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Consul-General-in-Residence Lecture:
“The Religious Harmony in the Republic of Kazakhstan”

ABSTRACT

*Former UN General Secretary, Kofi Annan,
“Kazakhstan may serve as example of a peaceful multiethnic country
where ethnic diversity is a blessing, but not the curses”¹*

Historically Kazakhstan has always been a crossroads of various religions, such as Christianity, Islam, Buddhism and Zoroastrianism, all of which have greatly influenced the development of the human race. The territory of Kazakhstan was one of the most important sections of the Great Silk Road, connecting countries through trade and cultural exchange and playing the role of a bridge between East and West.

Kazakhstan is a newly independent state, which has gained its independence only 17 years ago. Over several years the dynamics of demographic processes and migration have turned Kazakhstan into one of the most multinational, multiconfessional, multiethnic countries in the world.

Kazakhstan’s national policy is based on transparent and clear postulation principles such as inter-ethnic cooperation, social stability as a foundation for the fair ethnic issues solution, rule of law, state independence strengthening, and an active policy of integration.

There are over 130 ethnic groups living in Kazakhstan. The population includes the following main ethnic groups: Kazakh (58.9%), Russian (25.9%), Ukrainian (2.9%), Uzbek (2.8%), Uighur, Tatar, and German (1.5% each), and other groups (4%).

The Consul-General-in-Residence Lecture is to highlight all that the Kazakhstan Government has done for the last 17 years and is doing regarding implementation of its considerable state policy of multi-ethnic society revival, self-preservation and unity, and multicultural development promotion.

¹ From the speech at the meeting with Board members of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan, October 18, 2002.