousand Germans, 403 thousand Chechens and Ingushetians, 45 thousand Karachaevs, 37 thousand Greeks, 21 thousand Balkars, thousands of Koreans.... to Kazakhstan. We may continue this sorrowful list, but it will take a long time.

Could Muslims and Christians forget how in the years of militant atheism they were deprived of thousands of mosques and churches and not just deprived, how these mosques and churches were defiled and how nations religiousness was obliterated? By a modest computation out of 25 thousand mosques existing at the beginning of the century in the territory of the USSR, only 376 preserved in 1986 and 25 thousand Christian churches and cathedrals were ruined, 500 monasteries demolished. The ancients said: those, whom the gods want to punish, are deprived of memory and mind. Recollection of the fates of our ancestors must prevent us from the sweet dreams of the old time.

I'd like to dwell upon the development of democratic state, the ways of formation of Kazakhstan unity. The state is not only the territory and social system, just laws and economic system. The state is also a certain political community of the people identifying themselves as its citizens.

If issues related to the political, legal and economic basis of the statehood are to a certain extent apparent, civil self-determination, civil identification of the people is quite complicated

3 MIA - Ministry of Interior Affairs

substance. The citizen must always have the sense of belonging to this state, inseparability of its own fate with the fate of the country. It means understanding that well-being of each person is closely connected with the well-being of the whole country.

But nations of the CIS went through instantaneous and unprecedented crisis of identity. All of a sudden they lost their former statehood. The effect of this crisis was such a shock that many people still cannot get over it, though the majority managed to do it.

The results of various sociological researches show persistently that the overwhelming majority of the population of the country unambiguously identify themselves as the citizens of Kazakhstan.

In medicine there is such notion as “phantom pains” – there is no hand or leg cut long ago, but it hurts. The same with the USSR, it doesn’t exist as a state for five years, but some people still continue to consider themselves to be the citizens of that country.

This is speculated by some ultramilitant politicians, playing on heartstrings especially of those, whose historical homeland is outside Kazakhstan. The more frank politicians will be the sooner and the less painfully this political “phantom syndrome” will be recovered. The conclusion will not be encouraging to everyone, but honest: the USSR as a state of particular social system and particular geographical arrangement is in the past forever. The sooner a person will recognise this historical fact and identify himself, the better and easier will be for him, as well as for the country.

Today consciousness of the people is in search for accustomed niche, therefore emotional yearning for archaic familiar symbols of the past is understandable. Formation of a new identity shall be a success only, if the idea of democracy, freedom, pluralism, human rights, civil society shall find its union with a

nation-wide idea. It is possible, to my earnest conviction, only in the presence of two important ideological foundations, political independence and internal democratisation of Kazakhstan.

Formula of finding the identity, new self-identification of the people of our country is simple on the surface, but extremely complicated for implementation. This formula is as follows: independence may exist only in democratic Kazakhstan. In its turn without political independence real democracy is impossible in Kazakhstan. Formation of civil community in the Republic may become the third component in this formula, just civil community, not mythical super ethnic group. It is time to clearly define this most important issue.

The people of Kazakhstan is regarded as the community of the citizens of different nationalities, not as a new ethnic community. At this stage of our development this presentation of a problem is the only realistic one. By the way, the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan is one of the tools of civil consolidation of the representatives of various ethnic groups. In order to form new self-determination, new identity of the people, we have to make reasoned choice out of multiple options today. Search for nation-wide idea is getting more and more urgent character. Of course, it must have consolidating, not conflicting character. I already told my opinion of this issue three years ago.

Emphasis made on the stability, modernisation, independence and pragmatism as an ideological foundation of consolidation was right. However, we have to specify these basic principles today. First of all, it is necessary to revive historical consciousness of the people.

In the environment of totalitarian regime, the nations were allowed to know only history of the USSR. It referred especially to the ethnic minorities. Therefore the Kazakhs themselves didn't know history of their land, not to mention others. And this is not their fault. All the people must understand that there is a contin-

uous historical link of national statehood through many centuries. And many generations of Kazakhs, forefathers of residents of the present-day Kazakhstan had to fight for independence in order to have Kazakhstan acquire all features of statehood in terms and notions at the end of the twentieth century.

We should put a stop to insinuations of all kinds about non-existence of Kazakh statehood in the past. In this connection I would like to draw your attention to the fact that the notions “Statehood” and the “state” do not have the same meaning. Under the statehood, we mean not only territory, but the whole complex of political and legal relations, social, cultural and spiritual principles, on the basis of which functioning of the society as an integral system is possible. In this sense the statehood of Kazakhs existed from the ancient times. A different matter is registration of Kazakh statehood as a political and legal entity. It is known that it happened in the XVth century. But it is sad that among the researchers there is no agreement of opinion in regard of the exact date of the registration of Kazakh state. Here lie the main directions of ideological activity. How can we talk about bringing up the younger generation in the traditions of patriotism, when we are still wandering around written and unwritten sources in search of the date of formation of our own state? It is the urgent target of historical science.

On April 2, 1996 I signed a Decree “On the procedure of solving the problems related to the way of writing family and patronymic names of the persons of Kazakh nationality”. It is important to provide the people with the opportunity to revive centuries old national traditions. Now a new “Language Act” is being drafted. We have to amend and create effective methods of learning the language, primarily the state language.

Citizens of Kazakhstan must respect the state language of the country and be ready to learn and know it, bearing in mind that it is a native language of the majority of population of the country and that it will prevail in the future as the state language.

In this respect we have to change the situation, when Kazakh written language is regarded as a peripheral version of Cyrillic, it, naturally, prevents from treating it with due respect.

Prospective transition to Latin may efficiently promote learning the Kazakh language by the representatives of other ethnic groups, adaptation of technological potential of Kazakhstan to the world information space, as well as cultural integration into the Turkish speaking world.

It will also arouse respect of Kazakh speaking people to the languages of other nationalities of the country. Our position is counteremotion and mutual respect. There is no alternative to it.

In our environment common citizenship, political self-identification of the people with the fates of Kazakhstan statehood must become the basis for interethnic integration.

Simply stated, one of the foundations of the ideological activity must be in addition to ethnic principle, civil self-identification of the citizens.

Our policy is granting the people an opportunity to freely exercise their national and cultural interests and at the same time encouraging feeling of civil community and unity of Kazakhstan people on the whole. In the Constitution of the Republic, where Kazakhstan is defined as market social state, these are not just words. It is a choice of social, economic and also ideological model. And when the state declares that high income should be also heavily taxed, the Government must understand it correctly. We must encourage integration of the people in a social sphere.

Under socialism we lived, the working people were underpaid monthly more than one third of their wage (it is only according to the official data, actually even more). The state raised this money to pay pensions, free apartments, health services, education, benefits that created notorious distribution system, giving a chance to keep people dependent and under control. Therefore in the economy of today there is money of pensioners they were

deprived of. And we can't tell them: "it's not our business, live as you want, we have market relations now".

Though these are the debts of the non-existent state, we have to pay them off to the elder generation. The Government must allocate these funds from privatisation revenues, deduct amounts from the tax on property. Out of these proceeds we have to compensate losses of the people on their deposits, establish special fund through deductions from profit for soft credits to residential construction. We have already started this project reimbursing the losses on the deposits to the World War II invalids and veterans.

As you know, I am against all kinds of "isms". Having seen something of the world, I became convinced, that the system called capitalism has a lot of problems and diseases starting from the limitless egoism to unsettled social problems of millions of people. That's why there is no place for any idealisation. We are not for ideological disputes, we are for considering social interests of the people.

However, for that we have as a preliminary to accumulate considerable economic resources, which will be available, only if everyone works, producing goods for himself and the state. And all the market reforms are not the end in itself, they are means of creating efficient economy with clear social targets.

Speaking of the crisis of social identity, we must take into consideration unhealthy change in social system, change of social status of different strata of the society. Complexity and social implication of this crisis is determined by the fact that it affects elite strata of intelligentsia. World practice knows only two correct ways of solving this problem.

The first is adaptation of the cultural, scientific, educational elite to the market logic, i.e. it should live on the money earned.

The second method is sponsorship, patronage of the arts by the state of the national elite. We must overcome delicacy of the first method rendering real, not declarative support to the

creators of culture. I mean specifically creators and talented representatives of science and culture.

We need a team work with the Government and Parliament in drawing up comprehensive programme to solve these problems, not mutual reproaches and confrontation. The programme of individual support of cultural elite by the Government must be developed and implemented in 1996.

I would like also to point out the following. The science is the most important strategic resource of our sovereign Republic. And this resource requires special treatment on the part of the state due to characteristic features and in the best meaning of this word conservatism of the most complex organism called science. Understanding of its role and significance in building and strengthening of our statehood, in the processes of modification of social and economic relations, formation of the intellectual potential of the country, development of the economy objectively brought to approval of the decision on improvement of the science management system and measures for its strengthening.

With the purpose of development of mechanisms of realisation of this decision the Republican conference on the problems of scientific and technical development of Kazakhstan shall be held in May this year, in which leading scientists and experts, chief executives of the ministries and departments, largest industrial enterprises and companies shall take part, as well as the regional representatives.

We have also to take into consideration general logic of political transformations in Kazakhstan.

The target of the countries of transitional period today is truly unique, having inherited post-totalitarian forms of state system, to form democratic processes on the basis of undeveloped civil society. For us it is more complicated because we have to implement it in an environment of multinational country with many religions.

Few understand this level of complexity, and those who understand are looking for two simplest ways of its solving. The first is to turn the screws and establish classical authoritarian regime without any “democratic footsie”. I deny this approach on the two principle grounds. First, on the eve of the XXI century establishing closed authoritarian regime will bring to failure sooner or later due to economic, communication, information, as well as geopolitical reasons. I am deeply convinced that only democratic Kazakhstan may find its adequate geopolitical niche, not authoritarian.

The second reason is more serious. I emphasised repeatedly that we are quite experienced in authoritarian technology and it is not very difficult to suppress any shoots of opposition, meanwhile the target is in real modernisation of the economy, policy, science and culture. We won't have modernisation under all-round control by the authorities, primarily control of private life, spiritual sphere and without publicity in the society. Many generations of the people shed their blood for independence, not for having freedom in an independent state substituted for some fine word like authoritarianism, which means, in essence, no freedom in its own distinctive way.

The other quite simple way of solution of the above mentioned target is confrontation with power. Really, confrontation, conflict model of seizure of power in the history of the twentieth century has been implemented more than once. All political revolutions were founded on it. More than once it happened in the CIS states in the last five years. It was accompanied by bloodshed, violence and very cynic populism. And what is most important, nowhere it led to fulfilment of fine promises of the new rulers and expected improvement of life of the people. They say that no one, as a rule, learns wisdom from the mistakes of others. But the politician is obliged to learn, since his own mistakes shall entail grief of millions. I spent a lot of time reflecting upon anatomy of bloodshed, political conflicts in different regions of the CIS, having accurate

first hand information at my disposal and I became strongly convinced in the following: if political and economic interest of some groups is efficiently concealed under the protection of interests of the people, if it is aimed at mass ethnic and political conflicts, if the people are instigated to political aggression, the blood shall be shed sooner or later.

And the second lesson: the instigators, as a rule, come unscathed out of the battle, but they are the first to activate bloody conveyor. That is why I commissioned the Government to submit a draft law on domestic security of the state, prohibiting any acts aimed at destabilisation of the society to the Parliament for consideration. I hope that the Assembly shall support this proposal. We have just started to revive the economy, and implement social programmes. We need solidarity of the people, friendship and stability. Not just an exercise in intrigues.

I am for party pluralism in Kazakhstan. Today we have practically the whole spectrum of political associations in the Republic. But any class, religious, tribal or other parties prohibited by the Constitutions and law in Kazakhstan shall not be legalised. We have to preserve that small, but extremely important experience of democratic transformations and to have extensive dialogue between the power and political movements.

It would be most reasonable to conclude an agreement of stability between the political movements and jointly with power. Once one of the classics of liberal thought John Stuart Mill defined the law system as keeping a tight rein equally over the people and the government. We cannot seriously count on a new people's civil legal consciousness, if bureaucracy openly infringes the law. This is simple conclusion, but today it has, unfortunately, become very important for us.

You know very well that a number of decisions on personnel affairs in many regions of Kazakhstan have been approved mainly because of failure to observe the existing laws and the acts of the President. I warn the chief executives of all the ranks

















that their observance of legislation shall be under strict control. It will primarily be applied to all who fail to observe the legislation of the country.

But the fundamental and complex target is to change legal consciousness of the citizens. Fear of law maintained by the state repression, double standard, which allows to evade the law, these are two sides of the alleged legal consciousness of the past. Total lack of respect to the law against a background of total interference of the state in private life – such is our legacy.

It is impossible to change this stereotype within a few years. Indeed, we have founded a progressive legislative basis, but distortions in its implementation, corruption of the officialdom and direct abuse of power at different levels, together with inherited legal nihilism of the population, inevitable companion of any totalitarianism undermine confidence in the reforms. One ought to see the problem, not to take up ostrich policy. It is not only the question of the attitude of the people towards power. It is a question of confidence of the people in the fate of our statehood.

Official, irrespective of his position, involved in corruption, breaking the law, abusing power granted to him, not bound up with the interests of the people, works against the reforms implemented, ruins the country, betrays the interests of the state. He will bear adequate responsibility.

The Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan was founded just a year ago, it is a unique institution for achieving interethnic peace. During this time, by its activities it proved its importance as one of the factors of political and ethnic stabilisation in the society.

A considerable contribution is made to the revival and development of the culture of the peoples of the Republic. The activities of the National and Cultural Centres have been noticeably livened up. Such holidays as Naurys meiramy, festivals of Koreans, German culture, Tartar sabantui are celebrated by the whole Kazakhstan people. For the first time we had forums

and national holidays of Dungans and Kurd peoples. By the way, the word first can be applied to the global festival of Uigur youth, held at the end of October last year in Almaty, Republican festival of the German children's amateur and folk arts, organised in Akmola, "Book of people's memory" about the life of Turks in Kazakhstan, and many other events. Cultural life of the ethnic groups has become more eventful, initiatives of the National and Cultural Centres are approved practically in all the regions by the state authorities. Minor Assemblies, National and Cultural Centres in Pavlodar, Semipalatinsk, Zhambyl, Ust-Kamenogorsk, Petropavlovsk, Kokshetau now are housed in the new office buildings.

The Assembly has become the centre of organisational work with Diaspora. Thanks to granting a state status to its working agencies, the problems of the National and Cultural Centres were solved, the decisions on a number of them have been approved at the government level.

I have approved the proposal of the Assembly members, chairmen of the Armenian and Dungan Cultural Centres to celebrate anniversaries of the outstanding state and public figures of Kazakhstan Levon Mirzoyan and Magazy Masanchi. As is well known by the decision of the Assembly Council the Republican fund has been founded to render financial and organisational assistance to the National and Cultural Centres. Branches of this fund were opened in all the regions.

The Fund has rendered the first financial assistance to the Republican Cultural Centres. I hope that the same will be done in the regions. The decision has been approved to open the House of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan in Almaty, which will become the main shanirak of the Assembly. All the Republican National and Cultural Centres and Associations shall work under its roof.

The Assembly in practice has become the agency of people's diplomacy, which in addition to strengthening relations with the

Embassies in Almaty, establishes various contacts with historical homeland of Diaspora.

Thanks to it more and more students from Kazakhstan study in Russia and Byelorussia. A plot of land is parcelled out into construction of a new building of the Korean theatre. Another monument to strengthening relations shall be erected in Kokshetau region, where the professional training centre shall be built in commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the first deportation of Poles to Kazakhstan.

Members of the Assembly are taking an active part in all these projects, particularly the chief executives of the Cultural Centres. Ethnic Diaspora re-establish their relations with historical homeland with the assistance of the Assembly. Thus, recently "Kazakhstan - Ukraine" organisation was founded, Kazakhstan and Russian Friendship and Co-operation Society just started its activities. Our Assembly has established close relations with public organisation of the neighbouring state, the Assembly of the Nations of Kyrgyzstan.

Just a day or two ago the Assembly became a co-founder of the Republican magazines "Akikat" and "Mysl". At the recommendation of its Council, National and Cultural Centres and Associations the editorial board of these publications shall consist of the well-known political and public figures, who will jointly define theme-line of these publications.

Jointly with the National Agency for Press Affairs and Mass Media the Assembly decided to open a bookstore "Otan" in Almaty, which shall sell literature in the languages of Diaspora, living in our Republic. The Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan in close co-operation with Minor Assemblies under the regional Akims gathered rich material on the ethnic Diaspora.

The result of such work shall be publication of the unique book – encyclopaedia of the nations of the Kazakhstan. The Assembly also participated in a number of international conferences on the problems of interethnic relations and was the organiser of

the international conference on the problem of harmonisation of the interethnic relations in the new independent states (on the example of Kazakhstan), held in February this year in Almaty jointly with European Organisation for Security and Co-operation.

A unique idea in the whole post-Soviet territory was granting a quota to the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan for entering representatives of the ethnic minorities to the higher educational establishments. 2682 young people became first-year students of the Universities under the quota of the Assembly this year. Such regard to the youth of the ethnic minorities shall be given in the future too. I commissioned the Government to open Eurasian University, not only as the higher educational establishment, but as the Centre of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan to study interethnic problem, issues of getting the nations closer.

I can say that in the first year of its activity the Assembly successfully coped with the tasks and goals set before it.

There are, of course, unsolved problem, but on the whole it has obviously taken place as a public institution. The role of the Assembly will increase in the future as it acts in the capacity of one of the key tools of civil integration of the people of the Republic on which the future of our statehood and the future of our children depends.

This year we shall celebrate May 1 as the holiday of the Kazakhstan people's unity. It is thanks to the Assembly, since it was its initiative to have this holiday. We may not have a holiday without a gift.

I, as a chairman of the Assembly, would like to congratulate you with this cheerful civil holiday and present to all the participants of this session my book "On the eve of the XXI century", which is a collection of my reflections on the recent past and the future.

HISTORICAL MEMORY, INTERETHNIC ACCORD AND DEMOCRATIC REFORMS - CIVIL CHOICE OF THE PEOPLE OF KAZAKHSTAN

**Speech of N.A. Nazarbayev,
the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan at the fourth
session of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan**

June 6, 1996

Dear delegates and guests of the Assembly!

I am glad to have a chance to cordially welcome you in the ancient and eternally young land of Akmola!

I suppose that for the first time in its history such an authoritative Forum is convened, the participants of which represent the interests of all the nationalities, living in our country and that means the interests of the whole people of multinational Kazakhstan. This fact is a strong evidence that the new capital is becoming a real place of social and political life of the Republic, in this very case – the unusual tool of further stabilisation of interethnic relations.

First of all, I am grateful to you for the very important and timely initiative to sign Agreement for co-operation in Kazakhstan. All the parties, public associations and National and Cultural Centres, which signed this document should be the guarantors of civil peace, and the Assembly proved its status of the authoritative public institution, playing exclusively positive role in Kazakhstan society.

The Agreement for co-operation strikes the political keynote of 1997, which is declared according to my Decree on the

Year of the nation-wide accord and commemoration of victims of the political repression. It was expressly manifested on May 31, when we had Commemoration day of the victims of political repression. All the people of Kazakhstan were unanimous in the opinion that gloomy pages of our history must not recur.

However, discussion of the idea of the Year showed that sometimes people do not understand the necessity to digest our totalitarian past.

Meanwhile, I am deeply convinced that the lessons of history must be learnt diligently, from generation to generation. Especially at the transition stage of the social and economic development, which Kazakhstan is now going through.

I. The lessons of totalitarianism

One of the greatest philosophers of the past Emmanuel Kant was glorious by making meticulous analysis of both positive and negative sides of the least notional problem of being. As is known, a good practice has been established with our Assembly to review the most complex problems of political, economic and cultural development of Kazakhstan. Let's not break this practice today.

So, there are two mutually exclusive opinions in regard to the Year of commemoration and accord. They lead to the following: first, looking back, we may start looking for the guilty, including guilty nations; and second, behind us is a glorious path, which we must review not only from the critical point of view. I would like to dwell upon these two issues.

Let's proceed from the premise that there is no nation or people, which escaped totalitarianism that caused destructive and unfortunately, irremediable to some extent damage.

If the point is what our shameful opponents keep back, namely, the role of Russian people in bloody repression, one of the bitter truths of the XX century is that it was Russian people, the largest population of the former empire and the USSR, that experienced the biggest ethnic tragedy in its thousand years old history. Equally as Kazakh people, who lost almost half of its population directly or indirectly. I won't repeat the figures of the enormous in its scale and barbarian in its forms ethnic genocide of the resettled nations. Holding the events of this Year, we must highlight the key points. Only then we'll come at the whole truth that neither of the nations can be blamed for the ethnic Apocalypses of the outgoing century. The system alone is to blame.

It would be naive to shut our eyes to obviously positive moments, which we had in our recent history of all the nations, including Kazakhs. It's indisputable that just for seven decades, negligible period of time in essence, the economy and once patriarchal mode of life was modernised immensely. After all that success has been achieved not by extraterrestrials, but you and me, our fathers and grandfathers. The road we covered is our common past with its victories and defeats, joys and tragedies. Let one, who is of the other opinion, make clear to himself, that for his part it would be humanly dishonourable to reproach on the people of elder generation for historical meaninglessness or insignificance of their acts and deeds.

You know that I have always been adherent to the duly considered attitude to the history. This science cannot stand any falsifications or alterations. We must always remember that the art to distinguish between the seed and the weed is the only guarantee to avoid old mistakes. Therefore we must not allow to turn the Year of Commemoration and Accord into competition in slandering the past. It has quite different essence and other lessons. I would call them the lessons of totalitarianism.

Lesson one. We are all under moral obligation to the generations, who lived earlier. The fates of the millions and millions of victims of political repression is not a myth. It is a brutal reality, it is buried in memory of the past, but it doesn't mean that it became less brutal. Kazakh land became the place of location of a number of concentration camps, one of the most horrible inventions of totalitarianism.

Do we realise that long before concentration camps of Fascist Germany, in the territory of Kazakhstan, including the region, where you and I are now, large-scale, bloody "cleaning of human material" was carried out. Indeed, such was cynical expression of one of the pillars of totalitarianism Mr. Bukharin, who in the "cohort of leaders" had the reputation of being gentle-hearted person.

There are people both dedicated to religion and atheists in this hall. Liberty of conscience in a democratic state is in fact an extremely individual question.

But there are common to all mankind postulates, which are embodied in one of the wise monuments of human thought. It says: "People alive know that they will die, and the dead do not know anything and there is no yet retribution to them since memory of them is consigned to oblivion". The goal of the Year of Commemoration and Accord is to have these sad words remind us of our duty. Grieving over the guiltlessly killed we act in full compliance with both human laws and God's book.

Let's review some facts. Separately and jointly as members of the "kulak families" in the USSR 25-27 million people have endured repressive measures. 20 million out of them made peasants dispossessed of their property, in essence, "liquidated" as a class. After the revolution and the civil war about two million people left the USSR. In February 1954 the detailed information on the people convicted for counter-revolutionary

crimes in the period from 1921 through 1954 was prepared for N.S. Khrushchev. Total number of the convicted people made 3 million 777 thousand, 642 thousand were sentenced to supreme measure of punishment. In Kazakhstan for the same period over 100 people were convicted for political reasons and over 25 thousand were shot. The scale of political repression is amazing. Particular cynicism was that in the years of dreadful famine caused by collectivisation, only during one year of 1931 over 150 thousand of specially resettled people were lodged in the regions of Central Kazakhstan from up-country of Russia. It is difficult to differentiate between direct victims of famine and its consequences in the form of horrible typhoid epidemic, but multiple consequences of this forced experiment in Kazakhstan lead to approximately 1 million 750 thousand victims, that makes 42 percent of the Kazakh population of the Republic. I'd like to mention one more horrifying in its scale and number fact of human tragedies. Within three decades from 1920 through 1949 in the USSR there were deported 3 million 200 thousand people.

