DECLARATION
OF THE UNIVERSITIES OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

Taraz City, May 22, 2007

PREAMBLE

The social and economic prosperity of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the 21st century and the formation of an innovative society depend on the country’s ability to provide education to all members of society and to enable each person to succeed in a rapidly changing world characterised by high demands for development and the need for integrating education, research and innovation – the three points of the so-called “triangle of knowledge”. Hence the leading role of education.

Since their creation, the Universities of Kazakhstan have prepared quality graduates, professionals of high standard for all spheres of society. However, with the present globalization, the mission of higher education institutions is changing: university functions are also global, and the simple transfer of knowledge or the training for special skills no longer suffice. At present, future specialists require a public understanding of the vital role a changed Kazakhstan can play in the world at large, such a contribution requiring a well educated population with a high level of scientific and creative potential. The transformation and reform of the country depends on the professional competence, physical health, moral and spiritual strength of the younger generation of students.

Today, as never before, the objective necessity to increase the public role of education is coming to the fore in the country thus pleading for an official recognition of the status of Universities as educational establishments, i.e., social institutions that are responsible for the prospective and effective development of the nation - a mandate implying an enlarged cooperation for improving the national systems of graduate and postgraduate education.

Therefore, the Rectors of the Universities of Kazakhstan appeal for the setting up of an association for all Universities and for the definition of common reference points of strategic importance for the further improvement of the system of university education and the effective development of the state mission.

Thus, the Undersigned Rectors of Kazakhstan Universities express confidence that:
- the future of the country depends on its cultural, scientific and technical development as provided in higher education institutions;
- bringing the young generation to a high level of knowledge is not only a university responsibility but also the task of society whose future demands will have a continued and significant impact on matters of education;
- the Kazakhstan Universities should provide the younger generation with qualitative education encouraging its taking a valuable place in the world community.
We undersigned Rectors of Kazakhstan Universities, realising and understanding the major role of higher educational institutions in the development of society, hereby proclaim the main principles by which all Universities of the Republic Kazakhstan should be guided henceforth.

**MAIN PRINCIPLES**

Universities are social institutions the main task of which is the education of the younger generation, institutions which aspire to realise their full potential for the sake of a prosperous and independent Kazakhstan. The major mission of the Universities amounts not only to be centres of education, but also those platforms of science and culture from which culture and education are distributed through research and teaching. Following the requirements of the present, Universities should conduct their research and teaching activities independently from political ideology and economic authority.

The main goals of Universities are to provide qualitative education and professional training, to increase the new generation’s potential for qualified personnel (personal qualification(?)) and to innovate in the sphere of education.

In Universities, the educational process should be inseparable from the research activity of the world community. Maintaining the substance and quality of the organisation and management of the educational process should build on high levels of development in domestic and world science while also meeting the constantly changing needs of society.

The main principle for university activity should be academic freedom, i.e., the freedom to teach, train and research creatively. Universities should become the educational and research centres of society, a position requiring from academics a deep understanding of knowledge and the capacity to have it transferred to trainees through modern means.

The multi-cultural diversity of the nations forming Kazakhstan, a defining feature that differentiates the country from many others, should play a positive role in the modern processes of social integration and harmonisation. Universities, living by tolerance, should be the keepers of the traditions of humanism. Aspiring to constant enrichment through knowledge and its transfer to their students, the Universities should help simultaneously with overcoming political and national contradictions, with alleviating social divergences, and with promoting intercultural dialogue in order to foster social progress.

In Universities, the development of knowledge requires achieving leading positions in science while maintaining a high level of preparation among scientific and scientific-technical staff to advance national economy.

The key functions of Kazakhstan Universities are the scientific organisation of the educational institutions; the collaboration of science and education with industry, i.e.,
the integration of education, science and industry, including the use of industrial research within the educational process; the reinforcement of academic attractiveness for employers and other customers; the development of expertise for social partnership and the organisation of professional education in function of the labour market.

METHODS

To achieve the purposes of the educational field and to live by the above principles, there is need for the following

- the setting up of modern, effective University systems meeting the requirements of a global innovative society and enabling social empowerment for all;
- the development of work conditions enlarging the potential of the University community, from teachers to students;
- the selection of faculty for Universities and the definition of their status based on their research and teaching activity;
- the guarantee given to students of their academic freedom to achieve their own educational purposes;
- the introduction in universities of high learning standards at all levels of education, in particular for the study of mathematics, natural sciences, technology and foreign languages thus supporting the attraction of highly skilled teachers in these crucially important areas;

Kazakhstan Universities should cooperate as much among themselves as with higher education institutions from other countries.

Within the limits of Kazakhstan, interuniversity collaboration must promote a shared and general policy for education, modernise the national system of graduate and postgraduate education and guarantee the full performance of their mission.

The undersigned Rectors of Universities of Kazakhstan, on behalf of their institutions, assure that the substantive provisions accepted in this Declaration, are the expression of the joint will and desire of their university communities. Universities thus recognise the obligation to observe of all principles listed above and to perform those missions society has mandated them for.