



**DELEGATION  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN TO THE OSCE**

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*DELEGATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN TO THE OSCE  
(ON BEHALF OF A NUMBER OF DELEGATIONS – SEE LIST BELOW)*

**Statement  
by Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the OSCE,  
Ambassador Kairat Abdrakhmanov  
at the 857<sup>th</sup> Permanent Council meeting  
on the burning of Quran  
7 April 2011**

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson,

I have the honour and privilege to take the floor today on behalf of the following participating States: Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Turkey and Kazakhstan.

Mr. Chairperson,

We strongly condemn the burning of Quran by a religious leader in the US on 20 March 2011 and the subsequent violent incidents which claimed the lives of UN staff members in Afghanistan.

Manifestation of intolerance and discrimination against Muslims in such a way is a shameless and irresponsible provocation disturbing peaceful relations between different religions and communities.

This appalling act is one of the worst forms of extremism which hurt the feelings of millions of Muslims in the world.

In no way the offensive character of this act does not legitimize violence and killing innocent people.

It nullifies all the efforts of the international community, including of the OSCE, on reconstruction of Afghanistan, the OSCE partner for Co-operation.

The entire responsibility of its serious consequences rests squarely on those who failed to prevent it.

While acknowledging that freedom of expression is a cornerstone of democracies, it should be balanced with the need for combating intolerance and discrimination and promoting mutual respect and understanding between Muslims, Christians, Jews and representatives of other religions. To this end we underline the important role of community and religious leaders in promoting tolerance and mutual understanding.

We call for the corresponding governments to pay close attention to the issue of fulfillment of our common commitments in the field of tolerance and non-discrimination enshrined in the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, the 1990 Charter of Paris for a New Europe, the 1999 Charter for European Security, as well as in the number of Ministerial and Permanent Council Decisions.

The alignment process to this statement is not finalised yet and open for any other participating States to joint it.

Thank you for your attention.