According to the estimates made by the well-known Russian historian Roy Medvedev, 40 million people were subjected to repression from 1927 through 1953. In the judgement of other researcher, this statistics even more horrible. No matter how varied these figures were, the history of human race just never knew repression of such scale, and I hope will never know any more.

The problem after all is not only in great ethnic consequences of the tragedy, but also in its negative social outcome. We mean extermination of the whole classes and social groups, that brought to the formation of extremely deformed social system with mutilated scale of motives of labour and human life instead of balanced social system. Not only figures are horrifying, though the tragedy of millions of people is behind them. Horri-

fyng is the other thing, it is lack of understanding of viciousness of totalitarianism in general.

Lesson two. We must understand what historical option was interrupted by totalitarian regime and what line of development we would have taken, if the course of history had not been interfered by grandiose and brutal social utopia.

Just recently citizens of Kazakhstan celebrated the fifth anniversary of its state's independence. It is the result of not only centuries-long history of fight of the people for freedom and independent development, but also the result of ever lasting activity of the national brainpower. At the beginning of the century Alikhan Bukeikhanov, Akhmed Baitursynov, Myrzhakyp Dulatov and their associates founded the "Alash" party, the programme of which provisioned a great deal of what we do at present. Almost a hundred years ago a delegate Congress of five regions was held in Uralsk, where Constitutional Democratic Party was founded. Practically at the same time it was declared as a branch of the Constitutional Democratic Party of Russia in Kazakhstan and its leader Alikhan Bukeikhanov was elected a member of the Central Committee of this party.

Perhaps, it would be interesting for you to learn that Kazakh constitutional democrats, called cadets then, proposed in their programme to exercise legislative power through Duma and introduce presidential government in the country.

Each citizen was vested with right of casting a vote at public elections, irrespective of origin, nationality, religion and sex. Elections of delegates had to be held through direct equal and secret ballot.

Amazing astuteness! But the only thing that these outstanding people were conferred to was the label of nationalists in the Soviet historiography.

Let's seriously think of this fact. There was a historic chance to form democratic state in the territory of Kazakh-

stan even in the first quarter of the twentieth century. Russia's way to progress was also on this track of normal evolutionary development. Due to various reasons this natural and civilised progress was discontinued. Whether we would be in the position of overtaking country against, for example, eastern "tigers" or "dragons", if we started democratic transformations eight – nine decades earlier is highly questionable. But not less important is another hypostasis of this problem. If evolutionary processes had prevailed then in Russia, national statehood formation would have taken place half a century earlier in all the countries of Eurasian territory. We must clearly understand that historical period of lagging behind, that we are going through, is the direct result of the missed national opportunities. It can be proved by historians. But sober understanding of this simple truth must become a factor of mass consciousness.

Neither Kazakhs, nor Russians, Ukrainians, Uzbeks are inferior to the same Indonesians or Philippines. Then what is behind fantastic breakthrough of the last decades that had taken place almost in the whole territory of South-Eastern Asia or in Mexico? References to mystical role of their national psychology? No, and again no. There are no bright and stupid nations. Our lagging behind is explained by exclusively political, social and economic characteristics of totalitarian regime with the only communist ideology.

The second lesson is as follows: totalitarian regime of the past made us to speed up implementing reforms in all spheres of our life at present.

Why is it necessary to have these reforms implemented as soon as possible? Because the time, which was used by other countries to become the leaders, was wasted by totalitarianism absolutely to no purpose.

Everyone ought to understand it.

Lesson three. We have to remember the past not only in order to fulfil our duty to the victims of regime and realise why it is so difficult to speed up the reforms. We need it to avoid old mistakes.

As the saying goes: “We must undergo the truth, it is not taught”. We underwent this truth. Today occasionally we can hear the appeals to return to strict methods of political management. They say, then we’ll have more order. I absolutely disagree. Not so much because such views do not conform to my personal convictions, just because establishment of order with so-called “firm hand” gives precisely the opposite outcome in the historical perspective. Especially as the people that once gained freedom shall never give back or assign it to anybody.

Simple decisions are often wrong. The totalitarian political machine with one party, one ideology, one mentality was an illusory simplicity, since an attempt to drive by it in the “bright future” turned into a catastrophe. This simplicity was especially murderous in the sphere of ethnic relations. National policy of the Soviet period, based on combination of violence and ideological levelling took the shape of great catastrophe of consciousness and inner world of the people. The roots of inter-ethnic conflicts and fratricidal wars hitherto smouldering in different regions of the post-Soviet territory lie in its recurrences, not in alleged inherent aggressiveness of some nations.

It would be useful to give thought to one simple question: why did totalitarian system in the first place liquidate intelligentsia? Logic is simple: to deprive people of its feeling of national pride and national dignity, memory, culture, intelligence. It’s not by chance that in Russia, the first to be deported were philosophers, literary men and thinkers, whom the people were proud of and who glorified Russian intellectual tradition. And those, who stayed, had a tragic fate.

It’s not by chance that Alikhan Bukeikhanov and his fellow-champions were persecuted by the system till the last day of

their lives, it's not by chance that so dramatic were the fates of even those, whom the system promoted and brought up such as S.Seifullin, U.Dzhandosov, K.Satpayev, M.Auezov and dozens of other democracy oriented Kazakh intelligentsia trained in European high schools.

Today, when they say that the problem of interethnic relations was solved in the USSR, one may agree that in a way it was really solved. But the implication of this solution was in offering all the problems of interethnic relations in sacrifice to political interests of the system. How did it specifically manifest itself? It expressed itself in the fact that tranquillity of some people was ensured by the oppression of others, the alleged sister republics were quite officially divided into "junior" and "elder", in the fact that overnight the whole nation could be put on board the wagon for cattle at the point of a gun and transported thousands miles away from home land. Of course, this method is attractively easy for the governors, but it is tragically dreadful for the nations.

This is why speaking of the national accord, we must be aware that those methods of "solution" of interethnic relations problems known to us from the past must in no way be repeated. And for that we have to confront the truth.

What is most important is that there are no ready answers to settle these problems in nature, each country develops the sphere of interethnic relations in its own way. The fact that this is not an easy problem is evidenced even by the experience of the states with developed democratic system and favourable economic situation.

Thus, the third lesson, which totalitarianism taught us is dead-end and absolutely unpromising method of resolving the problem of interethnic relations. It is impossible to achieve interethnic accord on the old basis in present-day Kazakhstan.

II. Coping with “Socialist syndrome”: psychological aspect

Since at this session we are dwelling upon the issues of historic memory, we should also consider psychological aspect of the phenomenon, which I would call “Socialist syndrome”. The lessons we have learnt from the recent past provide rich material to make analysis. It is important also because today the issue: what is more preferable to the life of the people, whether totalitarian socialism or market democracy is extensively discussed by a man in the street.

Let’s recall that it took us a bit over seven decades to build the Soviet system, which was ruined a few years ago. Our independence is only a bit less than six years old. But it is, as they say, *de jure*. And if to look at the things objectively, actually, we started to pursue independent policy only from the end of 1993.

I have already said above that totalitarian, planning system in the country was established through sufferings of dozens of millions people, by blood and sweat of our fathers and forefathers. “Ardent tribune of revolution” Vladimir Mayakovskiy at the beginning of the establishment of barrack system expressed poetic dream of his generation to see “socialism built in the battles”.

It seemed that these battles would be local and transient. But they turned into never-ceasing battles lasting for over seventy years. A few generations altered during this time, but neither of them had a chance to live in more or less comfortable conditions. I am not speaking of the welfare, which was time after time declared by the ruling elite, but always remained a dream of the millions of common people. It was hard to live in the 30-s, when only in Kazakhstan half of the population died of starvation and in the succeeding years of the war and post-war period, and in

the epoch of so-called “developed socialism” with its empty shopboards and complete earthliness. The years of Gorbachev’s “perestroika” were also far from being prosperous. It took the shape of complete chaos and led to final breakdown of the system. In essence, the whole history of the Soviet time was a great and overall queue of the people. It was a queue for concentration camps, and emigration, for the food and apartments, for cars and other chronic and universal shortage.

In the unforgettable for all of us environment of those years the society was striving primarily for intellectual freedom. It was permanently, the main semi-licit subject of conversations of the most close friends in the kitchens, smoking places, practically all the people, whom we call by cult word today “electorate”. They were engrossed in reading “samizdat” manuscripts, listened to the tape recordings prohibited by all types of censors, got true information from foreign night “radio voice” broadcasting.

Administrative and command system, which was just on its way out in the last decade, collapsed and long-awaited freedom flooded, as they say, from all sluices and the publicity promptly flushed beyond any permissible and reasonable limits. And only when euphoria of the first squall of freedom passed away, when a short period of uncertainty passed by, we succeeded in building start position into the future.

That was the time, when we started building new society, independent state with up-to-date market economy.

Just from the beginning we had to and now have to solve simultaneously a great number of basically new tasks and problems in all the aspects of policy, economy, defence, social sphere, domestic affairs, international relations.

This course is not our invention, this is the course that all the new independent states are taking today. And neither of them is trying to keep the former system or reconstruct former “social-

ism". And nobody can reverse the course of history. Taking this course, we couldn't even imagine how tremendous would be forthcoming upheavals, how hard would be economic and social trials that would fall to our lot.

Human memory was always selective and to some extent even selfish category. Of course, each wants to remember about free education and health services, stable and quiet job, where one could sit doing nothing till pension and get fixed wage. But at the same time it doesn't come to mind how objectively your knowledge and skills were estimated, if you were first class expert. Or vice versa, doesn't the question arise whether anybody needed your job at all together with organisation you worked for?

Indeed, many illusions of the former pseudo-socialism disappeared. But there are still some people inclined to idealise the past, feel nostalgic of egalitarianism as of the supreme manifestation of social justice. It is clear psychologically and can be explained: they say, it would be great to turn back the time! It never occurred to them that one cannot preserve the walls when the foundation is collapsed. As well as one cannot preserve the whole former social superstructure of the economy torn to pieces.

Let's recall the rationing system of distribution of the major goods. It was not in the hard war years. It was in the so-called happy years of the sixties, seventies and eighties, when the country sustained shortage of just all the goods. Elementary goods such as soap, bulbs, salt, sugar, washing powder and many other goods of everyday consumption were in short supply. People laid in stock absolutely everything that can be found on the poor shopboards. In the capital of Kazakhstan half a year reserve of salt was sold out within three days of June 1988. The government of the Republic with great efforts in the multiple offices of Moscow tried to get the funds for buying food and tobacco for combine and machine operators, engaged in harvesting the crops.

Let's recall general egalitarianism and poorly conceived poverty, absolute power of dictatorship and unwanted people, Pharisaim of propaganda and absence of any chance to change our own life to the better. Let's ask whether it is regretful that socialism with all its "amenities" irretrievably sank into oblivion?

Let's be frank: we had to go through many hardships in the first years of our independence too, when Kazakhstan in no way could escape the impact of the former "people's economic complex of the USSR". And the point was not in our full economic self-isolation, final break off economically justified relations. Kazakhstan never set such task and made such initiatives. To the contrary, even then we spoke out of the necessity of economic integration. And the life proved our policy to be right and rational later on.

But we floated on the irregular waves of policy pursued by Moscow, again and again taking turns of crisis. Such was the situation till January 1992, when the prices were liberated at once causing shock and irretrievable upheaval in all the former Soviet Republics.

And only with introduction of our own national currency we started treating independently this terrible disease and undertook independent economic measure. Therefore it took us more than two years to curb the inflation. Only last year we managed to reduce inflation rate to the minimum.

Yesterday's schoolchildren, who today with more and more confidence make a fresh start in public and economic life of the country, of course, do not remember the way of life and psychology of our being seven-eight years ago. But their parents remember it very well. Let them tell children the truth about that time. Young people, tomorrow's principals, managers, businessmen, state officials, in a word, those, who will become active participants of the economic, social and political life of the country, must know the truth without any embroidery in

order to prevent from repetition of poverty-stricken wretched existence of their nation.

Some people may object and ask what is it better in today's life of the people than in yesterday's or the other day's? Indeed, I know, there are a lot of problems, especially in the social sphere. And you know well that practically the whole quarter of current year I was engaged directly in solving the most acute problems. I'll remind you that we attach great importance to settlement of debts in wages, pensions and benefits, privatisation, development of small and medium business.

You also know of the conclusions and estimates I gave to the activity of the executive bodies at all levels, as well as measures undertaken and positive shifts. We place exacting demands upon the Government and Akims, chief executives of the ministries and committees. They were commissioned to realise specific targets in order to improve the work in all the economic spheres, increase efficiency of the reforms, establish order and reduce social costs.

What chief executives at all levels do under the pressure of the President must become everyday job. I keep it under thorough control. I have already told you earlier and I shall repeat it again today: if the Government within the established terms fails to cope fully with the targets set and the people do not feel that the reforms are implemented to their benefit, I shall take other measures. But the target set in any case must be achieved.

And today we all have to get together to prevent disorder in the country and breakdown of the society into opposing blocks and movements, consolidate our effort to endure difficulties. And in some cases to show tolerance.

In due course we shall see all our mistakes and shortcomings. Making analysis of the recent past, you understand that it was difficult to avoid most of them, though there are also such, from

which we could have been insured. Therefore, correcting deficiencies, we must keep working and implementing the reforms. No matter what, we must sustain political will and prevent from failure and rushing aside in pursuing the strategic line chosen by us. And only then recent past shall not be perceived exclusively through rose-colored glasses by some part of our population.

III. National accord is the basis of political stability.

National accord is not only a subject-matter of theoretical discussions. It is a matter of practice, the state's daily pursued policy. We have the right to say that this policy in Kazakhstan is rather rational and duly considered.

In what we may agree with Lenin is that the practice is really a criterion of truth. And the truth is that the results of our national policy are evident.

We all remember heated debates regarding citizenship we had three-four years ago or debates regarding language before the Constitution referendum in 1995. We do not hide that conflict risk in interethnic relations in the first years of independence was rather high. In 1992-1993 each fourth Kazakstan person was seriously concerned about a threat of aggravation of interethnic relations.

Today according to various data the number of those, who are concerned about this problem, reduced to 5-6 percent.

The state of mass consciousness is a sensitive barometer. And stable reduction of concern of the society about the status of interethnic relations proves the rightness of chosen course in the national policy. That means that the time itself proved the rightness of our approaches to solving existing problems.

There is another true evidence of rationality of our policy. It is significant reduction in the level of migration. I'd like

to note, by the way, that this problem is not always raised accurately. Speaking of migration, some observers and experts do not want to see a simple fact that migration outflow from Kazakhstan was rather high in the 1980-s. It was caused by many reasons. Primarily, because a certain stage in the life of the whole generation of people ended. Most of those, who arrived to develop virgin lands or according to assignment to the industrial giants of Kazakhstan, upon termination of their work term, simply returned home. And it didn't cause any political collisions. However upon breakdown of the Union, migration outflow started to be interpreted through political prism. It is partially true. But only partially.

First, considerable part of migrants referred to the same category as in the previous years: people returned home.

Second, a great number of armed forces personnel and members of their families left due to trivial reason that military infrastructure of the ruined state could not remain the same, due to non-existence of the state itself. Therefore no questions may be put to Kazakhstan in this regard.

Third, a new phenomenon occurred when upon breakdown of the country many people started to feel certain discomfort, fear for the future, uncertainty, typical to an individual in a new environment. Especially as millions of people faced, one might say, not only changes of individual and biographic character, but changes caused by colossal social tension in connection with change of both the state system and the character of the social and economic system of the society.

Such phenomenon occurred in different times in different parts of the planet even in the mild forms of breakdown of the state entity. By the way, similar things are going on now both in South-Eastern Asia and African continent.

Fourth, could anyone imagine ten years ago, that for instance, thousands of Germans would have an opportunity to return le-

gally and in such a great number to their ethnic homeland? All the more so as it is Federative Republic of Germany, one of the most developed and stable states of the world. If people had such right in 1970-1980-s, the emigration, perhaps, would have been not in less, maybe even in greater scale. Further. Was it possible for the Greeks to emigrate freely and without difficulty to Greece and for the Poles- to Poland, etc? No, there was no such an opportunity. Under the Soviet power emigration abroad, as a rule, was prohibited or had political underlying reason. It's enough to recollect that emigration of the Jews to Israel was related to sensitive political bargain between the Soviet Government and the west.

Therefore let's be honest and recognise that namely granting freedom of choice of the place of residence by the laws of the country, liberalisation of the whole political sphere played a key role in this process. Not in the least any discrimination policy of the state.

Finally, one must count for the fact that many nations of the CIS countries building their independent states became titled nations in the language of legal terms. Their aspiration for strengthening the statehood, preserving the language, culture, traditions, reviving historical heritage is quite natural. It is a sound and explicable emotional motive.

Migration peak in Kazakhstan falls on 1992-1994. Today the situation is considerably stabilised. According to statistics, presented to me, in 1996 the number of emigrants reduced by 3,2 times compared to 1994. Besides migration outside Kazakhstan, inverse process of re-emigration is taking place, i.e. those, who earlier emigrated, return back to Kazakstan. By the way, it applies to all the nationalities and groups of the population.

For instance, according to the information of Kazakstan Embassy in Germany, thousands of our former co-citizens of Ger-

man nationality express their wish to return back to Kazakstan. In short, we may close the subject of debates regarding the migration since the major reasons for it were the factors of economic and political aspect. It cannot be otherwise since as soon as large industrial enterprises started operating we observed considerable reduction in the scale of migration.

On the whole, according to the estimates of the experts we may forecast material stabilisation in migration processes. The statistics impartially registers the trends in public processes, including migration. In this very case it registers one of the external manifestations of stability of interethnic relations.

We founded the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan, a unique public institution with the purpose of implementing national policy in a new environment. This institution, to tell the truth, was neither possible nor needed under the circumstances of totalitarian society, since national policy then, as we know, was carried out using other means and in other forms.

The results of the Assembly's activity have been recognised not only in Kazakstan. Representatives of the authoritative global international organisations studying the experience of interethnic relations harmonisation in Kazakstan point out that it is worth studying.

For instance, such conclusion was made by the participants of three OSCE conferences with High Commissioner for the National Minorities Affairs Mr Van Der Stool at the head. **Under his chairmanship problems of national policy in Kazakstan were discussed at the "round table" in Switzerland in December last year. Official statement of the chairman distributed among OSCE members reads that "the Government of the Republic of Kazakstan pursues consistent policy of en-**

uring adequate environment for exercising interests of all the ethnic groups in the country and further harmonisation of interethnic relations. Adherence to this policy approved by the majority of public institutions and citizens and supported by the international community, including OSCE, constitutes a firm basis for further stabilisation of interethnic relations in the country”.

This high international appraisal is given not for nothing. It is appraisal of the hard work done by the Assembly, including a job of those, who are present in this hall today. I would like in this connection to express my gratitude to all of you.

Some members of the Assembly are taken into the team of international experts working on the problems of interethnic relations by OSCE. Your experience is being studied in many CIS countries. President of the Russian Federation B.N Yeltsin by one of the Decrees assigned a task to review the possibility of establishing an institution similar to our Assembly in the country. Similar organisation is being established in Kyrgyzstan.

Speaking of your activity, it should be recognised that the Assembly makes a great contribution in preserving and ensuring interethnic unity and peace. It is participation in public discussion of the new draft-laws in the sphere of national policy. It is also large-scale work with Republican and regional National and Cultural Centres, which serve as chief tools for revival of ethnic language, culture, traditions and customs. It is also holding congresses, ethnic festivals, formation of national mass media, publishing literature in ethnic languages of Kazakstan. It is also the work in strengthening relations with Kazakh Diaspora abroad and establishing contacts of representatives of our ethnic groups with their historical homeland. It is also positive shifts in the field of education of ethnic minorities.

Today newspapers are published in eleven ethnic languages in the Republic, TV studios broadcast in 12 and radio stations

in 6 ethnic languages of Kazakstan. It is a sound base for creating informational space with the purposes of self-expression and development.

We open special kindergartens and schools for children of ethnic groups. 426 thousand children are being trained and brought up in seven ethnic languages in pre-school institutions, as well as 3 million in the secondary schools in the Republic. Approximately 106 thousand children, representatives of the ethnic minorities learn their native language at school. I'd like to note noble and expedient initiative of the people of Pavlodar. A school of ethnic revival was opened there for 500 schoolchildren, where education and upbringing is conducted in 9 ethnic languages.

The Assembly is granted quotas for the entrants to higher educational establishments. In 1996 over 9 percent of Kazakstan students or almost two thousand people started their training under such quota. In general the share of first year students representing ethnic minorities for the last two years increased from 12 to 17,7 percent. In total starting from 1995 4600 representatives of the ethnic minorities entered higher educational establishments of the Republic. This work is extremely important and it shouldn't be regarded as a short-term campaign.

While preparing to present session, I made a request to provide statistics on the ethnic composition of the personnel of the state authorities. I've got very interesting information. For instance, Kazakhs and Russians, Ukrainian and Byelorussians, Koreans and Uigurs, Tartars, Bulgarians work for Administration of the President. The Government today consists of 8 Kazaks, 8 Russians, 8 Ukrainians, and one Tartar. Obviously this proportion may be changed but such changes shall be motivated only by business qualities of an individual. Judicial system at all the levels is represented by Kazakhs, Russians, Ukrainians, Tartars, Koreans, Germans, Ingushes, Armenians, Uzbeks, Poles, Bye-

lorussians, Moldavians, Jews, Uigurs, Azerbaidjanians, Chechens, Bashkirs, Chuvashies, Ossetians, Kyrgizs. Tell me, where, in which country of the CIS there is such a situation? Nevertheless, all kinds of supporters appear now here now there, who want to look more saint than Roman Pontiff and keep speculating about some ethnic oppression in Kasakstan. I'll tell simply the following regarding this. If you are sincerely concerned about the fate of compatriots then, please, render real financial, economic support to the development of culture, language, business of your compatriots. Many countries all over the world take such approach. But if there is no substance except for old slogans, then better to keep the peace of the people, who recognised their new state, new citizenship by their faith and senses. Since mere political propaganda without real mechanisms of civilised support of the Diaspora abroad will lead to nothing except for interethnic tension.

Formation of the new Kazakstan civic consciousness is getting to be one of the most acute political problems affecting the foundations of our statehood. We are striving for political, civil unity, and people of Kazakstan must become the community of citizens of different nationalities, not some new ethnic community.

First of all, I must say about the role of Kazakhs, a state forming ethnic group. Independence of Kazakstan is not a gift of the fate to Kazakhs, it is gained through sufferings, a deserved right to build its statehood in its native land. Nobody must throw doubt upon this unconditioned historical and political fact.

In spite of the fact that Kazakhs, constituting the fifth largest nation in population of the former USSR, still became ethnic minority in their own native land and their native language was

at the vanishing point. It is again a fault of the system. Respect for the aspiration of Kazakh nation for revival of its culture and history, national identity on the part of the citizens of different nationalities of Kasakstan is a strategic basis of the stability of the country and a factor of confidence between the people.

First, present-day territory is the only space on the planet, in the frontiers of which Kazakh people has historically and politically justified chance to fulfil many centuries old wish to have its own statehood.

