

## **May 1990**

# **'Nevada-Semipalatinsk' Antinuclear Movement (Kazakhstan, USSR), Chronology of the Movement 1989-1990**

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### **Summary:**

A timeline describing the conception and subsequent activities of the Nevada-Semipalatinsk Nuclear Movement. Special attention is given to Kazakh-U.S. cooperation, acts of protest, and nuclear tests carried out by the USSR. The timeline ends with the International Citizens Congress for a Nuclear Test Ban in May 1990.

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## **„NEVADA — SEMIPALATINSK“ ANTINUCLEAR MOVEMENT**

**(Kazakhstan, USSR)**

### **CHRONOLOGY OF THE MOVEMENT 1989—1990**

**February, 26**

The well-known Kazakh poet Olzhas Suleimenov appears on the Kazakh TV to read a statement against nuclear testing and calls for a mass meeting at the Writers' Union Hall of Kazakhstan. The reason of it is that on February 12 and 17, 1989 during the test of atomic equipment on the Semipalatinsk test site a release of radioactive gas took place. The fact became known because of the raising of radiation level in this region which was registered by the geiger counters in the military settlement Chagan.

**February, 28**

The public meeting of the peoples of Kazakhstan and the birth of the „Nevada-Semipalatinsk“ Antinuclear Movement. O. Suleimenov is elected Chairman of the Movement.

During March the collection of signatures in support of the Movement (more than a million) is held and charitable donations are made to the Movement's fund. Thousands of letters and telegrams of solidarity come to the „Nevada-Semipalatinsk“ Movement.

**March, 11**

The information about the first Soviet grassroots antinuclear Movement in Kazakhstan, its aims and objectives, with expression of solidarity, appears in the foreign press (USA, France)

**April — May**

Mr. Matlock, US ambassador in the USSR, comes in Alma-Ata. The aim of his visit — to learn about the newly-formed „Nevada-Semipalatinsk“ Movement. The first documents of the Movement are handed over to him. Coordinating Council of the „Nevada-Semipalatinsk“ Movement is set up, its Programme and Charter are worked out.

The first materials of the Movement are spread in Kazakhstan and the whole country.

Regional initiative groups and committees of the Movement make their appearance in the Republic.

**June — July**

O. Suleimenov, the People's Deputy of the USSR, speaks at the first Congress of the People's Deputies in Moscow on the aims and demands of the Movement.

Murat Auezov, vice-chairman of the Movement, visits the USA. The first personal contacts are established with the American peaceful groups and organizations. Both sides agreed on holding joint actions on Hiroshima Day — Nagasaki Day.

O. Suleimenov together with the representatives of the Soviet press for the first time visit the Semipalatinsk test site.

Kurchatov town becomes declassified, the materials about it are published in „Ogoniok“ magazin.

By the „Nevada-Semipalatinsk“ Movement demand a scientific conference is held in Semipalatinsk. All the participants of the conference: physicians, specialists, scientists, public representatives — come to an unanimous opinion that the closure of the Semipalatinsk test site is of urgent necessity.



**July, 8**

An underground nuclear test breaks the five — month silence of the test site. The representatives of the Movement and the Soviet press for the first time are invited to be present during the test.

**August, 5—7**

An International action of Solidarity with the victims of atomic bombardment in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. A meeting of representatives of the Movement, of Kazakhstan peoples, of the Soviet Peace Committee and the press with the military stuff of Kurchatov town.

Action of protest against nuclear testing in Karaul village near the test site and adoption of the Appeal to Peoples of the Earth. A symbol and the hymn „Zamanai“ („The Time of Trials“) of the Movement are born at this action.

A huge demonstration against the test site takes place in Semipalatinsk City. Simultaneously the similar actions are held in Japan, USA, West Germany and other countries of the world.

**August, 29**

The 40 th anniversary of nuclear testing on the territory of Kazakhstan. Demonstrations of protest against atomic explosions take place in Semipalatinsk and other cities of the Republic. Memorial actions are held in the USA in support of the Movement's demands.

**September, 1**

„Peace Lessons“ are conducted in schools of the Republic by the „Nevada-Semipalatinsk“ Movement activists.

**September, 2**

An underground atomic explosion in the Semipalatinsk area.

**September, 9**

The 1-st Republican Conference of the „Nevada-Semipalatinsk“ Movement. Activists of all regional groups and organizations take part in its work. The „Nevada-Semipalatinsk“ acquires the scheme of organization. A delegation of Yakut scientists headed by M. M. Yakovlev, the People's Deputy of the USSR, comes to Alma-Ata for elaboration of common grounds in the struggle against the nuclear testing. The Movement opens its regional organization in the Yakut Autonomous Republic and Chukotsky Peninsula.

**September, 24—25**

Demonstrations of solidarity in support of the „Nevada-Semipalatinsk“ Movement demands are held in the USA and West Germany.

