

Statement to The Hague Forum, 8-12 February 1999

As written:

REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

ADDRESS
delivered by

Mr.Z. TURISBEKOV

Head of the Delegation of the Republic of Kazakhstan
before
The International Forum in the Hague
(8-12 February, 1999)

The Hague, the Netherlands

M-r Chairman,

Ladies and Gentlemen

Let me first of all on behalf of the delegation of the Republic of Kazakhstan to express the gratitude to the United Nations Population Fund as well as to the Government of the Netherlands for organizing this International Forum which is very significant as a part of Preparatory process for the Special session of the UN General Assembly.

M-r Chairman,

The **acknowledgement** of the population strategy as a key factor of the national policy is one of the significant achievements of the Cairo Conference on Population and Development. Our delegation quite attentively listened to the interventions made by other delegations, which testified to the substantial progress achieved by many countries in implementation of the Cairo Program of Actions.

Kazakhstan, **from** its side, stressing its political commitment to the goals of the Cairo Conference undertook the active efforts in integrating the population issues into the national development strategy. The fundamental document for implementation of this strategy is "The Message of the President of the country **Mr. Nazarbaev** "Kazakhstan 2030. Prosperity, Security and Improvement of Well-being of Kazakhstans citizens", which determines the important directions, such as morbidity prevention and encourage of healthy life style; improvement of women and children health; effective population family support policy, strengthening of institute of marriage and family; improvement of nutrition, environment and ecology.

To strengthen the necessity of bringing family, maternity and childhood issues to the rank of national policy, in 1995 under the President of the country the Council on Family, Women and Population Policy was established. The main aims of the Council are: participation in elaborating and implementation of women and children policy, developing of complex system of social, economic, legislative protection of family, realization of gender equality, advancing the women in sustainable development. The Council was reformed to the National Commission of Family and Women under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan in January, 1999.

In 1997 the Government adopted conception of the policy on advancing women status, and determined main directions of the corresponding activity, such as women participation in elaborating state and public policy, ensuring the equality of labour rights, women health care, the problem of harassment in women private life, developed the strategic goals, main approaches of their implementation and coordination of activity on realization of basic standings of the conception.

In Kazakhstan difficulties of socio-economic development, connected with transitional period, caused the reduction of total health index and negatively affected the **medical-demographic** situation in general: reduction of birth rate, growth of death rate, reduction of natural growth rate, reduction of life expectancy, high morbidity of social depended diseases. **Kazakhstan**, as well as other countries in transition, is witnessing a sharp decline of demographic statistics.

In 1998 there were 222 thousand recorded births, which is almost a two-fold decline compared to 1987, when the birth rate in the country reached its highest peak (417 thousand births). Kazakhstan has not experienced such a strategic birth rate decrease since World War II. From 1991, alarming tendencies started to manifest themselves in the death rate. The death rate grew from 8,2 in 1991 to 10,5 per 1,000 persons in 1995. Moreover, the gap between the male and female life expectancy expanded from 5,8 years to 11,2 years.

The child death rate remains high and at present it is 24,9 cases per 1,000 newborns.

As a result of the declining birth rate and the remaining high death rate the natural growth of the population decreased four-fold and in 1998 yielded 4,4 persons per 1,000 population. The average life expectancy of the population is also declining. Compared to 1990, life expectancy fell by 3,7 years and by 1998 amounted to 64,4 years. Thus the average of life expectancy for men is 59 years, and for women - 70,2 years. Such a steadfast decline of life expectancy in Kazakhstan has not been witnessed since the late 50s.

M-r Chairman,

Whereas these problems are pertinent to a number of countries with economies in transition, Kazakhstan, however, is facing the specific ecological problems, which has the characteristics of global ecological disasters. Everyone knows the disastrous situation in the regions of shrinking Aral Sea and Semipalatinsk nuclear test site, where the nuclear tests in atmosphere and underground have been conducted during 40 years. There are high level of maternal and child death rate, health diseases, involuntary migration in these regions.

Unfortunately, the global character of these disasters undermines the ability of the Government to solve these problems by its own. Experience gained by Kazakhstan since the Cairo conference is demonstrated the possibility to address the impacts of global population policy only on the basis of common efforts, developing the effective international cooperation in this field.

M-r Chairman,

The issues related to the population development and health of mother and child has been traditionally at the heart of national policy. While visiting Kazakhstan Madame Nafis Sadyk once said: "A nation which has such a deep respect to a mother has a great future". We do hope that her kind words prove to be true in not such a distance future.

Thank you, m-r Chairman.