Second, building this statehood, Kazakhs again display inherent wisdom and feeling of justice. Not only in post-Soviet territory but as we see, in other countries of the world, going through the time of transformation, revival of national statehood, we can find a number of examples of balanced and efficient national policy, which ensures peace in the whole society. And among those countries, there are few that bear comparison with Kazakstan in the ethnic composition of population.

Third, one may place demands to anyone upon presenting them to himself. Thousands years ago there was a golden rule established: "Do not do to others whatever you don't want to be done to you". Such a rule can be applied both to any man of education and any nation, particularly to the peoples of multinational society.

Diaspora of Kasakh nation all over the world meets these requirements. Our compatriots, which constitute approximately 5 million, live mainly in Russia, Central Asia and dozens of other states. All of them fluently speak the language of the titled nation of their countries, respect their customs and traditions, getting along with representatives of other nationalities. Not any movements and parties politicising national factor are established anywhere.

You know very well that Kazakhs emigrated outside the country mainly forcibly, under the pressure of totalitarian system or

escaping starvation. For all the years of their forced residence abroad we have not learnt of any significant or insignificant unmotivated overt action of Kazakh population on the national, political or religious grounds against native population. Kazakhs up to date tried to preserve their national identity, though in all these countries the Kazakh language is deprived of any institutional status.

While abroad, I meet my compatriots, representatives of Kazakh Diaspora, I always appeal to them with a request to show respect to the statehood of the country they live, local culture, language, customs. I appeal to these people for being law-abiding citizens, recognising political and legal choice made by the nations of these countries, showing respect to their sovereignty and territorial integrity. I would like to emphasise that Kazakhstan on its part using all acceptable political and economic methods will support Kazakh Diaspora all over the world, establishing relations of friendship and good neighbourliness with the countries of residence of Kazakhs.

Significant part of history of Kazakhstan is a history of ethnic and cultural interaction of the nations inhabiting it in all spheres, such as language, behaviour stereotypes, ideology, mentality. Now our young state, delivered from false totalitarianism principles, is performing really unique function ensuring equal development of all the national cultures. Kazakh culture, the priority role of which is predetermined by historical task of its full-featured revival, including primarily its state language in no way prevents from the development of culture of all the other nations of our country. We are trying to make Kazakhstan model of cultural society corresponding, on the one hand, to our domestic environment, on the other hand, meet rather com-

plicated requirements of modern age. So the state declines any ideological forms of pressure on creative processes. The development of culture is determined by including it into the system of the law-governed nature of the world culture, joining the new conceptual and emotional contexts of the present-day world. In essence, it is manifestation of Eurasian idea.

There is no “Iron curtain” separating our culture off the world any more. Basic novelty of modern situation determines qualitative change in the content of culture of all the ethnic groups of Kazakhstan. Their major distinctions shall be creative synthesis, adhering to principles of openness, orientation to dialogue with other world cultures. If to look forward, Diaspora shall not be representing only elements of continental zones of culture. They shall become “plenipotentiaries” of the whole multinational Kazakhstan cultural and civilisation complex. I.e. they shall become one of the channels and mechanisms of interaction of Kazakhstan with other national and ethnic systems.

Thus, unity of the national cultures of our country is the basis for occurrence of a new cultural phenomenon in the territory of Middle Asia, as well as distinctive and significant part of modern culture of Eurasian continent. It is a huge wealth, which we must preserve and transfer to our descendants.

Any country in addition to economic, political independence and corresponding to it legal basis as such, must have cultural independence too. It includes a complex alloy of the requirements to maintaining and development of identity of the citizens of the given state with its cultural and civilisation environment. Our country gaining the opportunity of independent cultural development only five years ago, is now at its initial stage of formation of the national cultural space.

It is a long-term target and, in its essence, it is a strategic one.

The policy of our state must take into account the changes in process and build the right strategy in the value challenges of coming century. And the most important in it is strengthening of our own identity. The question is, in fact, in capability of the people to preserve itself in a fast-paced world. **Now we must realise that we are Kazakhstan people and live in one social, political, economic, legal, and finally, cultural space. We are not just successors of the Soviet culture, which sunk into history, we are builders of qualitatively new cultural community out of historic necessity. It is already intrinsic meaning, essence of our life now.** Kazakhstan in addition to being common state, civil and political “home” is also cultural and civilisation “home” for any national culture.

On the whole, settlement of interethnic relation in Kazakhstan must be based on clear understanding of the following fundamentally changed environment.

First, political democratisation and economic liberalisation form new motives for behaviour of the people and new relations between them. These transformations impact on the interethnic relations too. If to define a major impact, we may definitely say that political and economic liberalisation on the whole positively affected interethnic relations in Kazakhstan (though, it should be admitted that it happened by no means everywhere).

Second, we are building open society. The society having presidential form of government, professional Parliament formed by free expression of the citizen’s will. Realising in practice freedom of discussion, it is not permissible to govern ethnic relations according to the recommendations of the closed society. Indeed, in a closed society any problem may be solved according to the principle “no man, no problem”, when even the most cruel actions, relied on force, shall not get any publicity or shall be interpreted one-sidedly. I deliberately insisted on including the article on mass media protection in the Criminal

Code. And it is not just formal gesture, it is position of principle, since without independent mass media, it is impossible to build open society.

Problems of interethnic relations must be openly discussed and be a subject of the public consensus, not bloody “deliberations” with closed doors and batons.

Third, the development of Kazakhstan in the last decade of the XX century shows that there is not any tragic and fatal necessity to be entangled in interethnic conflicts. Bitter experience of Bosnia and Karabakh, Trans-Dniester and Abhasia, Tadjikistan and Chechnya is not yet the ground to assert the opposite. After all Kazakhstan is also going through the hard time of transition. However, we maintained stability in the society, having specific mechanisms of regulation of ethnic relations developed. Today we have the opportunity to turn from solving the problems of rather hard and bloody past, centuries old negative stereotypes to qualitatively different, key problem of the new civil identification of all the ethnic groups of present-day Kazakhstan. Political stability and economic break-through and status of culture depends on how we solve this problem. The future of our children depends on it.

IV. Strategy of social and economic development of present-day Kazakhstan

Turning to the subject of social and economic development, I would like to note that we are at such a stage of reforms, when we have real opportunity to draw up a programme for the development of Kazakhstan for 20 –30 years to come. According to my instruction such document is being prepared by the Agency for Strategic Planning established under my Decree with involvement of the most experienced local and foreign experts. I am intending to make special address to the people concerning it in the near future. Now I shall tell briefly about it.

As you know, the priority of the recent period was achieving macroeconomic stabilisation. It is quite clear that in the environment of galloping inflation and permanent economic depression, it is impossible to make any serious forecasts. Basic performances were too shaky, we couldn't draw up more or less long-term feasible plans on their basis.

Therefore all the forces and funds were directed to get the economy out of crisis.

Meanwhile, it is early to say that we have fully remedied all the deficiencies, since the achieved balance is still very fragile. However, the consistent reforms, that we started with introduction of national currency in 1993, of which I have already mentioned above, as well as resolute and steady pursuance of the policy of macrostabilisation, allows to assert that the country has already passed by the "point of return", and now we may be closely engaged in ensuring stable development of the economy and increasing economic performances.

What do we have for today? Rather firm trend to stabilisation of the economy. We succeeded in, as they say, "swinging economic recession process around" and achieving a small growth, which we are intending to maintain at two-three percent during the next two-three years.

Strict policy of state expenditures and revenues allowed to keep budget deficit at an advantageous level of two-four percent of GDP in the last years. By the way, three percent of budget deficit is a limit for the developed Western Union countries to join EC. According to the level of foreign liability Kazakhstan refers to the countries with average index. Taking into account huge economic potential of the Republic this index must be increased, favourably affecting total creditability of the country.

According to the level of attracting direct foreign investments per capita, the Republic is confidently among the first five central and eastern European countries, as well as the CIS. On the whole,

our macroeconomic performances are quite normal, though there is a significant potential for their further increasing.

Another factor is structural reform, encouraging the development of the national market. Holding off at the start, we succeeded in finding such a pace of transformations implementation, which must ensure adequate economic growth. According to our plans, all the radical reforms must be completed in the following two years. Transit status of Kazakhstan economy, moving from the administrative system to the market, shall become established soon. We have all prerequisites for that.

What are the constituents of this potential?

First, our state is one of the leading countries in the world reserves of oil, gas, coal and uranium ore. The state must be focused on the development of these industries and increasing of their management efficiency.

The international community rightly considers that Kazakhstan is one of the major suppliers of energy in the XXI century. We face a challenge of becoming one of the largest exporters of oil within the next ten-fifteen years.

Actual reserves of many other minerals allow to ensure normal development of our enterprises. Copper deposits of Kazakhstan make 10 percent of world's deposits, lead – 18, zinc – 13, iron – 10, manganese – 25, chrome ore – 30. Proven reserves of barium sulphate and tungsten also exceed the world's reserves. All these give us an opportunity to be among the countries – producers of metal.

Potentially recoverable value of the Republic's mineral resources in-place are estimated in USD 8,7 billion, including explored reserves – 3,3 billion, probable reserves – USD 5,4 billion. Iron, manganese, chrome, uranium, polymetals, copper, gold resources are priority areas of the development of heavy metals in the Republic. Reforms in this field are

carried out according to the corresponding laws, concept of subsurface management and regulation of subsoil use and conservation of mineral resources.

Second, Kazakhstan has vast areas of agricultural lands. Today we are already fully provided with our own agricultural products, exporting approximately a third of its production volume. In the future the strategic target must be sustaining and increasing of Kazakhstan export of the agricultural products, and primarily crops in the Central Asian market.

We take into account the forecast, according to which in the near future consumption of food products shall be increased in China and India. Russia is among the main and nearest markets for Kazakhstan agricultural products. Therefore, it is apparent that export potential is just huge.

Third, in spite of the present peripheral location of the Republic in relation to the main world trade flows, the industries using our transit potential shall become high capacity source of economic development of the country. Grading this potential into the strategic one is dictated by a number of objective conditions. **The major of them is the necessity to reduce transport costs in the process of further world trade exchange between rapidly developing countries of South—Eastern Asia, China, India and the states of the Old World. Not less important is that with increase of the share of Kazakhstan in the world oil recovery in the near future, the new transport capacities shall be required for its export. Geographical situation and the vast territory of Kazakhstan in the continent provides us today and shall provide in the long term with natural advantage over some other countries.**

Thus, one of the priorities of long term strategy of the development of Kazakhstan must become the development of transport infrastructure. It means construction of oil pipelines trunk routes, railways, sea and river terminals, airports. Having built

the developed network of communications, we in addition to material increase of our export potential shall expand our capabilities of transit traffic through Kazakhstan.

The problem lies in that communication projects are very expensive and it takes a long time to repay them. The experience of other countries shows that market mechanisms do not promote development of infrastructure, and the main role in this must be played by the state. This is how we did in the construction of the largest airports in Akmola and Karaganda, station “Druzhba” on the Trans-Asian railway, port Aktau on the Caspian sea, highway Almaty - Akmola, our telecommunications, etc. This is how we are intending to act from now on.

By the way, speaking of the production infrastructure, one must not slip over a problem of the first large project, which shall allow Kazakhstan to materially increase its export capabilities.

Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC) shall start the construction of the oil pipeline this year. Its commissioning, planned for 1999, shall allow to increase annual export of oil up to 67 million tons. But already by the beginning of the XXI century it is planned to bring oil recovery in the country to 100 million tons and by 2010 – 2015 – to 170 million tons. Naturally, by that time the capacities of CPC shall not meet our demands. Especially since we set a task to increase oil export up to 100 and more million tons. Therefore, even today we have to think about the construction of the alternative oil pipelines, the routes of which shall be laid down not only towards the Black sea, but also in other directions. Besides, we are intending to increase oil product volumes transportation by railway and sea.

Fourth, it is quite clear that all our attempts to raise domestic economy from the knees shall be in vain, if we don't invest capital in our people.

I have already told that one of the few advantages of the former system was free-for-all education.

The fact that we have educated population is a great advantage, which neither South Korea, nor Malaysia, Indonesia had. It conveys a great deal of that our secondary education is very competitive. It's a pity that the first, who suffered from economic recession were teachers of the higher and secondary educational establishments, the students. It would have been prohibitive luxury to lose the legacy fallen to us. We shall not permit it. Moreover, we have the reserves for improving the level of English teaching, economic and financial subjects, law and information sciences.

One of the factors, affecting economic development of a number of Asian countries was training of their thousands of students in the international scientific and educational centres of the USA and Europe. In spite of some errors made in the course of implementation of the "Bolashak" programme, we shall continue to render a state support to the sphere of education, promoting improvement of knowledge and skills of Kazakhstan people, required both today and in the future. We finance the training of our students at the Universities abroad, as we know for sure, and it is proven by the experience of China, Korea, Japan, that this is the way qualified personnel must be trained to solve complex problems.

As far as the development of domestic education is concerned, the key role in it is played by computerisation. Formation of our own educational systems with the training process close to the highest training level of the leading global educational centres shall serve to the same effect. We already have such leaders of higher education, such as Kazakhstan Institute of management, economy and forecast, National higher schools of state management and others.

Fifth, as I have already said, any strategy is built on the development of natural or acquired advantages. With us it is not

an exclusion. However, in present-day world to become fully dependent on export of oil, metal or agricultural products means to lose these advantages. Solution of the problem is in diversification of export. It will not only reduce our costs in changing global market environment, it will also promote further technological development of industry. **In due course Kazakhstan, obviously, in addition to crude oil and ore shall be also exporting products of chemistry and mechanical engineering. Naturally, it is impossible to “jump over” these stages of technological development. And we won’t take this course. We have to combine properly development of the existing and creation of the new, primarily processing branches, such as mechanical engineering, light industry, industry of construction material, food products, etc. We referred all that to the priority challenges.**

Naturally, the value of any strategy is not in its concept. It is in its successful implementation. And in our environment the success in many respects is predetermined by actual attraction of foreign investments and providing the investors with political guarantees. Unfortunately, we cannot rely on the internal resources in the near future. Though many experts agree in opinion that people have approximately two billion dollars in the so-called “stocking”. I realise that it will take us some time to establish reliable financial system and return confidence of Kazakhstan people. Though, of course, even today we must explain to people that it is much more profitable to deposit money in the banks.

In other word, to become investors and promote development of the country’s economy, gaining at the same time your own prosperity.

Meanwhile in order to rise to its feet, domestic industry needs foreign investments. We need advanced experience, new technologies and know-how, management and marketing skills.

This is why we make great efforts to establish favourable investment climate in the country. To that effect there was formed a State Investment Committee, a new Act “On state support of direct investments” was approved. Today our goal is to establish clear and commonly applied regulations of capital inflow, develop exemptions and preference schemes of capital inflow, build social and communication infrastructure. In other words, we have to produce an attractive image of Kazakhstan among business circles of the whole world. Thus, we can attract capital of the largest global transnational corporations, acquiring material capital resources, advanced technology, global channels of product distribution.

These days the most important investment summit is being held in Almaty with participation of the senior management of the largest companies from all over the world. Yesterday I made a speech at this forum, listened to the views of its participants and once again I was convinced that fruitful and interesting to both parties dialogue about the ways of increasing foreign capital inflow to our country was going on. After all we must just “open” Kazakhstan to a wide circle of businessmen, let them know about potential opportunities, prospects of the development. I am sure that this summit will provide us with powerful impetus to establish international economic relations.

In addition, with this purpose we need to work all-time to sustain the economy in the environment sensitive to the investments. I.e. we need dynamic implementation of economic reforms. We have to take into account that it will take market much time to “warm up” the economy. Therefore market reforms in many respects stimulate involvement of the state in the development of economy, which is very often criticised. But

we should remember that this involvement cannot be compared with command and administrative one.

We are striving for doing everything so that the trends of the economic reforms coincide with those of the market. Such measures bring impressive results. In this regard experience of the so-called “Asian tigers” is a model to us.

Further. Within a short period of time through privatisation we have to form a class of private owners, regulate mechanisms of distribution of resources in order to use them efficiently, always “accompany” social and economic development by legal and regulating basis.

We must improve our administrative system. A cumbersome staff of the state apparatus is getting to be a material obstacle on the way to reforms. It is carried to the point of absurdity. According to the ratio of the state officials to the whole population, Kazakhstan is on parity with the most developed countries of the Western Europe. However the quality of the work of our state apparatus is beneath criticism. You know yourselves that it is far from being of European standards.

Naturally, to maintain the whole army of the public sector employees is difficult. Thus, if we are committed to speed up economic development, we must actually carry out the reforms in the agencies of state administration. This process started in March this year, when we reduced the number of ministries and departments by half, optimised the structure and the number of the agencies of the territorial administrations. We have reduced the staff of administrations in five regions and in dozens of districts. As a result we have to have more efficient and mobile administrative agencies. I commissioned the Government with general and each minister with specific targets and terms of their implementation. I set a task to bring qualified intelligent personnel with new mentality, able to work in an orderly and efficient manner to the new capital.

Besides, speaking of thousands of employees of public sector, we must remember that doctors and teachers make 70 percent of all those employed in public service. In order, to improve the quality of services, on the one hand, and to disburden the Republican budget, on the other hand, we are planning to implement a large-scale reform in educational and health systems.

Load upon teachers and doctors, the number of schools and hospitals must be optimised, meet the demands of the country, and remuneration of labour of this category of personnel must be increased. As I have already told you, the state doesn't turn education adrift in the world, this sphere shall be rendered assistance through the system of compulsory education, grants and stipends. I am for having more private, but licensed and satisfying the state standards schools, universities, hospitals. A great attention shall be paid to the system of medical insurance.

Dear delegates and guests of the Assembly!

Of late we have covered the constructive stage of the reforms, much has been done to strengthen statehood, promote Kazakhstan's joining the international community. It is clear that each time we faced and will keep facing new major tasks. But they are related rather to the development than to the problems of survival.

At least, we proved that irrespective how difficult was the heritage of totalitarianism, multinational state may and must be developed steering a course of peace and democracy, in the atmosphere of confidence and peace, respect to the human rights, in the environment of social partnership and co-operation of the representatives of all the strata of the population, all nationalities and ethnic groups.

Our country will continue to live in conformity with the laws of the democratic state, carrying out progressive national policy,

ensuring peace to the future generations, free individual development, harmony in the relations between the nationalities.

Having built such a state, **we shall perform our duty to the generations of Kazakhstan people, to sacred Kazakh land, that went through many tragedies, but remained eternally kind and generous, which nursed and brought up a unique multinational people of Kazakhstan.**

Thank you for your attention.

NATIONAL ACCORD IS THE BASIS FOR STABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT OF KAZAKHSTAN

**Speech of N.A. Nazarbayev,
the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan at the fifth
session of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan**

*City of Astana, House of Government
January 21, 1999*

Dear participants of the session of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan! Dear guests!

I am very excited today to make a speech from this platform. The ancients said: do not cross the bridge until you reach it. 11 days ago we have crossed the bridge in the first alternative presidential elections in our country and the last but one year of the century became reference point of the new seven years term of my presidency.

I am sincerely grateful to many of those present in this hall for the great intellectual and organisational assistance rendered in recent few months of pre-election marathon. Thank you very much, I deeply appreciate it.

At the same time I would like to emphasise that we deliberately didn't convene the session of the Assembly before the elections in order to avoid again reproaches at its political predisposition. The role of the Assembly lies primarily in the support of peace and accord in our multinational country. It's not also by chance that the first political event in the new year and all the succeeding years in the capacity of the head of the state

that I decided to have is this meeting. What was impossible to say earlier should be said today.

The elections held implied two ethnic dangers to the country. The first was disunity among interethnic groups, such attempts were made by some people, you know. Second disunity among people of one nationality. We are not going to follow blood-thirsty aphorism of Bismark, who stated: "We shall leave only tears to the defeatists so that they were able to weep". I respect the choice of those Kazakhstan people, who voted against me, since they are citizens of our state and I am obliged to protect their interests too. The matter concerns the other thing, the attempts to play ethnic card in order to reach opportunistic political goals. There should be no place for such politicians in our society. It is dangerous.

We know from history that during the XX century many young independent states, that gained sovereignty, unexpectedly started wars with each other and polarised further until complete loss of gained freedom and unleashing domestic fratricidal wars. We may give the example of 1948, when the Arabs gaining independence from colony, started war between each other and polarised inside. Those, who didn't learn from history, pay their own blood. We must take as established truth that maintaining independence and powerful state, ensuring the rights of all the citizens, is possible only, when we preserve peace between the nationalities.

Therefore keynote idea of our session today is the following: "Preserving peace between the ethnic groups is the basis of stability and development of Kazakhstan". It is neither magic formula nor political stamp. It is really the basis of our internal policy. But it must be daily ensured by concrete actions.

In this connection I would like to propose all the ethnic communities to discuss the draft law "On national and cultural associations", that we've been talking about for a long time. Of

course, it doesn't solve all the problems, but it is a unique instrument in the whole CIS territory, no one has such an instrument. And we would like to get this fundamental instrument based on your recommendations, proposals, and then submit it to the Parliament of the Republic for consideration and approval. This is a hard and important lawmaking job, which must be done by the Assembly in 1999.

I would like to make one political statement from this rostrum today. I appeal to all, who left Kazakhstan due to different reasons and under various circumstances upon breakdown of the USSR: "Welcome back to our common Motherland! The doors are open and we hope that jointly we shall be more powerful!"

The importance of consolidation inside the ethnic group of Kazakhs is determined not only by the lessons of history. Once again I was convinced in the wisdom of the people, after all real choice, actual behaviour of the people is more important and convincing than any theoretical model. It is more important than detached from life reflections on Kazakh tribalism, invincible obstacles and other ethnographic exotics, which concern a part of the conservative elite, but have no deep grounds neither in economy nor in policy. Of course, it is much easier to figure out where somebody's ancestors were born than to make serious analysis of what is going on in the society. If it is simply freak of narrow thinking, then we may be only amazed by such an archaic enthusiasm. But if it is someone's principle, which is introduced in any form in the policy, then there must be no place for such individual in the public sector of Kazakhstan.

According to the provisions of the Constitution any propaganda of class or tribal disunity is prohibited. Do not think that your President is naive, I am well-informed of those, who have such mentality. I am taking and shall be taking measures against such trends.

In the course of the elections it was clearly displayed that the people is a head and shoulders above bureaucrat-retrogrades both in understanding nation-wide targets, and in its readiness to form consolidated nation of the XXI century.

The problem is not only in pre-election battles. There was a high risk of getting into the following dead-ends in the national policy of the young state in the course of this rapid transition decade.

First. It might be national egoism. Let's assume that Kazakhstan is for Kazakhs. We excluded the option of building mono-national state, though could settle down to a course of encouraging emigration of representatives of non-native nationalities according to the principle (as it was earlier): no people – no problem.

Why do I consider this course dead-end? Even without pursuing a policy of national egoism, due to emigration we incur losses of people able to work. The country would have incurred greater losses due to the building mono-national state, since even greater number of non-Kazakhs, who made their choice in favour of Kazakhstan, eventually would have turned out to be migrants.

There are also other aspects. For instance, mass migration to the neighbouring countries unprepared to it, would sharply increase the instability in our geopolitical surrounding, which is also disadvantageous to our country. Besides, if in the first half of the XX century, characterised by the ruin of the empire, the need in national segregation was natural phenomenon, today under the present environment of integration processes and active building of supranational systems, national isolation has no historical perspective any more.

