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ASTANA – A CENTER OF GLOBAL INTEGRATION, SECURITY AND PEACE
International Parliamentary Conference dedicated to the Day of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan

Астана, 2018 жылғы 26 қараша • Astana, 26 November 2018



Forum Praises Nazarbayev's Role in Central Asian Cooperation



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Discusses Economic Cooperation in Minsk



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АСТАНА – ЖАҢАНДЫҚ ИНТЕГРАЦИЯ, ҚАУІПСІЗДІК ЖӘНЕ БЕЙБІТШІЛІК ОРТАЛЫҒЫ

Қазақстан Республикасы Тұңғыш Президенті күніне арналған
халықаралық парламенттік конференция

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President's Day

Forum Praises Nazarbayev's Role in Central Asian Cooperation

The international conference, Astana – A Centre of Global Integration, Security and Peace, gathered representatives of the Kazakh Parliament and international organisations Nov. 26 to discuss Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev's global peace and cooperation initiatives.

The Kazakh Mazhilis (lower house of Parliament) organised the conference with the support of the Kazakh Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The conference was dedicated to the Day of the First President and included high-ranking parliamentarians from Azerbaijan, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Russia, Spain, Turkey and Uzbekistan.

Mazhilis Speaker Nurlan Nigmatulin opened the event by praising Kazakhstan's new-found role as a centre of security and peace and a global gathering place for discussions on economic and political initiatives.

"Under the President's leadership, Kazakhstan has come a long way since independence from being a peripheral state of the former Soviet Union to a full member of the world community, enjoying its well-deserved authority and respect, and a responsible partner in addressing global and regional problems," he said.

Nazarbayev's accomplishments include promoting Eurasianism, leading significant economic reforms, which have attracted more than \$300 billion of foreign direct investment, facilitating peace dialogues via Kazakhstan's chairmanship in the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), membership of the United Nations (UN) Security Council and the Astana Process on Syria. He has also advanced modernisation initiatives, such as the recent article "Seven Facets of the Great Steppe."

"In his article, the President emphasises the main role of the Silk Road and notes that it is the cradle of the Turkic world. This area is currently a bridge between the East and West and, in this way, Central Asia unites Turkey and Europe. Therefore, we believe that Kazakhstan plays a role of great importance," added the Turkish Grand National Assembly Deputy Chairperson Mustafa Şentop.

Nazarbayev will continue cementing Kazakhstan's role in the global community as Astana will host a forum for parliamentarians of Asia and Europe in September 2019, which will coincide with the 25th anniversary of the idea of Eurasian integration.

"Direct multilateral dialogue between the leaders of legislative bodies of Eurasian states will contribute to solving the current problems faced by European and Asian countries," said Nigmatulin.

Subsequently, panel sessions on Astana Vector: Trust, Security and Cooperation and Global Initiatives of Kazakhstan – Promoting Ideas of Peace and Concord included experts from China, India, Germany, Sweden and Spain.

At the former session, Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst Deputy Editor and Central Asia-Caucasus Institute and Institute of Security and Development Policy Researcher Niklas Nilsson presented Svante Cornell and Frederick Starr's report "Modernisation and Regional Cooperation in Central Asia: A New Spring?," which analyses the recent emergence of regionalism.

"There is indeed a legacy of regional cooperation among Central Asian states since their independence," said Nilsson. "Today, we see a new impetus for regional cooperation emerging in Central Asia and key drivers are the increasing prospects for continental trade, reform processes taking place in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan and the changing role and perception of Afghanistan in the region."

The report analyses historical and recent trends in regional cooperation and identifies opportunities and obstacles by drawing on the experiences of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Nordic Council.

"ASEAN has enabled its members to approach foreign great powers as a unit rather than individually. The organisation has also coordinated members' economic and trade policy, fostering considerable growth in Southeast Asia. The Nordic Council, on the other hand, has shown that regional cooperation can function successfully even when members have very different approaches toward larger integrational structures," the scholar said.

The report's findings focus on how to translate good intentions into practical action.

"The most important point is that membership in these institutions of cooperation should be exclusively Central Asian – it should not be open to external powers. This is to provide a platform through which Central Asian countries can conduct a dialogue with foreign powers as a unit," he concluded.



EAEU Intergovernmental meeting in Minsk

Eurasian Prime Ministers Discuss Economic Cooperation in Minsk

Eurasian region prime ministers met Nov. 27 in Minsk Belarus to discuss economic cooperation, the status of agreements and future interaction, [primeminister.kz](#). reports.

The Eurasian Intergovernmental Council (EIC) meeting included the prime ministers of Kazakhstan Bakytzhan Sagintayev, Belarus Sergei Rumas, Kyrgyzstan Mukhammetkaly Abulgaziev, the Russian Federation Dmitry Medvedev and Acting Prime Minister of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan.

Participants discussed the implementation of the digital agenda and the forming of a common financial market. They also discussed the principles of tax policy, the creation of a system of marking goods with identification marks, the use of a trademark of the EAEU, the removal of obstacles in the domestic market were heard.

In 2017–2018, approximately 25 barriers to trade between EAEU member states were eliminated, according to the Eurasian Economic Commission.

The Nov. 27 gathering also included a meeting in expanded format in which Chairman of the Executive Committee and CIS Executive Secretary Sergey Lebedev participated as a guest.

