



## United States Mission to the OSCE

### **Response to the Address by the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan Murat Nurtleu**

As delivered by Ambassador Michael R. Carpenter  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
March 14, 2024

Foreign Minister Nurtleu, welcome to the OSCE Permanent Council and thank you for informing us about Kazakhstan's important reforms. Your support for the OSCE and its comprehensive concept of security are welcome. I personally witnessed the cooperation between your government and the Program Office in Astana, so thank you for that as well.

The United States values our strong relationship with Kazakhstan, built on our shared respect for the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of all states. Our relationship brings peace, stability, and prosperity to both our countries and the broader Central Asian region. We welcome the commitments of the C5+1 Presidential Summit, held in New York in September 2023. We look forward to follow-on engagements from this historic meeting, including exploring sustainable infrastructure development through the Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment, and increased energy security through the C5+1 Critical Minerals Dialogue and diversification of trade routes.

We welcome the announcement of President Tokayev's action plan to promote human rights. The implementation of the plan's initiatives -- including planned improvements in the areas of gender equality, disability rights, prevention of custodial torture and ill-treatment, labor rights and labor safety -- has the potential to significantly improve the well-being of the people of Kazakhstan and fits very well with the OSCE's third dimension activities.

For all of us who wish to grow our economies and attract foreign investment, it is essential to develop the transparent institutions and processes that both the business community and civil society demand. This of course includes improving protection of individuals' right to freedom of expression, including protections for national and international journalists and media professionals.

We applaud Kazakhstan's engagement with the OSCE's Representative on Freedom of the Media, as well as its ongoing consultations with journalists and civil society media experts, to ensure compliance with its international law obligations. We hope Kazakhstan will integrate feedback on the legislation from the RFOM and address legal regulation of such concepts as "hate speech," "extremism," and "incitement," which, if left insufficiently

defined, leave individuals vulnerable to persecution for exercising their right to freedom of expression. However, the sheer fact that you are engaging on this and other issues in a constructive way is well noted and appreciated.

The United States welcomes as well Kazakhstan's progress towards diversifying its economy, including upgrading infrastructure and expanding export routes beyond oil and gas to facilitate trade and build interconnectivity. We value Kazakhstan's leadership in developing the Trans-Caspian Transport Corridor, enhancing regional connectivity and spurring economic growth. I appreciate your focus on connectivity today, and we too see this as a potential game changer for the region. We are keen to continue working together to achieve commitments in this and other areas such as the Global Methane Pledge.

Minister Nurtleu, the United States looks forward to further strengthening our partnership with Kazakhstan bilaterally and through additional C5+1 engagements as well as here at the OSCE to advance regional prosperity, security, and respect for human rights.

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