We are against levelling, assimilation of one nation by another, one culture by another. Indeed, we returned state status to the Kazakh language, but our critics, who never know rest,

do not notice or do not want to notice that rights and interests of other nationalities, as well as of their languages are not infringed upon. Moreover, the Russian language is fully functioning in Kazakhstan today. Those, who call us assimilators, accusing of direct or latent infringing upon interests of non-Kazakh population, remind us those, mentioned by son-in-law of the Prophet imam Ali: “To part with a stupid person is as good as to meet an intelligent one”.

Let’s gratify ourselves. Let’s part with the influence of the stupid and turn to the true notion of the following words: “Kazakhstan is a laboratory of friendship of Nations”.

The second dead-end way is complete evasion of the state from solving national problems. We could have selected non-national model of the statehood development. What it could mean for us?

First, it could mean that the state is evading from solution of the problem of national self-identification of the native people. Such evasion in many respects makes senseless our sovereignty. We could have remained just ineffective independent constituent, into which the empire was disintegrated due to being superfluous to the metropolitan country.

Second, it means that the state is evading from settlement of relations between the nationalities. In such case, isolated within their own limits, they would have started to keep away from each other and compete with each other in all the spheres of life. In practice it may result in the development of spontaneous processes directed to strengthening all kinds of protective mechanisms in their national identity. I suppose, anyway the state should have interfered with these relations. But this interference would have been delayed since these processes would bring the society to confrontation, and it would be much more difficult to solve them amicably.

Third, formal equality inevitably means strengthening of influence of the larger ethnic group in all spheres of social life. In practice it leads to actual violation of rights of the ethnic minorities. In regard to this there is a joke about division of one well known navy between the two states well-known to us. One President then said to the other: "Let's share the navy like brothers". The other answered : "No, better fifty-fifty".

The third possible dead-end is waiver of protection of Kazakh national interest. Neither of the nations in the history voluntarily agreed to a waiver of their own independence. Naturally, the Kazakhs are not the exclusion. It is difficult to overestimate expectations of Kazakh people for the national independence. Kazakhs constitute the absolute majority of the country's population and live in their own historical and ethnical territory today. It is thanks to Kazakh people, who actually defended its only historical homeland, Kazakhstan people of all the nationalities live in the state ranking the ninth in the world in territory.

At the moment Kazakh culture, genetically formed in this territory, has the whole set of tools at its disposal for its full-fledged development and more and more actively is getting involved in the world cultural processes. I am convinced that waiver of protection of national interests of Kazakhs, constituting the majority of the country's population, is impossible.

Thus, summarising the above stated, we come to the conclusion that the result of implementation of any of the three dead-end options of the development might be only internal and external instability and, as a consequence, inevitable interethnic conflicts in the country.

A long time ago one English writer said: "The point is not that the world has become much worse, it is the coverage of the events that has become much better". Indeed TV, Internet, freedom of movement, culture for youth, world advertising standards, unified style of life are becoming factors, erasing national distinctions and

differences thousands times faster than all wars and conquests of some peoples by others in the past. To stand on the way of this locomotive is senseless and dangerous, it will just flatten.

All of us, who went through the collapse of the former statehood 8 years ago in a dramatic and swift-passing manner, understand these phenomena very well. Demolition of values is always painful, especially when it concerns sacred national feelings of the people. And behind all that is not so much enemy's machinations as incredibly complicated series of reasons and circumstances, which are called modern times.

What will be our answer to these challenges at the turn of the centuries and millenniums? What can we do in order not to lose our own national identity in pursuit of modern times, so that Kazakh would remain a Kazakh, Russian – Russian, Tartar – Tartar, etc.?

For that we need a few things and these things must be understood by all of us. They can not be written down in the laws, they are not tangible, but they are equally real just like very little is left before new Millennium.

Second. We have to understand that we live not in a vacuum, we live in a large global community, and we shouldn't be stuck to the stereotypes of ten years old. All the major threats and dangers to the national consciousness come rather from global community than from the neighbour with different eyes shape and colour.

Third. To fight against new informational technologies and other signs of modern times is useless. We have to be adapted to them. It requires new management technologies in the internal, including national policy of Kazakhstan.

Fourth. No one, except for Kazakhstan people themselves, fundamentally appreciates our peace between the nationalities inside the country. Over the last ten years we were just observing extremely low efficiency of various peacekeeping missions in

the whole planet. Unfortunately, in increasing frequency temptation comes into sight to solve the problems by force. But it is an illusion of solution. And under the ash always ripen bunches of hatred to the one, who in this case turned out to be stronger. We've learnt it from history.

We must diligently learn unpleasant, strict but honest and realistic lesson that if in Kazakhstan the blood starts flowing in the interethnic conflicts, neither UN nor OSCE or anybody else shall be able to stop it for a long time. It is time to relinquish children's illusions, we must all realise actual state of affairs. Thank God, we had such understanding all these years and the Assembly deserves the credit for the hard job it has done in this respect. Our goal is to maintain it as it is.

You and I present in this hall and those, who are at the back of us, people of sober judgement of our society must always be vigilant. It is thanks to your efforts and the efforts of those, who uphold you, we preserve stability in the country. As the Head of the state, I am truly grateful to you and all our people.

We must make conclusion out of all that. Preserving ethnic identity, national identity is not the problem of only Kazakhs. It is the problem of all the ethnic groups, inhabiting our country. Therefore, when we speak of the state national policy, we bear in mind in addition to maintaining stable relationships between the nations, also preserving and development of the national cultures.

I suggest the following formula: we are all primarily Kazakhstan people, when we are talking about the country in general and, especially, when we are outside the country. But when it comes to the internal life of nationalities, then each nationality is entitled to preserve its language, culture, traditions and nobody must prevent it. Shall we approve of such formula?

There is no such nationality as American, isn't there? It is a geographical territory. But how many nationalities and peoples

live there? Or take Australians. Australia is a continent, mainland.

When we go to the West, we see that there are “China towns”, as well as Japan and Korean towns, where they keep their culture. They are right considering that the problem of preserving ethnic language, culture, traditions is the problem of representatives of their nationality, just the laws and the state must not prevent or interfere with it.

Since we live in Kazakhstan and we are its citizens, we are all Kazakhstan people. Let's agree so, and not change our mind. It is important for us, because Kazakhstan is really our common homeland. We all must do much so that each of us could say with pride: “I am Kazakhstan citizen”.

As is well known, the year 1999 is declared the Year of unity and succession of generations. Besides social tasks, and upbringing of the feeling of responsibility to the elder generation of Kazakhstan people, there is also another strategic idea.

The nucleus of any national culture, the heart of the national spirit is the people's traditions. Each generation is the bearer of the traditions. But if the link of times and generations is broken, then national culture and national identity vanishes in the black hole. The unity and succession of generations is the means of protection of the national code from the universal national nihilism. The unity and succession of generations is the means of being yourself, preserving your national soul and national character.

Therefore, the chief idea of the Year is in care about the moral and social experience that is accumulated by the elder generation. It requires not only certain financial sources, that must become concern of the state and well-to-do people, it requires creating definite moral environment in the society.

I, naturally, do not exclude that in the last years of the twentieth century and Millennium, we must live under the slogan of

care for elder generation and succession, that we started to forget in the last hard years. Today's youth shall get older, become elder generation some day too and showing care for fathers and grandfathers by children, I think, is normal humanistic policy, supported in all the civilised countries.

What are distinct features of the Kazakhstan model of multi-ethnic state?

First, it should be recognised that one of the basic components of the national policy is targeted development of the Kazakh cultural nucleus and at the same time creating environment for the development of other ethnic groups. Kazakhs do not blame other nations in the hardships they endured, their tolerance, confidence and friendship form the basis for stable interethnic relations in our country.

Representatives of other nationalities shall always retain their right to speak native language and be understood, but the Kazakh language shall be studied by all the ethnic groups of Kazakhstan, if we continue to pursuit the policy of its unforced and gradual introduction. Again I emphasise unforced and gradual as some people sometimes tend to turn everything upside-down, nevertheless we must tactfully and persistently adhere to this principle in our educational programs, informational policy.

I'd like to be understood rightly not only by Kazakhs, but by the representatives of all the other nationalities, when I lay stress on the support of the processes of self-identification namely of Kazakh nationality. Unlike the Russian, German, Ukrainian, Tartars, Korean and others, Kazakh cannot rely on any state to have such goal set and fulfilled. At the same time the keystone of success in fulfilling it is real equality of all the other nationalities of the multinational Kazakhstan, provisioned by the law.

Second, major feature of our state national policy is reasoned policy of bilingual approach.

The time showed that in Kazakhstan we found proper status for two most commonly used languages - Kazakh and Russian. As a result we didn't have political tension between their native-speakers, exactly because we realised actual importance of these languages in the life of all the nations. I'd like to stress that at the same time the languages of other nationalities didn't become and shall never become stepchild in our multinational country.

We, as before, shall adhere to the policy of preserving and reviving ethnic languages of our nations. Important role in this is played and I hope shall be played by you, dear members of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan. After all, in many respects thanks namely to the activity of the Assembly for today hundreds of infant schools and schools are operating in the Republic, the upbringing and training in which is conducted in dozens of languages of nationalities living in Kazakhstan.

Besides, teachers of the German, Korean, Uigur, Polish, Turkish, Uzbek and other languages of the nations are trained in Kazakhstan.

Third, Kazakhstan adhered and keep adhering to the principles of secular state. We realise that presence of various confessions within the limits of one state promotes intellectual enrichment of all the nations inhabiting it. Any reasonable politician must understand that it is impossible to achieve peace and accord in the society without taking into consideration historically established traditional impact of the religion on the life of one or another ethnic group. To my mind, that golden mean in the relations between the state and the religion is found in the Republic, which allows to find common language and ensures understanding of the developments that take place in the religious environment of the Republic. Today there are two common points of co-operation between the state and religious communities.

The first is preaching of peace and civil accord, which are the top values that have become background characteristics of our everyday life.

Second is development and revival of culture. National and religious cultures are hard to distinguish from each other. Any of us today finds it difficult to define whether the holidays are national or religious: Ramadan or Nauryz, Easter or Christmas, celebrated by our people.

At present stage of the development of humanity, religions have become real mechanism of preserving national cultures. The time has passed, when national and religious values were in conflict with each other. Being a secular state, we must take into account these latest tendencies while developing independent state. On the other hand, we proclaimed that Kazakhstan is a secular state. We are against and shall keep to be against any attempts of imposing ideology of religious exclusivity. Each citizen enjoys the right of free choice of religious identification. At the same time the state shall rigidly fight against any forms of religious extremism.

Fourth, the feature of our model is goal-directed foundation of the National and Cultural Centres of the peoples of Kazakhstan and encouraging of the contacts of Diaspora with their historical homeland, as well as support of such an agency as the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan. 11 national newspapers, 44 TV studios, broadcasting in 12 languages, 18 radio studios, broadcasting in 6 languages cover various sides of wheels of life. Broadcasting in the ethnic minority neighbourhoods is conducted in the respective native languages. Nowhere in the territory of the CIS there is such precedent.

As the great French Victor Hugo said: "Greatness of the people is not estimated by its number just like the greatness of an individual is not estimated by his stature". There are no big or small nations. In the independent Kazakhstan all the nations are

equal in their rights and possibilities, such is the major principle of our national policy.

In this connection I must declare that I won't let anyone in the country to play Russia phobia, anti-Semitic or anti-Islam card in order to achieve their own political goals. It is provisioned by the Constitution.

I'd like to express appreciation of the role of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan played in the social and political life of the country, in the revival and development of the national cultures. Today the Assembly means dozens of public associations representing all the ethnic groups and nationalities, inhabiting the Republic, hundreds of conferences, "round tables", festivals, competitions, charities, training programmes. Of late years it has become a common practice for the ethnic minority youth to enter higher educational establishments under the quota granted by the Assembly. Only in the last four years the number of representatives of ethnic minorities, who entered higher educational establishments under these quotas made about eight thousand people.

A big job is carried out by Minor Assemblies of the Nations of Kazakhstan locally, which perform their activity taking into account local specifics and features.

Today we may say that the Assembly as a consultative agency under the head of the state came up to our expectations. It successfully coped with the challenges of the first years of independence and made considerable contribution in the building of a new society. The Assembly has become a real institution of consolidation of the multinational people of Kazakhstan.

I suppose, that it's high time to house the Assembly in a good building together with the National and Cultural Centres in one place. I think House of Friendship in Almaty is the right place for it. It will be a nice symbolic gesture.

Dear friends! I guarantee that in the coming 7 years of my presidency, the chief line of our national policy shall remain the same. We shall jointly carry out a big job in our multinational homeland, preserving political stability, interethnic accord, ensuring equal rights and opportunities to our citizens irrespective of the nationality, religion and belief.

I remain optimistic about our future. The ancestors of our eastern neighbours said: “A person without a smile on his face has no right to open a shop”. In our case the matter concerns a choice of the state policy. I am deeply convinced in great future of our country based on the confidence in our people, confidence in multinational people of Kazakhstan.

..Thank you for your attention.

IN FREINDSHIP AND ACCORD TO THE XXI CENTURY

**Speech of N.A. Nazarbayev,
the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan at the sixth
session of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan**

*City of Almaty,
January 10, 1999*

Dear compatriots! Dear friends!

What values is Kazakhstan taking to the next century, next Millennium? We are proud that we have come to this great turning point preserving our valuable property, which is peace between the nationalities, mutual understanding and respect, treating our friendship and unity as a sacred thing.

Thereby, we prove a judgement of our genius ancestor Al-Farabi that the inhabitants of the multifaceted cities (multi-national community of the people), learning from each other, adopting the best from each other, achieve high morality and kindness.

You all know that maintaining and strengthening of inter-ethnic accord and mutual understanding, friendship and unity is among our strategic priorities. We may easily assert that both stability and good mutual relationships in our society are the results of our targeted work.

It will remain to be our chief priority and concern in the next century .

We may confidently say that all our achievements in the sphere of interethnic relations is the result of many-sided goal-oriented

activity of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan. A great job has been done by the Assembly in upbringing of the people in the spirit of patriotism and internationalism, friendship and unity.

At all times there were people, who postponed their own interests to the public welfare, there are such people today among us too. In essence, the environment in the country always depended on the acts, sense, will, intelligence of these people. And decency, honesty, sense of high responsibility to the people and the country always served as a criterion of real patriotism.

The chief goal of the Assembly was and remains to be upbringing of the people, whole-hearted in their devotion to multinational country, deeply realising their responsibility to the people. I am convinced that you will cope with this noble goal.

Dear participants of the session! Dear guests! Dear compatriots!

It happened so that Kazakhstan gained sovereignty and independence in the last decade of the outgoing XX century, opening a new stage in its history.

Much has been said and will be said about our life in the last decade of this century. The big, as they say, is seen from a distance. The years will pass and the time will give objective, unbiased estimate of our deeds and accomplishments.

But it is already clear today that the decade of the breakdown of the huge empire and transition of many states to the course of free self-development, changing balance of forces and geopolitical trends in the life of the international community brought not only prosperity, but also freedom and independence to the people.

There was charged a destructive force, which in addition to wars and conflicts brought inertia of pessimism and disintegration into the life of a number of newly independent states.

Many people in these years once again have learnt what war, starvation and ruin, refugees and orphans mean.

We withstood in this swirl of history. None of the Kazakhstan citizens died in interethnic conflicts. There were neither explosions in our land, nor opposition or hardness of heart.

We ensured stability and didn't allow to manipulate consciousness of our people by extremists of all kinds, who for certain believed that Kazakhstan was the country of one hundred thirty nationalities, which should become blessed ground for destructive forces.

It didn't happen, and I am sure it will never happen, if we keep pursuing our national policy, which was worked out by all the nations inhabiting Kazakhstan land.

We didn't have any conflicts primarily because from the first days of independence, we were able to make a shrewd guess of the perils of the principle of ethnicism. Proclaiming and implementing the principle of unitarity as the basis of the state building, we avoided the danger of destabilisation.

Many nations and states suffered namely for these reasons in these years. More than one scenarios of conflicts on this ground was escalated in the world. And we know it very well.

But unitary states had different approaches to national policy. Some of them have chosen expulsion of non-native ethnic groups, the others – disregard of the problem as such. The statistics of the conflicts prove these facts.

Our choice is a search for points of coincidence, ensuring peace and confidence zone, approval of national policy, which takes into account ethnic composition of Kazakhstan. And the time justifies correctness of this choice.

Kazakhstan is the community of citizens of different nationalities, but not the new ethnic community. Integration of our nations is based on preserving ethnic identity of our country.

Close intellectual interaction enriches the cultures of all the nations inhabiting Kazakhstan, the phenomenon of a new social and cultural community is coming into being in front of our eyes.

We may confidently say that we have a new formula of stability of multiethnic society, stability as the result of co-ordination of the interests of all the nationalities in Kazakhstan.

It is the basis of carrying out both economic and political reforms, ensuring steady movement of our state along the democratic road, solving social problems of Kazakhstan people, dynamically developing the economy.

There is not any nation or nationality in Kazakhstan, which escaped destructive losses under the totalitarian system. Therefore we create all the opportunities for ethnic revival and development of the nations. Our priority is not only national, it is also civil self-determination of Kazakhstan people. We must provide the people with an opportunity to freely realise their national and cultural interests and at the same time encourage spirit of civil community and unity in people. The condition for preserving national spirit must be cultivation of national identity, not search for external enemy.

Simultaneously with encouraging revival of relations of ethnic Diaspora with historical homelands, we are ensuring such a foreign policy, under which friendly relations with neighbouring states is getting to be one more guarantee of stability, promoting interethnic harmony in our country.

And what really matters is that during these years we've been convinced and continue to be convinced that in solving national problems we have to rely on ourselves. In the event the conflict starts, no one shall stop it for you.

I am grateful to you, the most authoritative, active representatives of the ethnic groups living in Kazakhstan for supporting me in word and in deed during these difficult years. We all together were pursuing the policy the state adopted.

Upon living through ten centuries of the new era, a humanity starts practically new timing, just in this historical period it was determined by fate to build a new independent state, which due to objective reasons had no conditions and possibilities for its free self-development in the past history.

Our statehood is being built in the ancient Kazakh land. Kazakh people has experienced all hardships of totalitarian system.

There were victims of starvation, repression, Kazakhs became minority in the native land of their ancestors. Kazakhs were almost deprived of their language, traditions, history. It is not only our fate.

Today Kazakh nation has become the majority in its country, it started to refer to its roots. It is very important that all the ethnic groups understand and support this natural aspiration. On the other hand, being the majority, Kazakh nation must not repeat unfair treatment of other nations it experienced itself. Kazakh people must bear a greater part of responsibility for ensuring peace and order, equal rights of all the nationalities, nations, inhabiting our country.

I see successful development of our Motherland, nations of our country in mutual respect and confidence in each other.

The major value we gained on the eve of a new Millennium is the independence, opportunity to independently make a choice, the right to be the architects of our own fortunes, as well as the right to get involved in the fates of the planet. We are all obliged to sacredly safeguard these great achievements in the name of commemoration of the gone, in the name of happiness of the descendants.

Today, when all new local problems get international character, when the boundaries between the nations are getting to be more and more conditional, we have no right to immerse ourselves in the current domestic affairs.

Establishing true friendly relations between the nations in our land, relations of mutual understanding and co-operation, we are striving for making the world without wars and conflicts, world of democracy and prosperity high priorities of all the nations and states in the forthcoming century.

Kazakhstan is our common land, our common Homeland, our common Motherland.

I would like to stress it to those, who is ready to rake over their own and others' historical roots only for the sake of op-

posing themselves against others. The state shall ensure all the opportunities for harmonious national self-development, not contradicting the values of internationalism gained through suffering to all the people, who have bound their fate and future with Kazakhstan. It will be a new, true internationalism, when the potential and contribution of each nation shall be in demand and invaluable.

Our land had never had such a chance to have the best and sacred dreams and expectations of its people come true. People must be quite sure that Kazakhstan has well-deserved future, and that the talent and potential contribution of the people into the common development and therefore future of the country, which is their own future, shall be estimated in a fitting manner.

Only with such mentality and self-consciousness, we shall build a solid bridge and encourage national patriotism. Therefore, we shall firmly follow the chosen course.

We didn't run, as they say, ahead of the locomotive, for the sake of achieving outward signs of progress, we didn't go ahead right off the bat under the slogans of total and fast liberalisation of everything.

We always remember that at the cost of each inconsiderate step and hastiness, peace and stability in our country may be infringed.

We were anxious to prevent liberated human activity and initiative from becoming destructive force, have them gain necessary forms of constructive self-organisation.

One of the most significant events of the last decade of the XX century has become establishment of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan.

This is in the person of the Assembly, through joining efforts of all the National and Cultural Centres, we succeeded in establishing such an organisation, which was able to ensure constructive dialogue and discussion with all the multinational people of Kazakhstan, being always aware of and taking into

account its interests, demands and expectations. I believe, I can safely say, that today Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan in addition to being simply scheme of organisation, is also an integral part of our life, a symbol of our peace and unity.

Many sceptics, failing to find such precedent in the study books of the political history of different democracies, hurried up to declare this truly people's initiative to be unsound, inviable and forecasted its rapid failure.

But life is not a game with standing rules, moreover, adopted from the life experience of others. It is much richer than any theoretical schemes and principles.

And the main thing for us is to keep on following our own unique historical course, develop our own forms of public self-organisation.

The Assembly played and shall play important and positive role in the achievement of social progress.

Much has been done only during the last year.

The Assembly opened Kazakhstan "Artek". This year over 300 children of over 50 nationalities gathered together in the children's camp "Okzhetyes". Their impressions may be expressed by the lines from children's letters addressed to me: "I like very much to socialise with people of different nationalities. Having such friendship between the nations, one can with proud swelling of his heart step in the XXI century".

The proposal to transfer House of Friendship in Almaty to the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan has been approved. Today it is housed in that building.

Among matters of great importance is drafting the Act "On ethnic and cultural associations in the Republic of Kazakhstan". It is of prime importance since the efficient state and political model of the polytechnic society cannot be built without understanding and realising national interests and social goals, their character, duty and mutual responsibility of all the Kazakhstan people.

The Assembly and the Assembly's members take an active part in the public and political life of the society, elections of deputies at all levels, creation of the atmosphere of confidence between the people, development of culture and languages of the nations of Kazakhstan.

Today you have real opportunity to express our interests also through Parliament. Your chief executive Pavel Alexandrovich Atrushkevich became the first senator nominated by the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan, as I have promised to you. We shall keep pursuing this policy of increasing the number of the representatives of different nationalities in all the highest agencies of Kazakhstan State power.

I shall not enumerate all constructive Assembly's deeds and initiatives. We all know them very well. What really matters, I think, is that the Assembly is a reliable framework of our common home, the basis for stability, peace and interethnic accord. It is that undestroyable frame, on which our common perspective is built on, as well as confidence in the national revival and prosperity of all the nations, inhabiting Kazakhstan.

I am far from thinking that this road shall be covered with roses.

Unfortunately, I was right, when at the first session of the Assembly I said that irresponsible politicians, ambitions, interests of criminal and other corporate groups are to blame in the wars and interethnic conflicts, not nations, people, national interests of the people.

It has never been so critically dangerous close to our borders before: Chechnya, Dagestan, Tadjikistan and finally south Kyrgyzstan. Just recently we couldn't imagine that wars, violence and terrorism might come so close to the borders of our Motherland.

Indeed, unfortunately, globalisation turns not only into internationalisation of both production and capital. International terrorism, religious fundamentalism become the danger of the whole international community.

