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## Op-Ed/Statement from Ambassador Kenneth Fairfax in honor of the 50th anniversary of USAID

### USAID: Celebrating Our Shared Values

On November 3, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) marked its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Since President Kennedy established USAID, it has been a quiet force for progress in more than 100 countries around the world, helping people and nations to reach their skills and potential. Kazakhstan is among those countries where USAID has contributed.

Within a few months of Kazakhstan's independence, USAID arrived to help Kazakhstan rise to the urgent challenges of establishing a market economy, improving health and providing good governance to its citizens by building democratic institutions. USAID has been active in a broad range of activities -- everything from emergency medical programs to financial sector reform.

Working together, experts from USAID and Kazakhstan have built up an impressive list of achievements. One particularly notable example of that success was the role USAID has played in working with the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade as it developed and implemented reforms that resulted in the World Bank listing Kazakhstan as the world's number one greatest reformer in its *Doing Business Report*. Other examples can be seen across the country and in almost every field of activity. This has been an amazingly productive relationship.

Over the years, the work that USAID is doing in Kazakhstan has changed right along with Kazakhstan. As Kazakhstan has matured as a nation, the fundamental role of USAID has shifted from one of assistance to partnership. Today, the government of Kazakhstan co-finances USAID's programs aimed at fostering economic growth, thereby cementing the relationship as that of partners in a joint enterprise -- an enterprise intended to help Kazakhstan to grow. This transition from assistance to partnership is yet another reflection of the fact that, ultimately, USAID strives to "work itself out of a job" by helping Kazakhstan to become one of the world's economic and political leaders.

USAID is an important embodiment of the commitment of the American people to work toward a world where people live in freedom, dignity and self-sufficiency. I believe that these are goals shared by the American and Kazakhstani people and as Kazakhstan continues to grow we look forward to the day when USAID will welcome Kazakhstan as a full partner not just inside Kazakhstan but also elsewhere around the globe, helping other countries striving to build a better life for their citizens.

On behalf of the U.S. government, I would like to thank both the dedicated men and women of USAID in Kazakhstan and the Kazakhstani people for your partnership and friendship. And to USAID, let me add 'Happy Birthday.'

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