

**Statement of the Center for International Security and Policy
at the first session of the nuclear weapon ban treaty conference**

31 March 2017, New York

Delivered by Alimzhan Akhmetov, CISP Director

**Madam President,
Distinguished delegates,**

During this week in this hall, we are witnessing a truly historic event – the opening negotiations on a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons.

For many years, the world community has invested a huge amount of effort to reach this moment. We must, therefore, give it our best shot and make every joint effort to end the Conference with the development of an agreed draft document and ensure its approval, signing and early entry into force.

We believe it must be a **simple and compact document**, with its main focus on the nuclear weapons ban provisions.

Moreover, let me draw your attention to another important moment.

Currently discussions are taking place regarding the possible accession of the nuclear-weapon states to the treaty and the mechanisms of such accession.

We believe that it is too early to have these discussions.

In accordance with the Declaration of SSOD-1 «... *the nuclear-weapon States have the primary responsibility for nuclear disarmament ...*». Their absence at the Conference means not their **special position** here, but **irresponsibility**. Hence, we must not repeat the earlier mistakes and get involved in the discussion about the nuclear states. Instead, we must focus on the complete prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons.

The accession of the nuclear-weapon states to the treaty will be the next stage of the negotiations on the practical issues of eliminating nuclear weapons.

We believe, today our aim is to focus solely on the development of an agreed draft treaty to ban nuclear weapons and not allow potential interventions from nuclear-weapon states.

And here it is pertinent to recall the words of the French writer, Stendhal, «...*is a road any the worse, because there are thorns in the hedges on either side of it? The traveler goes his way and leaves the wicked thorns to wither where they are*».

Thank you.