We know that our country may become involved in bloody plans of some extremists. And you know that there is already such precedence. Let it be today just comic attempt to earn scandalous “fame”, but nobody is insured against the new provocateurs of interethnic conflict, that might come into sight tomorrow, striving for breaking peace and order in our common home.

We must be vigilant, we must be sensitive, we must take measures, we must stop any attempts in this direction.

I would like to express sincere appreciation of the unanimity and moderation of Kazakhstan people, all public and political organisations, which irrevocably and resolutely condemned such intrigues of solo-conspirators.

I am satisfied with the detection and termination of the activity of illegal religious organisations and foreign emissaries, who made an attempt to root religious extremism and fundamentalism in our land.

We recognise equality of all the confessions. We restored numerous cathedrals to Moslems, Christians and other religions, new cathedrals are under construction and all the religions live in concord. These confessions assist in our unity, friendship and according to Constitution we cannot permit any illegal organisations of religious-political-extremist orientation to exist in Kazakhstan.

I believe, that confessions should help us in this.

It's very important that we also assist our neighbours to keep stability by measures of suppression of illegal stay and transit of suspicious “tourists” with indefinite purposes and intentions. Recently it was provisioned by the law that all such tourist organisations must get a permit and license from the state.

Kazakhstan shall never permit the activity of any illegal public, religious or any other reactionary organisations in its territory.

From this rostrum I would like again to address to all our law-enforcement agencies that must take strict measures against

violation of the Constitution without waiting for any instructions or any advice.

Kazakhstan internationalism has become apparent in establishing good neighbourhood relations with nations, who shared our historical fate for many centuries.

After all peace and order in our country depends on the political, social and economic situation of the neighbouring countries.

Kazakhstan will always respect choice of the political course of the sister nations.

Taking this opportunity, I wish the sister Russian nation success in holding forthcoming parliamentary and presidential elections. My congratulations to the sister Uzbek nation on the elections to Oliy Mazhlis, Parliament of the country and I wish success to Islam Abduganiyevich Karimov in the coming presidential elections.

Dear friends!

We all together stood up in the most hard years. We are all on the eve of a new century, new Millennium, new era. And we all jointly must determine what should be left in the past and what should be taken with us into the future.

Let's leave behind all bad things, all offences, confrontations in the outgoing century, outgoing Millennium.

We shall leave behind all offences and mutual claims in the past. It doesn't mean loss of historical memory. It means facing the future, realising that we are people of a new epoch. Search for old offences and claims shall never be prerequisites of normal future.

In the future there is no place for unification of the nations and attempts to assimilate and suppress one nation by other nations, disrespect for national values, languages, national and spiritual wealth common to all mankind created for many centuries.

We shall leave behind all discontents about historical unfairness of the past and come to an agreement, having the forces of

















all the equal nations united, to build worthy fate of our common Homeland, the Republic of Kazakhstan.

We shall leave behind in the past all stereotypes, giving rise to uncertainty in our own strength in many of us, mutual suspicions, national prejudice and narrow-mindedness.

We shall leave behind in the past economic stagnation and social depression, dependence and indifference.

We shall take into the future inter-ethnic accord gained through incredible efforts and our unity, sense of common Homeland, Kazakhstan patriotism; equality of rights and opportunities. The right of all the nations to take part in the management of the country and determine its fate.

We shall take into the future political stability, social peace, our joint adherence to the policy of transformations.

We must be intolerant to any forms of violence, revanchism, extremism and terrorism.

We shall share our common concern and responsibility for the fates of our children, future of Kazakhstan in the new century.

In the future we shall be organic and unique part of human civilisation, preserving our own national identity and mutually enriching by national and cultural values and achievements of other nations.

We shall bring into the future our openness to the world, peace-minded essence of Kazakhstan and Kazakhstan people, political and economic stability, social peace and interethnic accord, our adherence to the course of transformations carried out. Liberal values, efficiency and entrepreneurship, confidence in our own strength on the chosen road. Love for children, and respect for the elder generation, charity, and social mutual aid, all the best, what was created by our ancestors, fathers and grandfathers. Firm intention, will and strength to protect our newly-won sovereignty and independence, our infant democratic values and freedoms, without which we won't be able to ensure further progress of our society.

Our common responsibility for life and fates, for security of all our citizens.

The major thing that we shall take into the future is confidence in our Homeland – Kazakhstan.

Let's bow to the past and roll up our sleeves before the future.

INTELLECTUAL-CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE PEOPLE IS THE BASIS FOR STRENGTHENING KAZAKHSTAN STATE INDEPENDENCE

**Speech of N.A. Nazarbayev,
the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan at the seventh
session of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan**

December 15, 2000

Dear delegates and guests of the Assembly!

Every day of the human history has its distinctive morals. All the more so can be said of the whole century, especially the century, of which they say not by chance: “The century of mine, the beast of mine”. These prophecies have become true in the land of Kazakhstan.

Our fathers and grandfathers have stuck together with their blood vertebrae of this century, full of sorrows and joys. One third of Kazakh people passed into nothingness during this pivotal century in national history, Moloch of violence ruined the fates of millions of our Russian, Ukrainian, German, Korean, Transcaucasian compatriots.

At the same time the outgoing century has become a century of grandiose gains and victories, including the space shot. It is impossible to describe a great century one-sidedly in black, as well as underestimate the meaning and the scale of the great transformations. Not a gift from above and not a game of another's will, but natural result of the struggle for independence gave a rare chance to the whole people to write down its own page in a global history of the third millennium.

At the end of the twentieth century and on the eve of the twenty first century I'd like all representatives of all the nationalities and all confessions of our native land, the Republic of Kazakhstan present in this hall, to stand up for a minute for prayer and contemplation of bygone century and hopes for the future century.

The most important event of the year 2000, Millennium Summit held in New York, where for the first time in the history of mankind leaders of all the countries of the world gathered together, was devoted not only to the security and global dangers, but to the questions of cultural, religious and civilisation identity too.

Therefore, speaking of the Year of Culture Support in Kazakhstan we should proceed from understanding that without culture in the present-day world any nation or any state may be quickly "dissolved with no remainder", not from specific problems.

If a decade ago our main political task was to gain civil unity, civil identity, today it is not sufficient.

Many eye-witnesses of well-known battles at the beginning of 1990 are present today in this hall, battles concerning language, dual citizenship, civil self-determination. Today the life has proved strategic validity of our Kazakhstan course, and practically 99 percent of inhabitants of Kazakhstan, even those, who are intending to leave the country, identify themselves as citizens of Kazakhstan.

It is our common victory. The great common victory secured in the course of disputes, but without blood and conflicts.

After all the state is not only common territory, citizenship or community of economy, it is cultural unity of the people.

The task of strengthening of our statehood in many respects is related to the intellectual, cultural consolidation of the society, all nations around common standards and values. Independence and freedom of choice of the national destiny really require to

have cultural values and standards common and permit each to develop freely.

I have already told you that the principle of formation of cultural identity on the basis of citizenship, not ethnicity has been laid as the foundation for the Kazakhstan state building.

It was the condition, which allowed us to avoid chaos and blood. It was the principle, which meets the requirements most of all, the requirements of a new twenty first century in the most complex and delicate sphere of the state building, sphere of interaction of national cultures in a multinational society.

Today it is necessary to give concrete essence to this principle.

We set a course for revival of intellectual and cultural identity of all ethnic groups living in the territory of Kazakhstan at the beginning of this decade. We can say that the community of cultures in Kazakhstan has become reality of our life.

The next stage is formation of common cultural community, which has nothing to do with assimilation of some cultures by others, as pessimists think.

However, a question arises: how this identity, a cultural community must be built and on what foundation? There are no and there will not be ready prescriptions, but there are firm objective grounds for such construction. What are they?

First of all, there is centuries-old cultural tradition of interaction of ethnic groups in the territory of Kazakhstan and Eurasia on the whole. Today this tradition cleared of any sort of speculations and later developments assumed a new form. We have historically justified model of dialogue between great cultural traditions.

There is no necessity in a dramatic search for the own cultural niche in the present-day world starting from external westernization to religious radicalism, from naive attempts to present the national history as a centre of business events to mankur-tizm. The truth is, as always, in the middle. It is necessary to

increase a potential of the traditional cultural interaction, instead of building new cultural barriers between cultures, peoples, nations.

We are open to dialogue of cultures. For the last decade much talk was about unique transit features of Kazakhstan, which were taken into account by our ancestors even in the epoch of the Great Silk Way. But we don't have to forget the humanitarian component of this way. Our culture is a distinctive regional phenomenon, as well as a part of the global East-West cultural bridge.

Therefore, I persistently put forward an idea of the Eurasian community, which we finally realised this year, establishing international organisation "Eurasian Economic Community" called EurAsEC. I think this organisation shall have a brilliant and specific future.

All that leads to the necessity to make a choice of cultural policy.

Kazakh culture is primarily centuries-long experience of traditions, allowing the people to go through all hardships and remain an independent cultural phenomenon of the present-day world.

There might be no more important mission than preserving the nation's soul, its language and customs.

Especially of such nation, that was exposed to the winds of the history without mercy and indulgence during the last centuries. Kazakh culture objectively must become that nucleus, around which cultural community of all Kazakhstan people will be built, not dissolved.

We are a part of a huge cultural continent of Islamic civilisation. And we should not forget it. Our developing cultural interaction with it is objective and natural.

Dozens of generations of our ancestors found a pure spring of their spirituality in this inexhaustible source full of ideas and forms.

At the same time we are a part of great Turkic world, based on unity of history, blood, language and culture.

No doubt that the Turkic world shall be one of the most dynamic political and cultural areas of the next century. It is also a source of our power and our intellectuality.

It is important that Central Asia, our neighbours are mainly Turkic nations, we shall live together with, in a new century.

For many centuries the significant part of our compatriots was directly linked with Russian culture, and Kazakhstan people on the whole consider the Russian language, Russian culture as one of the most important constituents of the world culture.

And there is not any exaggeration of it. We have to speak of it directly and openly. What nation in the present-day world, unless its mind is obscured by political intriguers, would voluntarily reject such powerful cultural heritage, as the heritage of Russian culture?

I always openly formulated my position on this problem and even suggested Russian government to establish an international fund for supporting the Russian language.

But we all have to work daily in order not to let these four circles of culture become circles of hell. The Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan, particularly, has a great responsibility for it. One must not pull on its own side, first asserting priority of Turkic unity then going to the other religious extreme, or trying to revert to the cultural environment that was banned by the history ten years ago.

We should clearly see the complexity of cultural platforms of present-day Kazakhstan and not to be horrified by this complexity, just search for and find points of coincidence.

Our history and traditions give us such a chance. The only in the world university named after Lev Gumilev in the capital of Kazakhstan is called Eurasian not by chance.

And it is not a tribute to market trends, it is a tribute to the history and the future. We have an opportunity to form cultural

unity on the basis of great traditions of cultural interaction. In this connection I recall an expression of the retiring High Commissioner for OSCE National Minorities Affairs Van Der Stool, who said at the session of the Council of Europe that all the states with multinational people and culture have to be armed with the experience of Kazakhstan and the Assembly in establishing interethnic relations.

Second, a dialogue of cultures in the environment of Kazakhstan means a dialogue of religions too. We should never forget it. A paradox is that in the name of belief there were killed much more people than in the most terrible world wars in the history of mankind.

It is our part of Eurasia that for a long time has been demonstrating interaction of Muslim and Christian confessions without any conflicts. It is in the environment, where the conflict of two great global religions is getting to be almost the main line of the global cultural break in the future.

The experience of a peaceful dialogue of the religions is the basis for the formation of the unique system of cultural values and standards in Kazakhstan.

We should seriously discuss a number of very important topics related to this problem. We have to discuss them in the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan just because this topic concerns all of us and because it represents all nations of our country.

Third, cultural community would have no chance, if we remained to be closed society.

Cultural field of Kazakhstan cannot be formed as an integral whole without constant innovations. We should oppose readiness of our society to comprehend new social and cultural technologies to the challenges of the twenty first century.

No matter how great would be despair of the skeptics in regard to the cultural openness of the present world, actually it is a great wealth.

The cultural standards of the twentieth century, its educational norm and information skills, all that is personified in the youth of Kazakhstan, who can speak two or even three and four languages in addition to the knowledge of their native language. It is the youth, which integrated into the world cultural space, and our future is in their hands. More than one and a half thousand Kazakhstan young people: Kazakhs, Russians, Koreans, Uigurs, Tartars, Ukrainians received training at the most prestigious universities of the world under the program “Bolashak” at public expense. And how many people receive their training at the expense of their parents? It means they join world civilisation. Completely different youth with their own understanding of the world, different conscience, different relationships, different views is growing up. And we have to bear it in mind.

Let me remind you that apart from this program, there are various grants, private and individual funds, which helped thousands of young people to receive training at the best global universities and in Kazakhstan.

But the question is not only in training students abroad or here in Kazakhstan. The question is in the qualitative reform carried out in the whole educational system in our country. A new model of finance system has been established. Only this year representatives of 20 nationalities of our country received 12,437 educational grants and 9,854 credits.

Next year we shall practically finish computerisation of schools. We consider that education is the basis for cultural development.

It is a new generation, which in the near future can already become one of the major factors in the formation of Kazakhstan cultural community. After all culture is not only professional art, it is primarily the system of standards and values brought by each generation.

The most educated and qualified generation of Kazakhstan people in our history is growing now. Isn't it the most promising start in the development of our culture?

Fourth, the cultural community of Kazakhstan people is possible only on a democratic basis and keeping tolerance between different cultures and nations. So, tolerance is the main point. Just imagine, if once in the morning all the people on the planet would wake up and find out that all of them are of the same colour of eyes, hair, language, religion. Anyhow the human character is such that before dinner we shall for sure find a fault in each other. We are all human beings. Therefore the point is in tolerance, to take an individual as he is, to understand him, not criticise.

As I have already told you, cultural community of Kazakhstan people is possible only on a democratic basis.

Process of national problems solution in a non-democratic society is well-known to us not only from a history, but from present time too.

Let me remind you, that millions of people in interethnic conflicts died during the last 10 years. On September, 6 at the Session of the United Nations Organisation, Summit of Millennium, if I'm not mistaken, Mister Clinton quoted some figures that domestic conflicts in recent years resulted in 25 million victims. Can you imagine? What for I want to ask?

At the same time in the developed democratic countries even with their separatist tendencies there are no wars.

We have to look at the problems of democratisation from the point of view of interethnic and cultural relations.

There are two different points of view regarding this interrelation. Many people recall our recent history and say that democratisation brought to numerous victims in many CIS countries. Maybe for someone it looks reasonable, but long ago it has been noticed, that "after that does not mean in the consequence of". It is just like to consider that the World War II was caused by the murder of one person. Indeed, democratisation detected some chronic diseases of national hatred. Just detected, not caused. It was caused long time ago, without it.

Anger and irritation of one nations against the others was built up for decades or may be for centuries.

Some people say that democratisation is a panacea from all national diseases, just enough to build a democratic society in order to avoid any interethnic conflicts. Unfortunately, it is a mistake too.

As Abraham Lincoln said: “A sheep and a wolf understand the word “freedom” differently”.

In fact it is not a secret to anyone that in some European democratic countries, which I visited, nationalists pull millions of voices. It is not a secret that in the countries with centuries-old democracy, aggressive radicalism is getting stronger against national minorities. We can see it, for example, in Germany, against the ethnic minorities arriving from underdeveloped countries. It is not a secret that in the democratic countries there is a problem of regional nationalism and separatism.

Therefore it is a mistake to think that democratisation aggravates national problems, on the one hand, or automatically solves such problems, on the other hand.

Only real practice of the state building in a certain country with the certain cultural and historical environment can give the answer to this difficult question. An answer that we can give to ourselves in Kazakhstan does not pretend to be universal, it is based on mechanisms tested by time and common sense of each individual.

The answer is in the formula “democratisation is an environment for interethnic peace in Kazakhstan, just an environment, not a guarantee”. The guarantee is the people of Kazakhstan.

The democracy, understood as a principle, when “people are managed by the people for the people”, was nowhere realised in its direct construction, especially now, when conflict of interests of various groups, including oligarchy, industrial, financial, etc, is of no little significance.

In his time Voltaire said: "Freedom means to be dependent only on the laws of a human being". Just think it over, democracy is when an individual obeys the law. Officials obey the law, citizens obey the law. No one goes to the President, government, Akims to present claims. They refer to the court, non-discriminatory law settles all the problems justly. This is the goal we have to achieve. Only then each person may feel comfortable and protected by the Constitution, adopted in the country.

The fundamental principle of modern democracy related to the human rights, free expression of the will and protection of political interests and of the national minorities, is the only reliable means of settlement of the problems of national relations. There is no alternative to it. More precisely, there are no peaceful alternatives. There might be others. But we do not need them.

The problem is to put theoretical judgements into practice.

Experience of Kazakhstan, our common experience is the most reliable manifestation of our principle we adhere to in the sphere of interethnic relations and intercultural dialogue.

In this respect activity in the legal sphere is of primary importance. Constitution provisions the principle that sovereignty of Kazakhstan is based on the integrity and unity of the whole population, not separate nationalities. It ensures the equality of the rights and freedoms of all the citizens irrespective of their nationality. There is no law in Kazakhstan, which could be regarded as prejudice to the rights of ethnic groups of our country. Meanwhile it is not typical for many independent states. We shall not name them, you know them.

Second is language policy in the country. We all know the figures, there is no need to repeat them.

I'd like to tell one thing that in the whole post-Soviet territory only in Kazakhstan both the Kazakh state language and the Russian official language are equally functioning and used. It is written down in the Constitution. It is not only the effect

of legislation as it is, it is the result of absolutely balanced and consistent law enforcement.

Third. Information environment in Kazakhstan from the standpoint of culture of interethnic relations is free from offensive stamps and stereotypes. We should express our gratitude for it to our mass media, which delicately highlights problems of ethnic relations. Otherwise is impossible in the country, where representatives of 130 nationalities and of 40 religions live.

Fourth. Sphere of culture in Kazakhstan clearly reflects that simple fact that the state in word and deed relies on preserving multiethnic identity of our state through revival and encouragement of all the national cultures. These are national theatres and schools, national folklore and an opportunity of religious revival.

Fifth. Democratisation of the government system, primarily personnel selection technique. If earlier one could blame us in the latent or direct mechanisms of personnel support of representatives of one or another nationality. Nowadays, for the first time in the CIS, we have created a system of objective competitive personnel selection for public sector. And for today more than 9 thousand persons have already been employed on a strong competitive basis, taking into account their knowledge, professional and personal skills.

You know very well that to enter high schools the students have to pass computer test, which so far cannot distinguish nationality of a person.

These are very important factors for psychological health of all the ethnic groups in our country.

Sixth. All these projects need serious financial resources. In 2000 more than 9 billion 100 million KZT have been allocated from the state budget and 4 billion 800 million KZT - from private sector to support ethnic cultures. Could you, please, tell me which of the CIS states has allocated fourteen billion KZT to culture this year? This money is allocated not only for such

elite and unique projects as theatres and conservatories. We opened about one thousand libraries and clubs, repaired about two thousand cultural institutions this year. Tonight all of you are invited to the concert in honour of the Year of Culture and probably we will get the detailed information on what was done this year.

One can debate in regard to one or another model of interethnic relations and interaction of ethnic cultures getting nowhere. We do not only debate, we act. The culture is not just a word, it is a deed.

Finally, as far as the ethnic Diaspora is concerned in Kazakhstan, we derived a formula of preserving national identity and patriotic sentiments towards the country of citizenship not in theory, but in practice. I'm confident that this formula will remain valid in the coming century. We can see the reflection of it in our experience of state building, in establishing National and Cultural Centres at the beginning of the 1990-es and the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan .

The distinctive feature of our today's session is that it is held in the year of the fifth anniversary of our Assembly.

Today, looking back, we recall March, 1995 when the new public institution was founded. Do you remember how many sceptics expressed no confidence in the Assembly? But the past years proved that we had taken the right decision then.

The life showed that the Assembly is a unique tool of carrying out national policy and efficient institution of a civil society.

The activity of the Assembly has been highly appreciated by the international organisations such as OSCE.

Today 25 Republican and regional, 185 regional and city National and Cultural Associations represent the interests of different nationalities, ensure constructive dialogue between the state authorities and ethnic groups, consolidating friendship and confidence between them.

The events arranged by the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan in the Year of Culture acquire nation-wide cultural character.

The first festival of Friendship of Kazakhstan Nations, the second festival of languages of Kazakhstan Nations, the second season of Children's Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan at the "Okzhetpes" camp have become the events of high cultural significance for the National Centres working in single cultural space.

I'd like to express my gratitude to all those, who were at the root of establishing the Assembly and made personal contribution to its formation and those, who are working for it today. My congratulations on the fifth anniversary of our Assembly and I wish all of you every success.

Now let's turn to the role of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan in present-day world.

We all have great expectations of the festive dates. A new year, a new century, a new Millennium will come in a half-month. Each of us is responsible for our future and future of our children. The Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan bears a very special responsibility.

We speak much of preserving peace and stability in our country, it is quite natural. But these are mainly general considerations on the subject, we have to give them specific content reflecting distinctive features of each event. Today we are faced with four main challenges.

In 2001 we shall celebrate a decade of our independence. You know that a number of proposals were submitted to have a Year of Education in 2001. There are, of course, a number of prerequisites for that, we are planning to complete computerisation of all 80,5 thousand schools next year. 85 new schools shall be commissioned and greater attention shall be paid to high schools. But my proposal is to dedicate it to the decade of our independence and friendship, thus, covering all sides of our life. And from January we may start discussing with people the

problems of our life, concerning our interests and requirements, our future, education, culture and our work.

The first 10 years of life of the state basically predetermine its prospects, whether it would be a historical chimera or a high-level involvement in the global process.

We can tell firmly that sovereign Kazakhstan today is quite a viable and recognised state with clear strategy of development and prospects of social and economic growth. Just take any sphere of the economy including culture and try to compare with the situation in other CIS countries, which started their development under similar circumstances. You will understand that despite any difficulties and complexities our dynamic of development today is the most positive.

How many times in recent years we have heard of failure and national conflicts in Kazakhstan from “fortune tellers”? How many pseudo-patriots we’ve seen protecting the interests of first Kazakhs then Russians or any other nationalities? Now it is clear they were indifferent to the interests of Kazakhstan people.

They just needed to display non-realised ambitions, because they were off the road of history, but today there are few of them.

It was this generation of Kazakhstan people present today in this hall, who had to bear the burden of these ten years. It was our common burden. I hope it will be much easier in future. And the major task of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan is to make this anniversary of our independence to be turning-point in the consciousness of our people.

Indeed, there are a lot of problems and people frequently criticise us quite fairly. But it is impossible to ignore hard work we’ve done in order to build the state during such a short period of time.

The time has come to speak up and start upbringing the people in the spirit of Kazakhstan patriotism. The motto of the next year should be “Ten years of peace and friendship”.

Baurzhan Momushuly, whose 90th anniversary of birth we are celebrating soon, said “in the name of the Motherland you won’t be burnt down even in fire”, “In the name of the Homeland and in the name of the people one must work hard”, “If you don’t know your mother tongue, you never tasted mother’s milk”. The meaning of these words come to the same love for Motherland.

It is the Assembly that using its opportunities and direct contacts with ethnic groups of the country can publicise the significance and the scale of what has been done during these difficult years through its daily systematic work.

Specific programme of actions for the year 2001 should be adopted by the Assembly, which can be discussed within the next few days. It is necessary to define the needs and requirements of the Assembly to fulfil this task.