**October, 4**

A nuclear test with the yield of 60 kilotons is carried out on the Semipalatinsk Test site. It brings about: the meeting at the Ministry of Defence of the USSR in Moscow, the press-conference of O. Suleimenov with foreign journalists in Moscow, releasing of Appeals to the heads of the SU and US Governments, to M. Gorbachev and G. Bush, and to the Ministers of Defence of both countries to launch a bilateral moratorium on nuclear testing.

**October, 9—10**

Representatives of the „Nevada-Semipalatinsk“ Movement participate in the IXth International Scientific Symposium of IPPNW. A sit-in in support of the „Nevada-Semipalatinsk“ Movement demands in Hiroshima.

**October**

The miners of Karaganda make a statement, addressing it to the Government of the Republic and of the country, with demand to stop nuclear testing, otherwise they go on strike.

**October, 19**

An underground atomic explosion is carried out on the Semipalatinsk test site within the yield of 20 to 75 kilotons (TASS report)

**October, 21**

A wave of mass meetings takes place in Moscow, Alma-Ata, Semipalatinsk, Saran, Abai region, Karaul village.

**October, 22**

Huge demonstrations are held in Karaganda and Pavlodar. Peoples of Kazakhstan demand from the Government of the Republic to submit the question on closing the Semipalatinsk test site to the consideration of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

**October, 23**

O. Suleimenov, the People's Deputy of the USSR, speaks on the session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, stating the demands of the „Nevada-Semipalatinsk“ Movement, which are supported by E. Shevardnadze, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR.

**October, 26—31**

A Commission, consisting of representatives of the country miners Committees and activists of the Movement, works in Semipalatinsk and the test site to see the effects of testing on the people's health.

**November, 10**

A meeting of the Commission members with N. Ryzhkov, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, in Moscow on the results of their work in Semipalatinsk region.

**November, 14**

All the Deputies of the Supreme Soviet of the Kazakh SSR unanimously adopt a resolution on harmful effects of nuclear testing on the people's health and address the Supreme Soviet of the USSR to decide the question of closing the Semipalatinsk test site.

**November, 26 — December, 5**

The chairman of the „Nevada-Semipalatinsk“ Movement visits the USA and has meetings with Dr. Lawn — co-Chairman of IPPNW, Mr. Muller — Chairman of the US Fund for Survival of Humanity, Dr. Stone — Chairman of the US Scientific Union, representatives of „Parliamentarians for Global Action“ and the US Congressmen. The aim is to coordinate efforts in sponsoring an International Citizens Congress for a Nuclear Test Ban on May, 24—28, 1990 in Alma-Ata.

**December, 9**

The II-d Republican Conference of the „Nevada-Semipalatinsk“ Movement and great charitable concert-meeting are held in Alma-Ata. Delegates of the Conference come to a decision to convocate an International Congress on May, 24—28, 1990 in Alma-Ata and Semipalatinsk, which is co-sponsored by „Nevada-Semipalatinsk“ Movement and IPPNW. An Organizing Committee of the Congress is formed.

**December, 19**

The Coordinating Council of the Movement together with the Regional Peace Committee and Trade Union Council conduct a public court in Semipalatinsk over the test site and the military-industrial complex.

**January, 1990**

A documentary film „Amanat“ about the living problems of inhabitants near the Semipalatinsk test site appears on the Soviet TV. Representatives of the „N-S“ Movement meet with N. Nazarbayev, the First Secretary of Central Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan, to decide the fate of the test site.

The first issue of the „Nevada-Semipalatinsk“ Movement's newspaper — „Citizen“ — is prepared for publishing.

Alma-Ata — Volgograd — Moscow — Riga TV-bridge via satellite is held on the Soviet TV, devoted to the problems of the Semipalatinsk test site, human rights and national relations.

**January, 23—27**

A Commission of the People's Deputies of the USSR headed by Y. Sherbak together with representatives of the „N-S“ Movement works in Semipalatinsk area to investigate the consequences of nuclear testing on people's health and their living. There is no testing on the Semipalatinsk test site since October, 20.

**February, 26**

Press-conference of the Movement is held at the Conference-hall of the Writers' Union of Kazakhstan, which summed up the activity during the year, since the day of foundation of the „Nevada-Semipalatinsk“ Movement.

**March 29 — April 2**

An activist of the Movement K. Umarov and a representative of Western Shoshone Nation take part in 10 Western States Stop Nuclear Testing Tour, organized by „American Peace Test“. Joint International actions against nuclear testing take place in Kazakhstan, USA, West Germany, Great Britain and Japan.

**April, 3—4**

A scientific Conference „Ecology, Man, Nature“ is held. Outstanding scientists and leaders of local initiative groups and regional committees of the Movement take part in its work.

**April, 6**

Press-conference of Olzhas Suleimenov with the representatives of central and republican press is held in Alma-Ata. He discusses the course of preparing for Citizens Congress and answers numerous questions.

**April, 8**

TV action „Peace Wave“ — a six — hour transmission on a republican channel.

**May, 24—28**

International Citizens Congress for a Nuclear Test Ban is held in Alma-Ata and Semipalatinsk region.