Statement by Kazakhstan on Culture of Peace

Mr. President,

My delegation supports both drafts resolution under agenda item “Culture of Peace” as they carry forward many actions already undertaken to advance understanding, tolerance and solidarity within and among nations, so acutely needed in today’s world torn by strife, conflicts, terrorism and religious intolerance. These resolutions, in order to be effective, must be reinforced by the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance, the Alliance of Civilizations under the broad UN platform of Dialogue among Civilizations, and all other legal instruments and frameworks related to culture and peace.

Implementing these resolutions calls for well-coordinated action by the UN system, with UNESCO as the lead agency, its Member States, regional organizations and all other stakeholders to reduce poverty which breeds conflicts, to foster social cohesion and inclusion, pluralistic and democratic participation, and sustainable development of all segments, including those of women, youth and children. Focus must also be on indigenous peoples, refugees and displaced persons and migrants. Today, we have the possibility to minimize extremism, biases and prejudices through education and promotion of values, the appropriate use of new technologies and dissemination and free flow of information.

We need to reach out to establish durable international peace and security through general and complete disarmament and effective arms control of all kinds of weapons of mass destruction, as well as small arms. Confidence-building measures and efforts for conflict prevention and negotiating peaceful settlements are also of crucial need. Problems arising from post-conflict situations have to be addressed through measures, such as demobilization, reintegration of former combatants in society, weapons-collection programmes and exchange of information, and Truth and Reconciliation Commissions.

Work at the global level can be achieved through individual efforts of Member States and Kazakhstan’s efforts have been noteworthy on many dimensions.

Kazakhstan, being a nation with about 130 ethnic groups and almost 20 different religious denominations established a unique mechanism of interethnic and interfaith dialogue – the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan – the body playing important role in the statehood development and decision making, including through direct participation in the legislative processes in the Parliament of my country.

To foster peace and stability through such a dialogue between diverse faiths and cultures President of Kazakhstan initiated in 2003 the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions being held triennially. As the outcome of the fourth Congress in May 2012 the Council of Religious Leaders was created to focus on cooperation with other fora and international organizations, such as the United Nations. In 2015 there will be the Fifth meeting of the Congress which would focus on closer dialogue of religious and political leaders. We look forward to an enhanced cooperation between the Congress and the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations to promote further peace and stability through intercultural and interfaith dialogue.

Kazakhstan, as the first Eurasian Chair of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in 2010 and as the Chair of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in 2011-2012 continued to endeavour to promote interfaith dialogue on the regional and global stage. My country also has enacted new legislation and instituted new government agencies and mechanisms. Kazakhstan is highly committed to provide moral and spiritual education to children and youth to overcome the spiritual vacuum of human values and to strengthen the moral fabric of its society. This has given people immunity from the dangers of their moral self-destruction and degradation.

Kazakhstan has also initiated the UN International Year for Rapprochement of Cultures, and subsequently the International Decade for the Rapprochement of Cultures (2013-2022), adopted during the 36th UNESCO General Conference in November 2011. This has provided the space for decade-long events and activities, to move from tolerance to actually a culture of peace.

Kazakhstan pledges to join the multilateral effort to foster global harmony and cooperation and strengthen everyday peace focussing on human capacities and empowerment of peoples in the post-2015 development phase.

Thank you.