

INFORMATION for NGO
participants on the Astana
“Environment for Europe”
Ministerial Conference

Please read carefully

Conference Venue

Palace of Independence
Tauelsyzdyk avenue, 52
Astana
Kazakhstan



The NGO preparatory meeting will take place in the Palace of Independence, from 10:00 – 18:00 on Tuesday 20 of September 2011. Please be there! Languages are English, Russian.

The Ministerial conference will take place from Wednesday 21 of September, starting at 9 AM, till Friday 23 of September, afternoon. For the programme of the UNECE ministerial conference please see their website; <http://www.unece.org/env/efe/Astana/documents.html>

Registration

Only registered participants can attend the Environment for Europe Ministerial conference. The NGO registration is already closed. You need to be registered in order to obtain your visa. See below.

Visa arrangements

We encourage all Conference participants who need a visa for Kazakhstan to apply for visa support **as soon as possible**.

Please note that it takes **at least 7 days** to process the form and issue an official visa support letter. The time required to issue visa may vary between different embassies of Kazakhstan.

Once your visa application has been processed, you can get your visa either:

- At the Kazakh Embassy or Consulate in the country where you live
- At the airport at arrival in Astana (please count on long waiting time at arrival)

Therefore, we advise to contact your nearest Embassy in advance in order to verify that visa can be issued in time for the Conference.

Visa will be issued to all participants for one month single only (from 12.09.2011 to 11.10.2011). Visa will be issued **without consular fee**. (i.e. VISA does not cost money !)

In order to get visa you need to complete the **attached form** (see attachment, or go to http://www.eng.efe.kz/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=89&Itemid=89) and send it to unecevisa@gmail.com

Complete the form correctly and fill in the passport data accurately. In case of mismatch of passport data you can be denied the visa of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Place to get a visa: in home country or at airport

It is necessary to pay attention to the column **“place to get a visa”**. It is important to specify exact place of getting visa. In case of mismatch of data on place of getting visa, you will be denied the visa of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

If there is no diplomatic mission of the Republic of Kazakhstan in your country, you can apply for visa in countries where there is diplomatic mission or in consular points located at the airports of Astana and Almaty. In such case, after getting visa support, **invitation letter with required stamp of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs** will be sent to your e-mail.

We encourage all Conference participants **to obtain visas before traveling to Kazakhstan**.

However, if due to limited time, travel schedule or other issues, it is not possible to obtain visa in advance, participants can also obtain the visa on arrival at Astana or Almaty airports. This option is available to Conference participants from all countries (irrespective of the country of residence) that have chosen to receive his/her visa on arrival.

While all efforts will be made by the host country to ensure the quick processing of the visas on arrival, participants should be prepared for some waiting time, if choosing this option. To minimize such time, we encourage all participants that plan to obtain visa on arrival to fill in and print out relevant **visa application form** (<http://www.eng.efe.kz/media/blank005.doc>) before traveling and have ready upon arrival their **passport-size picture** as well as **visa support number**.

Please note that participants have to decide whether they would prefer to obtain their visa in advance or on arrival prior to submitting their application for visa support. The relevant section of the form should be filled clearly and cannot be changed after the form is submitted. **It is not possible to receive visa on arrival on the basis of a visa support letter issued for obtaining the visa at the Embassy of Kazakhstan in your country.**

Visas for Conference participants should be issued for free (both visas issued by embassies and on arrival). If you encounter any problems in your visa application, please report it immediately to the host country secretariat.

If you want to get additional information on visa support, please contact Kanapyanov Meiram e-mail: unecevisa@gmail.com. More information you can also find on the Conference website: www.eng.efe.kz

Accommodation and Transfer from Astana Airport

During the conference Rooms have been booked for sponsored NGO participants in Hotel Abai, where we have booked for our participants double rooms from Tuesday 20 September (check-in) till Friday 23 September (check-out).

Hotel Abai

Republic avenue, 33

Astana

Kazakhstan



There will hopefully be shuttle busses available (we are discussing with the Kazak organizers), that will bring you to Hotel Abai from Astana Airport and during the conference, from Hotel Abai to the Palace of Independence. If not, taxis costs about 3 Euro (500-600 KZT one way ride). We will provide you with more information about the bus transfer in the coming weeks.

Language The conference will be held in English and Russian.

Good to know

Currency rate

The currency in Kazakhstan is the **Kazakhstani tenge** (KZT). The current exchange rate is approximately:

1€ → 210.888 KZT

1\$ → 146.3 KZT

1 RUB → 5.06209 KZT

Weather

Astana is the second coldest capital in the world after Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. However, the month of September is considered the last month of the summer and temperatures can still be very agreeable. Keep in mind that the weather in Astana is changing all the time (even during the day) which makes it very difficult to give weather forecasts. In the city it can also be very windy and it can cool down quite quickly during the day. Take therefore enough warm clothes with you (especially for the evenings) and check the weather forecasts online before departure.

Important phone numbers in case of emergency

Lifeguards:	112
Ambulance:	103
	31-67-52

Fire department: 101
94-99-11
Police: 102

Contact in Astana

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Important locations

Astana