Second, the Assembly should play a key role in preventing politicisation of interethnic relations in the society.

We all were eye-witnesses of how in the last one and a half year the attempts were made to politicise the case regarding the verdict on Odjalan, to present the activity of the extremists in Eastern Kazakhstan as national-liberation movement. I just don’t understand why? At the same time in Russia they recognise people, who are on the wanted list of the law-enforcement agencies. Those people had to find gravy train, to show their worth. Or let’s take the capture of the criminal group and its disclosure in Almaty, which resulted in bringing accusation against the whole nation. Do you understand what feature goes to show that criminality is characteristic of certain nationality?

You should agree that interethnic stability in our home should be protected. That is why people have elected me the President to exercise the authorities empowered by the Constitution, as necessary, without any hesitation to ensure peace for all. And I shall act so.

We are grateful to the leaders of the National Associations for the intelligent behaviour and politically correct estimates of these events.

But we must say openly that the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan in these questions must be more strict and active.

Primary goal of the Assembly is to establish a system of preventive measures and recommendations to prevent political problems in the interethnic relations, not just simply respond making official reports on such events

I repeatedly told that all national problems “are solved” once and for all only in totalitarian societies. They are, as a rule, solved so that not only countries, but the whole continents fall into pieces as a result. In those countries they just imprison, no problems, or shoot the people, no problems as such. We may not and do not think of reverting to it even in our bad dreams. We have to bear in mind that there are external in addition to internal reasons. The roots of some problems are frequently buried thousands of kilometres away from the place of conflict. Naivety in politics is very close to stupidity.

The Assembly has to review all problematic tendencies of the national relations in the country in good time.

We have a special institute of strategic researches under the President of our country. It has to organise strict and systematic monitoring of interethnic relations jointly with the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan Council and to raise questions openly instead of “hiding a head into the sand”. Interethnic relations are an exclusively scientific problem. Only experts must study them. It is necessary to study the environment the ethnic groups live in, the state of public opinion. For this purpose we need an institution to have the experts, monitoring the state of affairs, take preventive measures in good time, and make analysis.

Though our conversation today is taking place on the eve of a holiday, it is a realistic discussion. I agree with the opinion “the more we know, the more we suspect”. The Assembly must keep

informed of current and potential problems in interethnic relations in order to prevent any suspicions, insults or fantastic rumours and gossips. Perhaps there is no need to get the government involved very often, when such problems arise. The Assembly has to discuss these problems and express an objective opinion on this or that problem arising in the multinational country.

The question is not in being informed. The question is a principle position of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan.

If we see that some leaders of the National and Cultural Centres have open destructive position, then the role of the Assembly is to give a proper political estimate to such behaviour instead of persuading somebody or be inferior to someone.

Let's discuss all the questions in the Assembly. What are the problems? Let me know them or any official at any level. You may refer to the Assembly, or me, your chairman. By the way our Assembly for the first time is mentioned in the constitutional law. I am at your service, perpetual Chairman of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan.

I have personal interest to increase the status and the role of the Assembly in Kazakhstan. So that in the future it will become a tribune and its voice will be heard everywhere, in the Parliament, in the Government and across the whole Kazakhstan. Therefore, to tell the truth, as a human being, not as the President, I feel sorry for the people, who while their stay in foreign countries start begging, maybe they need money for their personal needs? We can solve even such problems, provide them with government financial assistance. They also start complaining how bad is in Kazakhstan.

What is bad? Let's get to the bottom. If things look bad for one, they are bad for everyone. Let's take each nationality. Can you tell me which of the nation or ethnic group lived better than the other? If things look good for one, they are good for everyone. Do you agree with me? Isn't it true? That is why we are obliged to pay close attention to these questions.

I believe that the Assembly's Council has to hold thematic discussions. We have to draw up medium-term plan of the Assembly's activities for 2-3 years specifying political and informational aspects, preventive measures against politicisation of interethnic relations. And upon its drawing up the Government of the country must review it and take corresponding measures.

Third, it is necessary to raise prestige of the Assembly. We talk a lot about a civil society, increasing the role of non-government organisations.

National and Cultural Associations and the Assembly should play a key role in a dialogue between the state and public institutions. For this purpose some resolutions should be taken.

For example, to ensure legal basis of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan's activity we have to adopt a special law. We have already discussed it.

Also we should introduce a practice of discussing major draft laws of the country, at such sessions of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan. This question was raised before, and in my opinion, the law shall not get worse for it, it will be better.

Recommendations of the Assembly, taking into account the interests of various ethnic groups of the country, will be useful and essential for the executive authorities.

Speaking of patriotism, community spirit, people often forget that patriotism and a cultural community is the result of the activity of certain individuals, first of all, intellectual leaders of each ethnic group. Why not publish our own Kazakhstan collection of "Life of distinguished people" and dedicate it to the tenth anniversary of independence of 2001, giving brief biographical account of those people, who made a great contribution to the interethnic accord, including the leaders of all the Republican National and Cultural Centres.

Do you realise how everyone is amazed with such a peaceful hostel existing in Kazakhstan? Historians will study this phenomenon, how we managed it, what we said and what we did.

I think we have to publish such collection of the distinguished people, who contributed to interethnic friendship and confidence in our country. Let everyone in Kazakhstan, each ethnic group know those people, who ensured our unity.

We have certain reserve in our informational sphere.

The Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan should have its own Internet website. May, 1 of each year, and of 2001, in particular, must become the day of TV-marathon devoted to the unity of Kazakhstan people.

Of course, the Assembly has to create the election mechanism to have the Assembly consist of the most esteemed and authoritative representatives of each nationality and ethnic group of Kazakhstan.

The Assembly Council is working on a number of specific proposals, maintaining the status of this organisation, and I am working on these issues too.

Fourth. Kazakhstan is not an island in the ocean, it is a country, located in one of the most problematic regions of the planet.

Religious extremism and international terrorism is posing an increasing threat to the region.

We will allow no one to be engaged in defamation, and in this connection I can tell that great Islam is one of the heights of the world spirit. Any attempts to get Kazakhstan and its people involved in religious wars will fail.

We have to distinguish between revival of Islam, as quite a natural attempt to return to the roots of the dogma, and international terrorism. It is necessary to distinguish it very clearly. In everyday life we can hear various interpretations, therefore, this aspect is not less important, than any enforced methods of struggling against terrorists.

Probably only experts know that the term "religious fundamentalism" is not of Islamic, but of Protestant origin. Let's sort out the meaning of simple words and concepts instead of accusing Islam ignorantly and undeservedly. One must not mix up extrem-

ism with fundamentalism and with strict observance of Koran dogmas, which means neither political, nor religious extremism.

The problems arise there and where illegal armed formations are based, which use violence and religious slogans to achieve absolutely different purposes.

Drugs have become a profitable business, financing purchase of the war weapons. The war has become a profitable business and the ground to earn one's living.

We have to speak of extremism only in case, when violence becomes the main argument in the debate having non-religious nature.

Thus we have to distinguish between Islam, as the world religion, and actions of the extremists, who call themselves Moslems. If we do not understand it, there might be a threat of Islamophobia in the society, which is impossible to allow and offensive for the country, where the majority of the population are Moslems by origin. Such things ought not to be allowed also because religious peace in our country is the most important environment for cultural dialogue.

I know that in October of current year the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan jointly with OSCE held international conference on this topic.

It is, of course, very significant event, which helps to attract attention of the public, including international, to this problem. However, we should not limit our work to scientific and theoretical events. It is time to turn to actions. Therefore primary target in this work is to explain representatives of all the ethnic groups the real state of affairs.

Counteraction to probable spread of the religious extremism should become one of the major activity of the Assembly.

The Assembly may publicise the role and the place of the religion in socio-political activity of our society. This work should be carried out jointly with non-government associations, scientific centres and scientists.

In my opinion all of us may review the possibility of establishing Council of Religious Leaders under the Assembly, if our religious leaders do not mind. They should meet and discuss inter-religious problems too.

According to the postulates, which I propagate, there is one God for all, but the ways we come to the Supreme are different. Let these ways be different, let everyone have its own religion. We trust in one God, one Supreme, so being united on this basis, we can solve all the problems without any conflicts. If such Council will work under the Assembly I think we shall learn about the problems from it, we shall hear its voice.

The main purpose of such Council is to bring up believers to respect the law, expanding inter-confessional dialogue, cooperation, active participation in gaining accord, ensuring peace in the society.

I'd like to emphasise that today, when we can see a number of the external threats to our security, cultural variety of our society may serve as a barrier for unification strategy, accompanied by violence in the person of extremists and radicals of any religious or ideological group.

Dear delegates of the session!

It is a very symbolic that we meet each other half a month before the new century, the new Millennium of mankind. We are meeting each other and celebrating this holiday, thank God, thank Allah, under the peaceful sky. There are no mines on our way; there are no refugees in our cities. We did not send our children to interethnic battles and our mothers did not cry because of it.

Our economic conditions today are quite good and the prospects of the next year are encouraging. We discuss and solve our cultural and educational problems that speak of a good situation in our state. In the history of Kazakhstan the year 2000 will remain as the year of the exploration of the largest oil fields in the world and we lay great hopes on them. Our people shall have

great future provided that we have peace, accord and confidence between all Kazakhstan people.

Tomorrow the sovereign Kazakhstan is celebrating the ninth anniversary of its independence. On such days we usually recollect our past. But I appeal to you to think about the future. The future is made today in no small degree through the efforts, intellect and will of those present in this hall. Paraphrasing the words of an Italian politician of the last century Cavoore I'd like to say that "We have built Kazakhstan, let's bring up Kazakhstan people, patriots of their Native land". It will be that cultural community, which is the basis of our independent country.

My congratulations on the ninth anniversary of independence of our Native land, the Republic of Kazakhstan, I wish all Kazakhstan people health, prosperity and flourishing of our Native land. Thank you for your attention.

THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE: PEACE, PROGRESS AND ACCORD

**Speech of N.A. Nazarbayev,
the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan at the eighth
session of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan**

October 24, 2001

Dear friends! Dear members of the Assembly! Dear guests!

This year we are celebrating the 10th anniversary of the country's independence. In spite of some hardships, we are celebrating this festival in a fitting manner.

It is thanks to a great role played by the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan.

Just imagine. Upon breakdown of the "red empire" according to the judgement of some politicians, Kazakhstan must have endured various difficulties.

Some Republics fell to bloody conflicts. There is no need in reiterating the past events, you know them all.

Fortunately, we haven't experienced such hardships. We managed to maintain peace and order, unity of the nations of the country, in spite of all the hardships of the first years, managed to ensure social and economic growth of the country in a democratic way.

Therefore, we succeeded in finding consolidating, uniting force of the people. We never segregated people by their nationality, race, religion, pursued open policy of free development. All that was provisioned in the Basic Law – Constitution.

The Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan was the key point in pursuing consistent policy.

Therefore, we decided to hold the eighth session of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan on the eve of the Day of the Republic, the day, when Declaration of State Sovereignty was approved. This day marks the beginning of independence.

In this connection I would like to share with you my thoughts that trouble the society, the most significant problems of the country, moving on the path of democratic development.

Dear members of the Assembly and guests!

The tenth anniversary is the date of great importance to the development of our country, it allows to comprehend and sum up the reforms we carried out. The major result is that we had overcome economic recession, the hardest social and economic crisis, got over "pain barrier" of the transition economic reforms. Thanks to the efforts, made during all these years, the country started its economical upturn. If in 2000 gross domestic product growth made 9,8 percent, for nine months of this year increase in output reached almost 13 percent. Foreign trade turnover increased by 18 percent for half a year. Investments in fixed capital increased by 26 percent for eight months.

Today thousands of people have their own business. Thousands of enterprises started operating. People returned back to the plants. Unemployment reduced, wages materially increased. High rates of economic growth allow to solve the problems of social and economic development, strategic tasks of security. Special emphasis is made on the improvement of the people's well-being.

The policy of increasing minimum pension was approved in 2000. In 2002 it will increase almost by 45 percent compared to 1999. Pensions assigned in 1999 shall increase by 1000 KZT.

The state shall repay the major part of debt already this year to the victims of Semipalatinsk grounds, unemployment and oth-

er benefits shall be paid in the total amount of several billions KZT.

Next year the wage of the personnel of budget organisations, doctors, teachers and others shall be again increased by 25 percent in average. First of all, the wage of the junior and medium staff of the state apparatus shall be increased by 25 percent in average too.

In recent years we created pension system involving the state, employer and the employee. Similar scheme shall be introduced next year in public health. So future pensioners shall not have the problems that are faced by the retired people today.

The opportunities, which are provided by the economic growth, allowed the state to introduce the system of deposit insurance and increase the bank warrants.

We are steadily developing education, primarily, elementary and secondary.

This year Kazakhstan has become one of the first among the CIS countries to complete computerisation of all the schools, 8 thousand in total, including 6 thousand rural schools. We started reconstruction and repair of the schools. The new schools are under the construction, 92 new schools have been commissioned and 80 percent of schools have been repaired this year.

We financed 24 thousand grants for training at the higher educational establishments this year, more than last year. That means that children get higher education free of charge at public expense. We managed to do it thanks to the reforms carried out during these ten years.

Financing of the armed forces, frontier troops and other important security structures as minimum doubled. We started solving the problems of accrued debts, re-deployment and improvement of infrastructure.

This year for the first time in the last years the army shall start buying new arms and defence technology. We started solving social problems of the armed forces personnel too. Official sa-

lary of the enlisted personnel has been increased by 30 and more percent and most of them received new apartments this year.

The lessons of crisis, that you and I had, taught us to be pragmatic and extremely careful. We must not permit any more delays in payments of wages and pensions. For these purposes the National Fund was founded, to which considerable amounts of money is being allocated up to date, as they say, for a rainy day.

Establishing Bank of Development, we started to effect the policy of diversification of the proceeds from raw materials in the development of manufacturing industry. Till the end of this year about USD 150 million shall be accumulated in it, which shall be allocated to the long-term social projects, which cannot be financed by the second-tier banks.

According to the estimates of the international experts and financial institutions, Kazakhstan is leading in the social and economic growth and implementation of reforms among the CIS countries, and in attracting foreign investments per capita Kazakhstan surpassed many countries of Eastern Europe.

Chosen strategic course allowed the state to make the substance of the economic freedom and freedom of political choice real.

I'd like to stress that independence of the state and success of the reforms is, primarily, the result of the policy of interethnic accord, steady and targeted work of the society and the state.

Therefore, I took a decision to award all the members of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan with a medal, specially instituted in honour of the 10th anniversary of our independence. You are the first to be awarded with it. It is acknowledgement of the fact that interethnic and spiritual accord is our chief strategic resource, the basis of progress of our society and the state.

Therefore, I'd like to dwell on the main results of our interethnic policy. Especially because Kazakhstan became a country with its own know-how in establishing civil peace and interethnic accord, recognised valuable by the international community.

What are the main results of our interethnic policy? On the threshold of independence in Kazakhstan as well as in the other CIS countries, the possibility of occurrence of interethnic conflicts was high.

“Friendship of nations” inherited by us upon breakdown of the USSR went to pieces. You know it very well. As soon as totalitarian regime’s pressure weakened, national problems became apparent in the whole post-Soviet territory. Nevertheless, we didn’t permit serious conflicts to arise in our country, since interethnic accord was determined as the priority of the state policy.

Today we may sum up this work done by all of us.

First. We formed legal basis ensuring equality of the rights and freedoms of all the citizens irrespective of their nationality or religion. This principle lies in the basis of interethnic policy of the state.

Our laws take into account world practice, they are based on the fundamental principles of present day democracy, human rights, freedom of will and protection of the minorities’ interests.

We have no law, which provisions infringement of the rights of the ethnic minorities inhabiting Kazakhstan.

Representatives of over 120 nationalities live in Kazakhstan and such approach was the only right one to ensure interethnic accord. That is why High Commissariat for the OSCE National Minorities Affairs at the international conference, held this spring in Almaty appreciated highly the success achieved in our country in the issues of equality of all the ethnic groups.

Second. The unique and efficient mechanism of realisation of the national policy and interethnic dialogue in the person of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan has been established.

This efficient public institution is based today on the activity of over 300 Republican, regional, and city National and Cultural Associations. If you remember, when the Assembly

was just founded in 1995 we had about 120 National and Cultural Centres. Dynamics of these figure is the evidence of the universal cultural revival of ethnic minorities and the Assembly ensures comprehensive dialogue between them. Our know-how is adopted today by some neighbouring countries.

Third. Dialogue is on between different cultures. Basically multicultural society with the values common to all mankind is built in Kazakhstan. Many centuries old tolerant and open to innovations culture of Kazakh people has obviously become the pivot of spiritual integration.

Spiritual identity is added to civil and political unity of our compatriots becoming one more corner stone of strengthening of the state independence and consolidation of the society in the XXI century.

The symbol of the solidarity and friendship is a national holiday May 1, proclaimed as Solidarity Holiday of the Nations of Kazakhstan.

In contrast to the former abstract “proletarian internationalism” aimed at according to Bulgakov: “... to sweep tram-lines and build the life of some Spanish ragged fellows at the same time” we, as I have already mentioned, focused our efforts to ensuring real friendship in our home – the Republic of Kazakhstan.

We start realising that we are Kazakhstan people and each of us is a part of the whole. We have joint goals and will in building our own common home, and seeing flourishing and prosperous state in Kazakhstan.

Fourth. We achieved success in carrying out balanced language policy.

Kazakhstan is one of the few in the post-Soviet territory to solve these problems without serious conflicts and social upheavals. You know that they had taken place in the post-Soviet territory. Natural process of learning the state language by the

citizens, especially the youth is going on in the country. It is not imposed, it is a free-will of the people, who feel the need in the knowledge of the state language. I am confident that such keen interest shall grow with each year.

On the other hand, we established a network of ethnic and cultural education in the form of Sunday schools and language courses under National and Cultural Associations, including practically all the languages of ethnic minorities of Kazakhstan, even such rare one as Assyrian.

It has become a tradition to hold Republican festival of the languages of the nations of Kazakhstan. We may state with pride today, that linguistic wealth of Kazakhstan enriches culture of the whole Kazakhstan and is the important factor for strengthening solidarity of multinational people.

Fifth. You and I ensured spiritual revival of the country and what is most important – inter-confessional accord and tolerance.

The legislative basis guarantees liberty of conscience. There are over 2,5 thousand religious associations, representing 46 confessions and congregations in Kazakhstan.

I am convinced, that tolerance historically inherited by today's Kazakhstan generation in the spiritual sphere is a good basis for maintenance of civil and inter-confessional peace in the future.

In short, we showed in practice, that multinationality is not a shortcoming, it is an advantage of the society. The evidence of our right stand in the sphere of inter-cultural and inter-confessional interaction has become a visit of Roman Pontiff John Paul II and his sincere appreciation of the development of our society.

And, finally, the last and the most important thing. Over the years of independence, we succeeded in changing mass consciousness. Invisible revolution in the brains, related to ruin of the world view of the totalitarian society and development of the

new democratic values and new political and legal culture has basically taken place.

Kazakhstan society apprehended liberal values and acknowledged that there is no alternative to the democracy and market. Our people got actively involved in the process of transformations and have become driving force of our reforms. We must never rest content with what has been achieved in our policy.

Before our eyes changing world generated new threats and challenges, displayed earlier latent problems, attached new quality to them. We are a part of the international community. Whatever occurs in the world concerns us.

For all of us a new time of trials is coming. We have tense situation in our region today. Chiefly it is related to the situation around Afghanistan.

As never before increased is the danger of:

- conflict escalation and follow-up military and political destabilisation in the region;
- humanitarian catastrophe as a result of the mass escape of thousands of refugees from the sites of military operations;
- increase in transnational crime, drug transit, illegal trade of arms.

What is going on in Afghanistan is the consequence of the twenty years long civil war. This war made long-suffering Afghan people a hostage of international terrorism.

One must see that international terrorist organisations establish their military facilities primarily there and for that there is corresponding social and political environment. And such an environment of disorder and chaos is in Afghanistan.

Situation in Afghanistan torn apart by conflicts, where clericals, seizing power, unleashed spiritual terror against their own people, was found to be convenient for the activities of the international terrorists. International terrorists and their patrons were presented the opportunity not to get Afghan people involved in these developments.

Actually leaders of the international terrorists use defencelessness of the people of this Asian country, most of all suffering from the military operations there.

In this situation it is important to divide Afghan people from the international terrorists.

Let's digress from the present developments and draw attention to our recent history.

Our people jointly with the whole Soviet people went through state terrorism, when Bolsheviks seized power. A significant evidence of terrorist essence of the Bolsheviks' regime are the documents preserved till today.

A Commission for rehabilitation of the victims of Soviet period repression has been operating for many years in Moscow. I decided to bring to your notice the following extracts from the documents publicised by it.

In September, 1918 Grigoriy Zenkov wrote: "We must conquer to our side 80 out of 100 million people living in Russia under the Soviet power. As far as the others are concerned, we have nothing to tell them, they must be annihilated". 10 million people could be easily annihilated.

Central Committee of the Communist Party distributed a telegram: "Carry out mass terror of rich Cossacks, exterminating them without exception".

They confiscated Cossack farmers of their property in the Cossack land without leaving them a "thread". Thousands of Cossacks have been shot.

Secret circular letter of OGPU issued in February 1923 at the proposal of Lenin had a list of people to be killed:

"...1) all former members of pre-Revolutionary political parties; 2) all former members of monarchic unions and organisations; 3) all former members of independent agricultural unions; 4) all representatives of old aristocracy and nobility; 5) all former members of youth organisations, etc.

This is for the information of those newly appeared “Bolsheviks”, who are malcontent today with freedom of political activity.

Terror against the religion started in 1918. Documents are horrible. They evidence that priests, monks, nuns were subjected to brutal violence. 3 thousand priests were killed only in 1918.

May 1 of that year was proclaimed “a holiday of the working people” and all had to participate in demonstrations. But this day fell on Wednesday of Holy Week and believers could not participate in the secular march. In response arrests and shootings started in eparchies.

On March 19, 1923 Lenin wrote a letter to Political Bureau: “Requisitioning of valuables, especially from the richest monasteries and churches must be carried out mercilessly and decisively within the shortest possible time, undoubtedly, nothing should stop it. The more representatives of reactionary clergy we’ll manage to shoot, the better”.

There were cases of marauding in all the cathedrals, churches and mosques. According to conservative estimates requisitioning made 2,5 billion in gold roubles, but many people think it was three times as much. Treasures have been confiscated with the alleged purpose of helping starving people, but they bought bread abroad only at the amount of 1 million gold roubles.

Newspaper “Pravda” of August 31, 1918 published programme statement of Dzerzhinskiy: “The hymn of the working people from now on will be a song of hatred and revenge”. “Hatred and revenge, people’s enemy” – this is the “program” proposed to the people by Bolsheviks to establish order. These slogans are similar to those of today’s terrorists, aren’t they?

“Religion is the opium of the people”, “family is the remnant of the bourgeois society”, “upbringing of children in a family is vicious”, meantime upbringing of children like Pavlik Morozov, betraying their own fathers, is good. Such is the heritage we received and have no right to forget it.

All these so-called measures have been also undertaken in Kazakhstan, to say nothing of Stalin's repression of 1937 and resettlement of people. We shall apply all our forces to counter such "bolshevism", so that such idea never recurred to Kazakhstan.

Being aware of all this, we carry out the only right policy, which is based on the principle that terrorism in any of its forms must be stopped grimly. This is why we fully support international coalition in its war on terror.

Bolshevik's "red terror" was in the name of ephemeral communist, militant atheist idea. And today we are confronted by other variety of terrorism, terrorism under the guise of religion.

