

**Statement By
Ambassador John Duncan to the Conference on Disarmament
on behalf of the United Kingdom and France,
6 September 2006**

Central Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty

Mr President

I should like to make a brief statement to the Conference on Disarmament on behalf of the UK and France.

On 31 August the Republic of Kazakhstan formally brought to the attention of the Conference on Disarmament their intention, with the other Central Asian States (Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan), to sign a Treaty on a Central Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in Semipalatinsk, Kazakhstan on 8 September.

The United Kingdom and France have long supported the formation of nuclear weapon free zones as an important path towards disarmament and non-proliferation. As was highlighted in the decisions of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the NPT the establishment of internationally recognised Nuclear Weapon Free Zones enhances global peace and security.

However, owing to the lack of consultations with nuclear weapon states and concerning elements of substance, the CANWFZ draft treaty does not in our view meet the objective and principles of NWFZ as expressed by the 1999 UNDC guidelines. The importance of the negative security assurances associated with NWFZs, and the need for consultation, were highlighted in these guidelines. Art VII of the NPT sets out the concept of regional treaties and the assurance that they provide of the absence of nuclear weapons in such zones.

We have expressed our concerns about these issues to the C5 countries and, since 2002, have on a number of occasions requested further consultations in order to resolve these issues. These requests have never been answered.

France and the United Kingdom regret that, despite our representations to the UN and requests to the C-5 for further consultations, the C-5 will nevertheless seek to sign the text on 8 September without addressing the issues we have raised. On the basis of the current text the United Kingdom and France will not be in a position to support the Treaty and

to sign the relevant Protocols that would grant negative security assurances to the C-5 States signatory to the CANWFZ Treaty.

The United Kingdom and France request that this statement is circulated to Member States represented at the Conference on Disarmament.