Under present circumstances it is important to divide Islam religion from terrorism. Terrorists, whatever shelter they use, have nothing in common with Islam, with its basic precepts of non-violence, justice, tolerance, and equality. Islam has strong "antiterrorist" roots.

In one of the Koran surahs it is said: "Murder of even one person is equal to murder of the whole humankind". In another surahs the words of the Prophet Mohammed are cited: "Where there is violence, there is no Islam". Therefore, any shelter of extremism and terrorism under the slogan of Islam is anti-religious in essence.

One must not connect terrorism to any religion or people, since such approach shall inevitably lead to further escalation of tension all over the world. It is what we have to proceed from in choosing the ways of counteraction to international terrorism and extremism

As things stand now we have to preserve political stability in our country and in the whole Central Asian region.

Peoples of Central Asia maintain and, I hope, shall keep maintaining peace and order, solve the problems they have without giving way to emotions in regards to the situation around Afghanistan. We must not give cause for using problems, which our countries are faced with, to sow the seeds of

strife and turn the region into the next “flash point” by international terrorists.

Therefore, as things go nowadays, Kazakhstan people must be vigilant.

World economy, unfortunately, respond to what is going on today. Sales slowdown is observed in the American and European markets. For us it is very important to have stable world prices on raw materials.

Therefore, the Government, all Akims must adequately respond to what is going on. And while considering the budget for the next year, we must provision for the funds we might need in crisis situations so that they wouldn't affect our people.

In this regard I cannot pass over a number of issues. Indeed, thanks to our achievements in the economy and reforms, we have the opportunity to accumulate funds. We started to improve life of all the strata of the population. I have already mentioned, what social problems we are solving, what wages and pensions we are paying to our people. However, we do whatever we can to further accumulate funds and render support to the people. But the questions arise regarding statutory age of retirement and keeping it at the same level as we had it before since the funds become available.

Pension reform carried out in Kazakhstan is being studied today by all our neighbors, including Russia and Eastern Europe. They want to come to this system too.

Reduction of the age of retirement will immediately cause decrease in the size of actual pensions that, naturally, will affect welfare of pensioners today. If we reduce the age of retirement, then in 5-7 years there will be one pensioner per one employed in Kazakhstan. To cover such huge expenditures we shall need from 30 to 50 billion KZT. There is no such money in the budget. As a result we shall again have pension debts.

Some politicians advance rather wild argument, that life interval of men is 62 and women – 59 in Kazakhstan. But the statistics show that after retirement a man lives for 12-13 years

and a woman – 19. So, according to this statistics the age of retirement is quite justified.

We have, as usual, such politicians, who think as Bolsheviks that if there is spare cash, it should be distributed. Which state is living following this principle? Even a family doesn't follow such principle. Therefore let's not debate this issue. The task of the state is to pay pensions in good time and increase them for all the pensioners. I believe, it is right.

The next issue is payment of benefits to the citizens, victims of Semipalatinsk testing ground, Aral, etc. In hard years we postponed these payments till 2003 and this year we decided to pay half of them (2,5 billion) before the appointed time. But I want to ask you. Whom do we pay at all? Some people think that the Government prints money on the newspaper. After all this is money of the taxpayers of whole Kazakhstan from west to east, the money we all pay. We have to define clearly who is most in need of this money. If a person falls ill with radiation sickness, he must be registered and get free medical treatment. For such people we must buy equipment, medicines, provide them with free medical treatment until they recover from the disease.

We must not pay all, just because they live in this region. Is it a rational way of spending state funds? Or let's take the Aral sea area, where people live in poverty, who gets these benefits at all? Wouldn't it be better, if there are no adequate living conditions there, to allocate this money to have them resettled and once and for all solve this problem giving them houses in better places?

The government must sort out the issue of targeted social assistance to the needy and families having many children. We must know where such large expenditures go to. The Act on targeted social assistance must be at last adopted. And there is no need to create new benefits. That time has passed, there is no way back to it.

Our major task is to increase the wages and pensions annually and not to infringe the rights due to the benefits paid to some of the citizens.

Now we have one acute problem to preserve stability in the society and primarily stable interethnic and inter-religion relations. The state authorities are faced with a task to prevent propaganda of any extremist ideas, which may break the unity of Kazakhstan people.

In this connection we have to amend our legislation, make law provisions tougher, increase responsibility for their observation. And at the same time we must undeviatingly observe human rights and freedoms, which are the chief achievement of our society during 10 years of independence. In this respect the most important is our position of principle in regard to war on extremism and terrorism.

The whole century we all lived in a society, where people reigned, no laws. Where there was no state governed by law. Supremacy of law, based on human rights and freedoms, must be established in any legal community.

Law-abiding of the citizen must become standard of behaviour of the citizen. It is in the interests of each person. If you violate legitimate right of other person, then your rights shall be violated too. We must adopt these laws, systemise them and then create independent legal system able to counter any officialdom's pressure at any level and take final legal decisions. The Judge must become authoritative and public official guarding the interests of the citizens. Then vast road shall be open to true democracy free of demagogy and political manoeuvring. We are going along that road.

Dear members of the Assembly!

The problems that we are faced with now may be solved with active participation of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan, but present form and substance of the activity of the Assembly cannot fully satisfy solution of these problems.

Therefore, I want to share with you my vision of strategic tasks that must be accomplished under the auspices of the Assembly using the potential and resources of the civil society.

First, all our efforts and activity must be directed to consolidation of our Kazakhstan society in counteraction to terrorism and extremism. This task must be the chief one for all our society and, I am confident, that members of the Assembly shall understand it.

In order to gain a victory over terrorism and extremism, we have to undertake military measures, consistently eradicating the causes of this phenomenon. Therefore our strategy must include solution of the existing social problems in Kazakhstan, such as poverty and unemployment, formation of the middle class, improvement of the living standards of Kazakhstan people, quality of education and health services. It is not a secret that social trouble, illiteracy is a cultural media for extremism, terrorism and radicalism in any coloration.

Therefore the second major task is economic and social components in our interethnic policy. I have already told you above, the Government is commissioned with a task to increase pensions and wages of the doctors, teachers and other personnel of the budget sector by 25 percent. In total about three million people, including pensioners shall have their wages and pensions increased. Upon approval of the budget, the state shall pay the major part of its debts off to the people.

Such policy, policy of submission of the economy to the goals of improving welfare and living standards, shall be carried out successively, based on the budget resources. All Kazakhstan people must be aware of the objective regulatory: the richer the citizen, the richer the state.

Third, the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan must make its own contribution in the upbringing of youth in the spirit of patriotism. Corresponding special functions should be performed by the educational establishments, primarily, secondary

schools. This job must be based on the upbringing in the spirit of state patriotism so that children could feel themselves citizens of the state, participating in its building locally.

Fourth, all together we must encourage further development of Kazakhstan culture. Today the scale of urbanisation, globalisation of the problems of the existence and development of ethnic groups, internationalisation of national economies, all these challenges require finding reasonable balance of traditional and new forms of preserving and development of culture of each ethnic group of Kazakhstan.

It is necessary, on the one hand, to ensure preserving and encouragement of cultural traditions of the nationalities inhabiting Kazakhstan and, on the other hand, develop integration processes in the encouragement of Kazakhstan culture, common to all the citizens of the country.

Strengthening of confidential interethnic, ethnic-cultural, inter-confessional relations in the country, maintenance and encouragement of succession of spiritual accord of Kazakhstan society is our major goal.

Under the present circumstances we face the problem of making barrier, including legal, to the attempts of spreading extremist ideas in our country under the shelter of pseudo-religion. Today it is important to ensure comprehensive dialogue with representatives of all the religious communities, acting in the country, and achieve consensus on the issue of formation of the most optimal law on religion, which is being now widely discussed.

Speaking of maintenance of spiritual accord in the society, I would like to draw the attention of the members of the Assembly, especially leaders of confessions on the necessity of targeted work to prevent using religion for indecent purposes.

We have to strengthen and adapt mechanisms of realisation of the state national policy, which proved its efficiency, to the changed realia.

In the first place the question is about the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan, about us. Today, to my mind, the long-felt need is to improve its activity, increase efficiency of the activity of the Assembly as the main mechanism of implementation of the state national policy. We have to overview the priorities of the activity according to the defined strategic tasks, determine common to all the National Cultural Associations approaches to their fulfilment, develop early warning mechanisms.

The Council of the Assembly, Executive Secretariat must attract the best experts to work out proposals on the lines of the reforms, prepare and submit them to me for consideration. In this respect I suggest to think about drawing up medium-term strategy of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan's activity, taking into consideration challenges of nowadays.

In the near future we shall have to increase the role and status of Minor Assemblies, acting at the regional level. I commission Executive Secretariat jointly with respective state authorities to explore the issue and submit specific proposals for their review. My request is to intensify the job, in particular, of Minor Assemblies. They may as non-government organisations carry out their own studies and in every possible way assist the state. For this purpose we may allocate them small grants. These funds will help them to solve their problems. It will be a job of special foundations, which have already been established.

Dear compatriots!

In conclusion, I would like to say that new challenges in the changing world require from us more and more consolidation, strengthening of our unity and solidarity. A great responsibility lies upon us for the future of the country. We have a hard job ahead of us, requiring patience and tolerance but we shall cope with it.

For that we have political will, developing civil society, constructive potential of Kazakhstan people, stable traditions of peace and accord, rich spiritual culture.

On the eve of the Day of Republic I would like to congratulate you, all Kazakhstan people with a great holiday, which laid foundation for revival of Kazakhstan statehood.

I wish you happiness and prosperity.

**DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY OF THE ASSEMBLY OF
THE NATIONS OF KAZAKHSTAN:
NATIONAL ACCORD, SECURITY, CIVIL PEACE**

**Speech of N.A. Nazarbayev,
the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan at the ninth
session of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan**

*City of Astana
November 15, 2002*

Dear compatriots!

Each session of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan is becoming a significant event in the socio-political life of the country. In this connection we have to take up new challenges of the time, revise guidelines and tasks of the Assembly's activity for the near future.

Together with the members of the Assembly senior officials of all the branches of the state authorities, ministers, Akims and leaders of the religious and public associations, well-known scientists and workers of culture take part in the work of this session.

It points to the fact that our Assembly has become one of the chief institutions of the developing Kazakhstan democracy, assigned the most critical mission to be guardian of the nations' friendship, accord and civil peace in the country. But for all that for seven years of its existence it didn't take the place of parliamentary institutes as some people predicted upon its foundation. And at the same time it didn't turn into some bureaucratic control tool over the ethnic groups.

The Assembly of the Nations has become an important element of the political system of Kazakhstan, which bounds the interests of all the nationalities, ensuring strict observance of the rights and freedoms of all the citizens irrespective of their nationality. The activity of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan involves a great positive experience, which we all jointly contributed and continue to contribute into the world practice of solving inter- ethnic problems.

This contribution has been highly appreciated at the top- level. General Secretary of UN Cofi Annan called Kazakhstan “an example of interethnic accord, stable and steady development to all the other states of the world”.

The Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan has determined the strategy of its development, chief goals of which in general consist in the meaning of the words, simple and clear to each person, whatever nationality he is, irrespective of the religion - national accord, security, civil peace.

Achieving it is a noble and at the same time difficult task, if we take into account the tests and challenges our society might be subjected to in a new century.

Dialogue between the confessions is the basis of the national accord in Kazakhstan

One of the challenges is related to the fact that in modern lexicon of political science such Middle Age notions as “jihad” and “crusade” have been revived and started to live their “horrible life”. In this situation, it is important to understand, what is going on in present-day world.

At the turn of the centuries, one of the trends of social development was that people brought the religion back as the source of spirituality, culture and national identity. This process, primarily, concerned that part of the world, which has awoken from the totalitarian lethargy, finding itself in uncertain state, having

lost spiritual reference point. Ideological stereotypes driven in like nails for decades, turned out to be thrown away in a heap of history.

During the last ten years total number of religious associations has been increased more than four times in Kazakhstan. The number of the mosques increased from twenty five to one and a half thousand. The number of Orthodox churches increased four times and Catholic – by a third. Missions and houses of worship started operating, including about one thousand Protestant associations, 21 Judaic communities. There appeared adepts of other religions. It is vivid evidence of the fact that after policy of militant atheism under totalitarian time, freedom of conscience, provisioned for by the Constitution, is being exercised in practice in Kazakhstan.

Our citizens, without any fear practice freely the religion they choose, speak their own native languages, preserve their cultures and traditions. It is what we call real freedom of a person. It is worth being proud of. We have to safeguard it.

Increasing religion's role and its significance at the end of the XX century was closely linked with globalisation process. First, open information-oriented society encouraged dissemination of any confessional ideas, turning the XXI century into the century of "export" of religion, as well as of pseudo-religious views. Do you remember, how with fall of the "iron curtain", a wave of preachers have fallen upon us, as well as flows of literature and recorded media of various "Messiahs" and "Prophets", demonstrating miraculous healing at the stadiums and assuring that their doctrines and views were right.

Second, one must see the other side of globalisation, which lead to forcing unwonted stereotypes of culture and behaviour upon many countries. Under such circumstances religion was a kind of protective people's response.

Fundamentalism is not a clan feature of only Islam. At the beginning of the XX century this notion originated as a char-

acteristics of some Christian groups in the USA. The same term was used in regard to theological and practical activity of the numerous religious groups of not only Islamic, but also Christian, Buddhist, Judaic origin, acting all over the world and preaching recurrence to the true dogmas of their belief.

Not only in Islam, but in other religions too, political parties and movements started to build their concepts and doctrines on the principles and thesis of fundamentalism. They are added to their armoury as banner by extremist political forces, and also used by terrorists to justify crimes, which have nothing in common with true canons of any religion. I am convinced that under present-day circumstances the danger of international terrorism and extremism may not be equated to any specific religion.

At the same time, we cannot be unaware of inter-confessional tension in many countries and societies. In this connection non-simple questions arise. How great is the danger of global inter-confessional fight? Or is there another way? Is clash of civilisations inevitable? Groping for an answer to them makes us to refer again and again to our experience of interaction between the confessions.

Current religious situation in Kazakhstan is unique. We are among the few countries of the world with a great diversity of confessions. We have about three thousand religious communities, representing over forty confessions. All of them peacefully coexist on the basis of an ongoing dialogue initiated and maintained by the state.

Ban of politicisation of religious factor has become our most significant achievement. This idea form the basis for the Act "On religious communities", one of the first legislative acts of independent Kazakhstan, adopted at the beginning of 1992. At the same time our legislation to this very day is estimated by international experts as the most liberal among those of the post-Soviet countries.

Religion in Kazakhstan acts not as competitive identity, opposing to ethnic or political communities, but as supplemental

element of spiritual culture of Kazakhstan people, attaching the society exceptional diversity and at the same time unique identity. Common past and ethnic and cultural traditions of Kazakhstan people have a key impact on the character and features of religious traditions. Their major peculiarity is mutual attraction to each other. Good relations have been established in our country between Islam and Orthodox Church, other religions. Diversity of Christian churches emphasise inter-confessional tolerance so characteristic of Kazakhstan. We never had any acute antagonism between the representatives of other religions and worships displayed.

Under the influence of this factor, the activity of numerous confessions acquire exceptional unique features. It can be said primarily about Kazakhstan Islam, which is based on the teaching of the great theologian of Sufism Khodzha Ahmed Yassavi.

Kazakhstan maintains close contacts with the centres of the leading world religions. The example to that is Pilgrimage of Kazakhstan people to the sacred places in Mecca and Medina. During my visit to Saudi Arabia in 1994 the king of this country, patron of the major Moslem sanctuaries, showed respect to Kazakhstan, allowing me to go inside the sacred Caaba.

Kazakhstan made its contribution to reconstruction of the Orthodox sanctuary, the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour in Moscow, making a donation of gorgeous Kazakhstan granite and marble for finishing works. In 1999 we made a donation of sacred manuscripts of Lubavichskiy rebbe to Jewish community in New York. Just recently I have had a meeting with the Judaic rabbis from a number of Eurasian states. I supported their idea of holding international meeting of the leaders of Islam and Judaism in Kazakhstan.

A visit of Roman Pontiff John Paul II to our country in September, 2001, during which he expressed sincere appreciation to Kazakhstan people for preserving peace and spiritual accord, has become a sign of official recognition of the Kazakhstan's contribution in preserving stability between the religions.

This is Kazakhstan, where the first World Congress of spiritual concord was held 10 years ago, which convened representatives of all the confessions, scientists, workers of culture. On the whole the example of our society shows that inter-religious conflicts are inevitable neither today nor tomorrow. For that we must keep inter-confessional dialogue on, succeed in getting spiritual concord to become an integral feature of everyday life of Kazakhstan people, especially since members of the Assembly are the leaders of many Kazakhstan confessions. It is one of the major tasks of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan for the near-term future.

You are spiritual leaders of your ethnic groups. Much depends on your opinion. During all these years we've been working jointly to make Kazakhstan a country of peace and accord of the nations. I am sure that it is in our hands to make Kazakhstan a country of spiritual accord, succeeding unity not only in our deeds, but also in our souls both at this trying time and in the future. It is one of the pillars of our accord between the ethnic groups in the society.

Proceeding from its experience, Kazakhstan addresses to all the confessions of Eurasian subcontinent with a proposal to approve "Eurasian Charter of Inter-Confessional Peace and Accord". Our country can be a place of holding meetings of all the religious figures.

Security of the country and its citizens

Complexity and unpredictability of the present-day world makes us to review the situation on a regular basis and seek for the new approaches in accomplishing the major task of the state to ensure security of the country and the society. What kind of challenges and threats endanger Kazakhstan most today?

First, the whole world is at war proclaimed by the "terrorist internationalism" today. Terrorism and extremism do not recog-

nise the borders, as well as privacy right. Tragic events of September 11 last year in the USA, terrorist acts in the Middle East, on the Bali island, hostages in Moscow, all that is testimony to the fact that innocent people irrespective of their nationality, and religion become victims of terror.

Terrorists have no religion, because neither of religions justifies unlawful homicide. They have only criminal purposes, for which they will use any ideology and any means. Under these circumstances to hope for the best or believe that your country may not be the target of terrorists means to be off guard.

Second, in the environment of present-day world transparency of borders of any state becomes evident. No matter how they are guarded, whatever barriers are made at the frontiers, the society remains rather vulnerable to such threats as transnational criminality, drug traffic, increase in drug abuse and illegal migration. According to the data of international experts this year a record crop of opium was gathered in Afghanistan. But for all that international community didn't set up efficient barrier to spread of drugs yet. It means that drug traffic stream shall increase northwards, extending drug abuse metastasis along its route, including Kazakhstan.

Serious problems are related to the growth of illegal migration. They bear not only social character, but related also to the use of channels of unauthorised migration of people by the same terrorists.

Third, the situation remains tense in the regions adjacent to Central Asia. Instability in a number of states presents a serious threat to our security. Political situation in Afghanistan remains tense. Antiterrorist operation delivered a violent strike at infrastructure of international terrorists, but failed to bring their forces to destruction. We are concerned about situation around Iraq. Confrontation of India with Pakistan in the atmosphere of ongoing tension in Cashmere may turn into unpredictable consequences in the whole Asian continent. In this connection the

task of the Assembly of the Nations is to keep its eye on the pulse of time and keep reminding the society of the threats and challenges.

Activities of terrorists and extremists, drug dealers, transnational criminal syndicates, supporters of illegal migration are aimed not only at state institutions. They are primarily aimed at undermining citizens' personal security, endangering their health, property, welfare of children, It is important to have it realised by each person. To know where the danger comes from means to allow nobody to take you unawares.

At the same time we must diligently search for the ways and approaches to ensuring security of the country. All the intellectual potential of the society, including the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan and all its branches must get involved in this work.

Security first of all means retaining of the national accord and domestic stability in Kazakhstan against a background of incipient external threats, growth of external environment instability.

It is important to understand that in the face of the new threats and challenges today "nuclear umbrella" is weak, incipient global and regional security systems are rather conventional.

Independence of the country supposes ongoing protection of its institutions and citizens. All the efforts of the state and the society must be aimed at it.

Security of the country means protection of the citizens from extremism and terrorism. Nobody on any pretext shall be allowed to break the peace in our common home, endanger the life and welfare of Kazakhstan people. In this connection Kazakhstan shall remain active participant of antiterrorist coalition of the states of the planet.

The state authorities shall take all required measures to build a protection system from extremism and terrorism inside the country. In this regard, I am confident the state shall get the required support of the whole society.

Security also means protection of business, especially small and medium business from illegal encroachment upon its rights, property. In this perspective we must work to strengthen and develop entrepreneurship in the society. Major activity of the Government must be aimed at it.

Security of the country means exercise of the constitutional rights and freedoms by each citizen of Kazakhstan. At the same time we have to solve complicated dilemma and find the balance between the citizens' security and exercise of their rights and freedoms. Freedom of one person must not infringe freedom of the other. Restriction of freedom must be allowed only if it is provisioned by the law of the country.

Law-abiding is the basic provision of the stability in the country. After all instability endangers welfare and security of all the Kazakhstan people. Each person must bear it in mind.

In any specific case, in any circumstance one should stick to the "golden mean" in determining what is better, for example, human right to life or right to acquire weapon?

Taking decision may not be easy, but failure to make a choice means play cunning and at the same time endanger security of the society and each person.

The government must protect the people from threats, including by way of enforcement existing laws. Anyhow, there will always be discontented people. But the interests of the country and the society are above all.

Security of the country means security of each ethnic group inhabiting Kazakhstan. We understand that we have to keep going along the road of encouragement of democracy, development of our civil society. To facilitate this work I took the following decision today.

According to strategic course for deepening democratisation the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan is assigned to form standing Advisory Board of the Republic of Kazakhstan consisting of the deputies of Parliament, Government members,

officials of Presidential Administration and other state authorities, leaders and representatives of any political parties, non-government organisations, for preparing proposals for further democratisation and development of civil society.

Second, to ensure broad publicity of the Advisory Board's activity, take measures on its organisational and technical support. Progress report must be furnished to the Head of the state by the Board on a regular basis.

I think, it is right. All the strata of our population, all politicians must determine how to advance in the development of our society, economy. It is done to achieve peace and mutual understanding.

We all need political stability in present-day restless turbulent world. Everyone, who is concerned about the people and society, must sit down to table, listen to various opinions and reach a consensus. And then it will be clear, who really wants to make the life of the society better and who just shouts and makes populist gestures.

Today's generation of Kazakhstan people bears responsibility for preserving cultural, language identity and traditions of each ethnic group of our country and people of the whole Kazakhstan to the descendants. We must oppose the attempts to disunite the peoples to common aspiration to preserve our unity in the name of prosperity and future of our country. This is one more strategic task of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan.

On the whole, security of the country means security of its citizens. Such principle must be laid as foundation of the activity of the state and the society in ensuring national security of Kazakhstan.

Indeed, we must understand that security, peace and order are the most important factors in improving welfare of the people, economic growth in the country.

We assume that total growth of GDP shall make 45% in the years 2000-2002. Few countries can claim such rate of econom-

ic growth. In recent years the income of the citizens has been steadily growing. Next year we are planning to increase pensions, start reimbursing the deposits made in the times of the USSR Saving Bank. State social, health services and education expenditures shall be increased by 30-40%.

On the whole, our country shall have good economic performances as of the end of current year. Based on this I assigned the Government a task to find additional facilities to adjust new budget, so that minimum pension and minimum wage were increased up to 5 thousand KZT, start paying lump-sum allowance per each newly-born child in the amount of 15 estimate indicators equalling to 13 thousand KZT. I am confident that deputies of Parliament shall approve such proposal.

Coming three years are declared to be the years of village support, which is also a vivid example of the state's concern about low-profit strata of our population.

Establishing interethnic relations taking into consideration distinguishing features of Kazakhstan

At present one of the global challenges of the humanity remains to be interethnic conflicts. We may see growth of interethnic tension deepened by acute religion based contradictions all over the world.

At the same time, we must admit that bloody interethnic conflicts of the XX century have never found its final settlement yet.

Middle East, and Indonesia, Balkans and Central Africa, the Caucasus regions and others, these are all smouldering flash points with great explosive potential.

Today it is hard to find a country on the planet, which had not encountered the problems in interethnic sphere. Establishing global labour force market under the circumstances of great difference in economic development of various regions of the

world results in increasing nations migration stream. Figuratively speaking, the world enters a new era of “great transmigration of nations”.

In this connection even multinational states face many problems today, related to integration of foreign labour force into their society. These processes promote growth of xenophobia, tense relations between natives and foreigners.

Thus, it becomes evident that without solving national problem it is difficult to keep society in a balanced state and stability, it is impossible to ensure its security. At the same time there is no universal formula to solution of this problem.

From our recent history we may recall how solemnly it was reported of the solution of national problem in the former Soviet Union. Marxist concept of self-determination turned out to be embodied in terrifying Stalin’s statement: no people, no problem. At that time thousands of guarded overcrowded heated goods vans were running across the huge country from the Carpathian Mountains, Crimea and Caucasus to Tean-Shan, from Vladivostok to Sary-Arka and Ural.

Terrible in scale deportations undermined historical and cultural background of dozens of nations. Many of them turned out to be at the vanishing point, lost their identity.

First events in Almaty, then carnage in Sumgait and Nagorny Karabakh, other cities and republics put an end to the strategy of formation of the “Soviet people”. Powerful multinational country collapsed like a house of cards.

“Theory of racial purity” and “final settlement”, for example, of Jewish problem by German fascism, brought to the horrors of holocaust, mass extermination of millions of non- Aryans, natural military and political collapse of the “Aryan empire” itself.

The efforts to solve national problem within the framework of the colonial policy of the leading powers of the XIX century – first half of the XX century turned into underdevelopment of most of the countries, which gained their independence in com-

plicated struggle. But the delayed-action mine planted at that time keep detonating even in the XXI century, shaking a number of large colonies by explosions of nationalism, mass ethnic cleaning, atrocious murders.

There are also such ways of settlement of national problem, which are based on the gradual assimilation of small ethnic groups living in the country by titled nation. But this practice encounters heavy opposition from even small ethnic groups.

Even in liberal Europe with its adherence to democratic rights and freedoms, increase in ethnic extremism and terrorism brings to strengthening positions of the national parties, requiring to pay a close heed to some ethnic groups. There they adopt strict migration laws, limiting inflow of foreigners.

All these facts testify to the fact that there is no absolutely indisputable, acceptable by all the countries practice of establishing interethnic relations. Hence, no countries may impose its own model of national policy upon others. Each country due to its ethnic, historical and cultural specialness must have its own approach to solution of interethnic problems.

For ten years of independence Kazakhstan has been displaying to the world that it has its own efficient strategy in achieving interethnic accord, based on the principles of unity and multiformity. Our activities were aimed at not just revival of Kazakhstan nations' culture, but conducting ongoing dialogue, establishing good relations with all the ethnic and confessional groups of the country.

We succeeded in strengthening the unity of Kazakhstan people carrying it through the hard test of time. Civil peace and accord in Kazakhstan is the result of thorough work of both the state and the society. The contribution of the Assembly in it is great too.

Preservation of civil peace is a strategic mission of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan, all state authorities, parties, public associations, mass media, each Kazakhstan person.

The reality is such that contemplation of “obliteration of the nation” most likely shall remain nothing more than utopia of theorists. It means that certain interethnic antagonisms shall exist not only in foreseeable future, but in distant prospect too. They exist in present-day Kazakhstan, putting the society a task of solving all arising problems in this field, forestalling the events.

I am confident that in this hard period of time we shall manage to avoid interethnic and inter-confessional conflicts in the society, preserve traditions and culture of all the Kazakhstan nations, provide them with new opportunities for the development. Only on the basis of our joint adherence to civil peace and national accord, joint responsibility for the future of Kazakhstan, we shall be able to stand up to threats and challenges to our security.

Today each member of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan must realise his great responsibility, be enterprising, have civic consciousness and take practical measures to have each citizen of our country understand this idea, as well as acute necessity of preserving our major wealth, which is friendship and confidence between people.

KAZAKHSTAN MODEL OF INTERETHNIC ACCORD: EXPERIENCE, PRACTICE, PROSPECTS

**Speech of N.A. Nazarbayev,
the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan at the tenth
session of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan**

December 24, 2003

Peace and stability in our common home is not just a statement, it is great success in this unstable world.

Development of world processes at the turn of the centuries brought numerous threats and troubles to the mankind. One of them is aggravation of interethnic relations.

For a number of European states mass migration from underdeveloped countries and related to it aggravation of interethnic relations is getting to be a serious problem. National conflicts occur in some Asian states.

Long standing confrontation on the religious and ethnic grounds is going on between the states in the Middle East and Near East, in South Africa. Ethnic conflicts in Africa sometimes acquired the forms of fratricidal wars. Besides, interethnic problems have the tendency to aggravation in a number of the CIS regions.

We observe, seemingly, paradox phenomenon. In the process of globalisation, which covers ever new sides of human life and unifies the world, the national problem is being aggravated. It seems that founder of the great anti-utopia of the last century Oldos Hacksley was right asserting that "Technological progress grants us more and more sophisticated means to move back".

Why is it so? There are diverse reasons for ethnic conflicts on the planet. But at the root of most of them lie three major problems.

First, globalisations expands interaction of the nations. It gives all the opportunities to join technological achievements, radically change economic structure, turns the world into single communication system. At the same time it causes natural anxiety of the people for their historical roots, national identity, language, cultural and religious traditions. These senses sometimes arouse hostility to the bearers of other ethnic and religious values.

Second, due to globalisation in some countries internal conflicts are being aggravated.

State borders become more transparent. Not only prizes of civilisation, but also many global threats get into our society through them.

Former security mechanisms, based exclusively on the guard of the external boundary, military deterrence, are not so efficient in the fight against such phenomena as international terrorism, and religious extremism, drug traffic and traffic in persons. Large-scale process of the new “transmigration of the nations”, on the one hand, aggravates illegal migration problems. On the other hand, leads to washing out former mono-national basis of many states. In present-day multiethnic societies it proves to be much harder to find society consolidating pivot adhering at the same time to the principles, on which the state was built.

In many countries all kinds of movements and parties enliven their activities “playing” on ethnic themes. Some politicians, appealing for adopting limiting measures in regard to ethnic minorities, migrants, poll considerable part of votes, aggravating interethnic relations. They say not without reason: “When opponent has no arguments any more, he starts finding out the nationality”.

Third, the roots of the majority of interethnic conflicts rise to the unsettled social and economic problem.

Imbalance between the level of development of different regions of the world, unevenness of social status of the people even inside one society has become obvious.

Poverty, unemployment, limited access to the resources, social woes, low literacy rate cause tough response. Not for nothing it is observed that “hatred is the anger of the poor”. There are about eight hundred million starving people, over a billion, i.e. the fifth part live on less than a dollar per day. And untold wealth is in the hands of twenty percent of population. This is the root of the anger. In the present-day world it takes conflict forms, starting from extremist actions to terrorist acts.

We may say that one of the major problems of the XXI century is that the humankind hasn't developed universal formula of interethnic accord. This problem has huge destructive potential, lying at the root of many global threats and challenges to the world.

Kazakhstan has been developing during 12 years of independence against this dangerous tendency. Since interethnic accord in Kazakhstan society is not the result of any special character of some or other nations. Unfortunately, national history of Kazakhstan, is full of examples of bloody conflicts, just like a history of any country in the past. Our national accord is the result of hard work of the state under the auspices of the public institutions during all these years. In the difficult environment we managed to establish optimal model of relations between all the ethnic groups of the population. It is based on mutual understanding and tolerance, patriotism and civil responsibility for the fate of the country of the representatives of all the ethnic groups, living in the ancient land of Kazakhs.

Ethnic equality of the citizens of the country in all the spheres of the society is provisioned for in the laws of Kazakhstan. Finally, we established unique public and political institution – the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan as the chief mechanism of interethnic interaction. Regional Assemblies of the Nations

are functioning in the regions. Executive working bodies of major and minor Assemblies have been founded this year.

Today over three hundred and fifty Republican and local National and Cultural Centres are operating in Kazakhstan. They unite thousands of people, interested in preserving and developing the language, culture and traditions of their ethnic group. The state approves these processes.

Our experience has been highly appreciated at the top international level. It was noted by the UN General Secretary and High Commissioner for the OSCE National Minorities Affairs, General Secretary of Council of Europe, political and religious leaders, public figures of many countries of the world. Our model of interethnic accord is recommended to the states of the planet as embodying in practice formula of civil peace and accord in a multinational society. It is much obliging for us.

According to the estimates of experts, there were about fourteen local wars and dozens of armed conflicts in the world in 2003 mainly on the national and religious grounds. Aggressions and interethnic intolerance are often caused by feeling of an irresistible impulse to emphasise superiority of one's nation or religion over the others. Many people are ready to die for the sake of their understanding of religious ideals. After all, any great religion brings primarily the light and the peace. The God creates people equal and only you and I attach such dramatic importance to the difference in language, colour, or eyes shape. Three people were asked: "What is dawn?" One of them answered: "It is separating strip between night and day". Second said: "It is time between light and dark". And the third was a poet, he answered as follows: "These are two women of different colour, but both are really beautiful". Sometimes, poet's statements are much wiser than most of the complicated political theories.

Parents and schools must bring up a child to follow a simple rule: "Don't do anybody what you don't want to be done to you". To live in the modern world means to be open and tolerant to

other nations, cultures and religions. Parents from the early age of their children must teach them to love fellow-men. This approach corresponds to the policy of Kazakhstan. Our children will live in a single world, when they go on a journey to different countries, they will see the world as it is. They will not segregate it into nations and races, religions. It is the earnest of peaceful life. That is why we have to bring up the children in the spirit of internationalism.

We always have to synchronise our watches with inclination of the global development, take into account peculiarities of our multinational society in solving practical tasks that our country face. The society needs revaluation and comprehension of the experience of interethnic accord as determining factor of our progress. Kazakhstan is becoming an integral part of the international community. We are striving for having our own niche in the world economy. However, we should remember that we are entering vicious competitive world. Our aspiration to move ahead was proclaimed in the Strategy “Kazakhstan –2030”. State’s actions on the village revival, implementation of the Programme of Industrial and Innovation development of the country till 2015 are aimed at it. Major tasks of recently approved State Programme “Cultural Heritage” are subordinated to this logic.

If we allow to disturb interethnic accord, then we shall inevitably lose all those social and economic gains that we achieved through hardships during 12 years of sovereignty. It should be clearly understood by Kazakh nation too and all the ethnic Diaspora of present-day Kazakhstan. It is the most fragile and important sphere of relations, the responsibility for which is equally borne both by the state authorities and public institutions.

Therefore, it is important to have complete idea of what threats endanger interethnic relations in Kazakhstan today and in the near future.

First challenge is the attempts to use religions as a tool of international terrorism and extremism. In the consciousness of a

person religion and nationalism are closely interrelated. And today religion is regarded as an important protective mechanism against the danger of moral, cultural and intellectual values loss. Quite natural that the process of intellectual and ethical revival of Kazakhstan society, freeing hands from fetters of totalitarianism, brought to increasing the role of religion in the life of the people.

The laws, guaranteeing secular character of the state, equal opportunities for the activity of all the religious communities of the state, have been adopted in independent Kazakhstan. At the same time the state rendered great assistance in the construction and opening of cult buildings, mosques, churches, houses of worship.

There are not any serious internal prerequisites for having the relations between the religions of Kazakhstan complicated. This danger is mainly of external nature. It is related to the use of religious postulates to justify extremist actions in policy, terrorist acts.

But not less dangerous is thesis of "Islam threat". There are many examples in the history, when to justify terrorist acts various dogmas were used. Particularly, chronicles of terror over the last half a century testify to that.

Moslems constitute major part of population in Kazakhstan. But here almost all the religions of the present-day world are represented, such as Orthodox Christians and Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Buddhists, followers of other cults. All in all 46 confessions and religious associations. Due to this our society is very sensitive to various insinuations regarding aggressiveness of one or another religion. Import and active exploitation of this cliché is able to undermine inter-confessional balance and at the same time endanger ethnic peace in Kazakhstan.

Aggression is caused by pseudo-religious activity, covering narrow political and other objectives. Citizens of Kazakhstan, as well as the whole international community, could be assured that religions have unlimited humanistic potential in September

this year, when Astana received the members of the First Congress of the World and Traditional Religions. The Congress has become a specific contribution of Kazakhstan in overcoming the danger of inter-religious confrontation, which is spread all over the world.

The second challenge to interethnic accord in our country is related to the fact that to solve the problems, arising in the sphere of interethnic relation, in the environment of liberal society is hardly easier than under totalitarian regime...

Democracy by itself doesn't guarantee automatic solution of the problems arising in regard of ethnic groups. It is proved by the experience of such countries as the USA, Switzerland, Belgium, which for a long time served as models for solving interethnic problems. In the environment of democracy in solving interethnic problems it is not enough to use traditional techniques, related exclusively to the activity of the state authorities.

The state, evidently, played and shall play an important role in maintaining and strengthening interethnic relations. But at the same time we need additional public mechanisms of settlement of interethnic relations.

Anticipating this, from the mid of the nineties we decided to build such mechanisms as National and Cultural Centres, major and minor Assemblies of the Nations. It was a step in the right direction. In essence, National and Cultural Centres became one of the first self-organised public institutions. At the same time they became the basis for interethnic accord in Kazakhstan.

Since then there were founded various creative associations of different ethnic groups, print mass media is published in ethnic languages, non-government educational establishments such as Sunday schools are functioning. There are Kazakh, Russian, Uigur, German, Korean and Uzbek theatres and creative teams. TV and radio programmes broadcast in eleven languages, about twenty central and regional print mass media are published. About thirty books of over eighty thousand editions are pub-

lished annually only at the state order. Admission to the higher educational establishments is arranged by computer testing in Kazakhstan. Any national discrimination is excluded. Civil service employment is based on competition, which ensures equal opportunities to all ethnic groups. The third challenge is whether we would be able in future to maintain reasonable balance of interests of Kazakh nation and dozens of ethnic Diaspora, many generations of which live in Kazakhstan. We went along the evolutionary road all these years. Kazakhstan people, irrespective of the ethnic group they belong to, are well aware of the importance of preserving and developing the Kazakh language, its state functions. For today record management is conducted in state language in Atyrau, Zhambyl, Kyzylorda, South-Kazakhstan oblasts. These regions are distinguished by having good command of Kazakh language by the citizens of other nationalities. The number of the Kazakh language classes in secondary schools is increased. The number of schools and kindergartens, where upbringing and education is conducted in the Kazakh language, increased during the last two years.

Compared to 2001 the number of newspapers in the Kazakh language increased by 25, magazines – 12 percent. Almost 95 percent of all the electronic mass media half of the time broadcast in the Kazakh language. In our country all the required conditions and mechanisms are created, encouraging the development of the Kazakh language as a fundamental layer of civil identity of the whole Kazakhstan people.

These processes had and have natural pace of development. Any artificial acceleration, all the more, revolutionary approach in this respect should be excluded.

Simultaneously the state solves the problems on preserving and developing languages, cultural traditions and customs of all the other nationalities of the country.

Joint residence of different ethnic groups in Kazakhstan for centuries has generated special Kazakhstan mentality. It is devoid of emotional extremes and ethnical alienation. The iden-

tity of present-day Kazakhstan constitutes in ethnic diversity. It is a great wealth, common wealth of all our society, providing Kazakhstan people with an opportunity to exchange with other nationalities of valuable cultural gains. The Russian language, as usual, remains the language of communication between the nationalities in Kazakhstan. It is necessary to further revival of the Kazakh language evenly controlling excesses, preserving cultures of all the other ethnic groups of our society.

Model of interethnic accord, realised during the years of independence, became one of the basis of international authority and prestige of Kazakhstan. According to the level of attractiveness for emigrant from Russia Kazakhstan ranks third after the USA and countries of European Community. And vice versa, in a number of state, for instance, in the same Russia, Slovakia favourable conditions are created for the emigrants from Kazakhstan. With all this going on pointed reference is made to the tolerance of our citizens, their fast adaptation to other cultural environment, respect to the customs and traditions of local people, preserving the culture and language of their own nationality at the same time. I'd like to read out the lines from a letter, sent shortly before his death by the writer Leonid Danilovich Kri-voshchyekov, who left Kazakhstan a year ago: "Never before I could even imagine that once I would have to leave Kazakhstan. Since it is not just a land, to which I am obliged by my birth. It is something greater. It is the place, where great brotherhood of compatriots, many-voiced heterogeneous folk lives in inseparable unity, where I cast in my lot with creative activity. It is the place, where my spirit is, where the beginning of my life is".

They are not mythical, they are real-life examples of efficiency of the national policy of the state. While large scale terrorist acts are taking place around, when people are afraid of traveling abroad, when in the streets of the great world's capitals racist behave outrageously, Kazakhstan remains to be the place of civilised interethnic relations.

In this connection it is expedient to transfer to the practice of determining annual priorities and missions by the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan.

In 2004 we have to focus our work upon solution of the problems in five lines.

First. It is necessary to work out preventive mechanisms of response to possible aggregation in interethnic sphere, mainly under the impact of external circumstances. Primarily it concerns the issues of preserving and strengthening interethnic accord in the country.

Assembly Council jointly with the Council for work with religious associations under the Government must study the problem and present proposal for the whole spectrum of interactions between the state and religious communities, relations between the confessions of Kazakhstan.

Second mission in this line is related to expansion of mechanisms of interactions of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan with public institutions, including primarily, Non-Government Organisations. It is quite possible to establish associations of ethnic theatres and creative teams, mass media public advisory boards in ethnic languages, associations of Ethnic Sunday schools and other organisations under the Assembly.

A few years ago chief editors of a number of Kazakhstan mass media in ethnic languages signed joint instrument on ethics of press coverage of the interethnic relations problems. Its provisions are mainly complied with.

But since then hundreds of new mass media were established. Who can tell whether they joined this unique convention or not? It's hardly possible. A number of tactless publications in some newspapers and magazines testify to this. I assign Ministry of information of the Republic of Kazakhstan jointly with the Assembly Council a mission to study this problem. As necessary, you must reinforce the laws on preservation of interethnic peace, and all the political parties have to make and sign a special agreement, defining the frames of using ethnic problems in

their activity, particularly, in pre-election campaign. It is especially important in the run-up to the elections of Mazhilis of the Kazakhstan Parliament next year.

Second. It is necessary to determine the place and role of the Assembly in implementation of just approved State programme “Cultural Heritage”. There’s a great depth of meaning in this programme. As a great poet of the twentieth century Thomas Eliot said: “Tradition cannot be inherited, it must be conquered”. The point is not in revival of patriarchal forms of behaviour, it is in the patterns of ancient and modern culture, which give us a spirit, help us to preserve identity in the rapid stream of history. Sometimes the history corresponds to the aphorism: “Things forgotten by sons may be recalled by grandsons”.

Revival of the culture is our common deed. Cultural heritage of Kazakhstan includes not only Kazakh culture, it includes cultures of each ethnic group, living in our country. Therefore National and Cultural Centres must take an active part in implementation of this programme.

The Assembly Council jointly with the Ministry of culture is assigned to draw a plan of actions for participation of the National and Cultural Centres, major and minor Assemblies of the Nations in implementation of the “Cultural Heritage” programme.

Third. Next year is the Year of Russia in Kazakhstan. Major events of the Year of Kazakhstan in Russia eventuated in success. Minor Assemblies of the Nations took an active part in arranging the Year events, organising festival of “Friendship of Nations-2003” in the areas close to the border. Representatives of National and Cultural Centres participated in the fair devoted to Kazakhstan held in Moscow. The Year events were crowned with just ended Days of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan in Moscow. All these events were aimed at strengthening friendly ties and mutual understanding between our nations.

Now our mission is to ensure high organisational and cultural level of the Year of Russia in Kazakhstan. Forthcoming events should be used for all-round development of culture of

all the nationalities of Kazakhstan, for whom Russia is the ethnic Homeland, such as Russians, Tartars, Bashkirs, Chechens, Ingushes and many others.

Fourth. Next year we shall celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the development of virgin and fallow lands in Kazakhstan. A great contribution in the development of agriculture was made by the representatives of many nationalities. 50 years ago thousands of young people from different parts of the former USSR arrived in Kazakhstan. Some returned back home later on, but for some people Kazakhstan became second Homeland, their own home, where children and grandchildren were born.

Of course, in the years of development of virgin lands a number of mistakes were made of ecological and economic character, as well as a number of excesses in national problems. But one thing is obvious that pros and cons of the virgin lands epic work are incomparable.

It was the development of virgin lands that has become the decisive condition of vigorous spurt in the development of agricultural production in Kazakhstan half a century ago.

I propose to have events in honour of the anniversary, held in the former virgin lands capital, now capital of the independent Kazakhstan next year. I assign the Government jointly with the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan to have anniversary events held in February, 2004. The experience of the workers of the virgin lands might be helpful to the benefit of implementation of the three-year plan of the village revival.

Fifth. In the course of the Fifth Congress of the World and Traditional Religions Leaders it was suggested to build Palace of Nations and Palace of cultures and religions in Astana. The palace ensemble shall be a peculiar symbol of the unity of the Nations of our country, where representatives of one hundred thirty nationalities live in peace and accord. The head-quarters of the Assembly of the Nations of Kazakhstan, Republican National and Cultural Centres shall be housed in it. This complex shall include buildings of the Mosque, Church, Synagogue, Pagoda.

It is important to take into consideration specifics of both national and church architecture of the Kazakh and other nations of the country in the design of the complex. But this idea has not just symbolic character. It has a great practical importance. In recent years important international events, including summits of the heads of the states, representative conferences with participation of politicians, businessmen, scientist and workers of culture from all over the world are being held. Therefore, Palace of cultures and religions, built in the centre of Eurasia, must become one of the centres of interaction of states and nations. I assigned the Government to explore the issues related to the design and commence of constructing of the Eurasian Palace of cultures and religions next year on the left bank area of Astana.

Eight years of the Assembly's existence is already a history. It is a history mainly of steady progressive advance. The point is not so much in the amount of work it has done in transformation of the economy, social sphere and policy. It is a great start for the future and the source of confidence in the present. All this was based on interethnic peace and accord. They say that peace is when they shoot somewhere away from your place of residence. Unfortunately, in the present-day world such is the case. Each nation, each country bears responsibility for preserving peace. Nobody shall bring peace and accord from outside. It is not worth taking the trouble to cherish an illusion.

There are two strategies of achieving peace. The first is just in strict construction of aphorism of one of the last century's presidents: "We'll gain peace, even if we have to fight for it". This strategy is not coming our way.

The second wording is engraved on the building of the Palace of Peace in Hague: "Desire peace, observe justice". It is much closer to our philosophy of interethnic relations. Attention to the interests of any, even the smallest ethnic groups, sincere respect to the national traditions and customs is the basis of just inter-ethnic peace.

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