In that meeting, participants discussed cooperation in trade, industry, agriculture, energy, food security and transparency in the movement of goods. The Kazakh side suggested expanding the union's foreign trade and creating a tool for interaction in the field of economics and financial policy.

Sagintayev also noted the need to expand trade and economic ties with major partners and new, growing markets. For example, the European Union occupies a significant share in the foreign trade of EAEU member countries and should be developed.

Following the meeting, the EIC participants signed documents, including on the system of labelling goods with identification marks and on joint forecasts for the development of the agro-industrial complex.

The group also agreed to hold the next EIC meeting in early 2019 in Almaty. Next year will mark 25 years since Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev proposed establishing the EAEU and five years since the treaty establishing the union was signed.

Prior to the meeting, Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko received the heads of the EIC delegations. The sides noted economic growth within the union and union's role in strengthening cooperation between member states.

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Central Asia – European Union

Foreign ministers Meeting Examines EU-Central Asia Strategy

The European Union-Central Asia ministerial meeting was recently held in Brussels. The meeting was attended by the heads of the Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan foreign affairs authorities and the European Union's (EU) High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini.

The agenda included a draft of the EU strategy on Central Asia. Kazakh Foreign Minister Kairat Abdrakhmanov said Central Asia is one of the world's most dynamically developing regions with significant potential, including in natural, industrial and human resources.

The Kazakh side emphasised the strategy should develop human capital through education, the promotion of the rule of law and high-quality public administration. The strategy should also emphasise private entrepreneurship and small- and medium-sized businesses focused on women's entrepreneurship.

The delegation noted Central Asia's growing involvement in global economic processes requires more cooperation between regions, including introducing a new technological paradigm and digitalisation, interfacing transport and logistics infrastructures, sharing experience in energy efficiency and introducing green technologies.

Environmental protection and rational water use, as well as joint assistance to restore and stabilise Afghanistan, are important.

Abdrakhmanov also noted the main provisions of Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev's article, "Seven Facets of the Great Steppe." The writing details how Kazakhstan plans to implement large-scale projects to update centuries-old historical heritage and adapt archival, archaeological and other data into digital format to be used by citizens.

European Union and Central Asian interaction in the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and the Belt and Road Initiative, the largest economic projects in the Eurasian space, can make Central Asia an important economic hub. The minister expressed Astana's readiness to provide a dialogue platform on EU-EAEU-People's Republic of China interaction.

Abdrakhmanov drew attention to the need to comply with key elements to implement the document: ensuring cooperation integrity in the EU-CA format and creating more flexible tools to practically implement the strategy, as well as enhancing its visual perception.

To achieve the latter, Kazakhstan proposed creating a single online website to provide "virtual institutionalisation" of cooperation that

could become a universal online window to Europe for 70 million Central Asians.

The sides also adopted a joint communiqué which stressed the importance of adopting a new strategy in early 2019 "to guide the development of region-to-region relations in a way that brings mutual, tangible and long-term benefits."

Abdrakhmanov and Mogherini later discussed efforts to ratify and implement the Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between Kazakhstan and the EU (EPCA), as well as the outcomes of the 12th Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) summit and issues of international and regional cooperation.

The EU is Kazakhstan's largest trade and investment partner, accounting for approximately half of its foreign trade and investment. The EU is also one of Kazakhstan's foreign policy priorities, said Abdrakhmanov. Kazakhstan is the European Union's 32nd largest trading partner and accounts for 80 percent of the EU trade with Central Asia. In the past two years, Kazakh-EU trade has grown 20 percent and officials from both countries hope to grow and diversify trade in the coming years.

In this context, the sides have high hopes for the EPCA and intend to use the full potential of the new document.

As part of the EPCA, Astana seeks further rapprochement between Kazakhstan and the EU. Easing visa restrictions for Kazakh citizens visiting the EU is a priority, said Abdrakhmanov, and negotiations are scheduled to begin after the EU adopts a new union code on visas.

Mogherini praised Kazakh political and administrative reforms that facilitate Kazakh-EU engagement. She also stressed the country's important role in regional processes.

The sides discussed the EU cooperation strategy with Asian countries, which it presented at the ASEM summit. The Kazakh side said it is ready to participate in the implementation of that cooperation strategy.

In Focus: Foreign Policy Priorities

Strengthening UN & Int'l Security



Kazakhstan and South Africa hold consultations in Pretoria

A delegation led by Deputy Foreign Minister Yerzhan Ashikbayev participated in the sixth round of bilateral political consultations in Pretoria between the Kazakh and South African foreign affairs agencies. The latter was represented by Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Reginah Mhaule.

The parties discussed their nations and the prospects of political, economic and trade cooperation, interacting in science and education and expanding the legal framework. They also exchanged views on international agenda issues.

Mhaule noted Kazakhstan's successful work as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for 2017-2018, commending the nation's activities aimed at maintaining peace and security in Africa, combating terrorism, nuclear non-proliferation and sustainable development.

Ashikbayev congratulated South Africa on its election as a non-permanent member of the UNSC for 2019-2020 and hoped for further cooperation within the UN and other international organisations.

Following the consultations, the delegation heads noted the potential for coordinating all aspects of interstate relations. They stressed the importance of the work by their foreign affairs agencies to organise efforts in expanding bilateral cooperation and strengthening interaction within international structures. www.mfa.gov.kz

Welcoming Investments



Askar Mamin holds negotiations in UAE

First Deputy Prime Minister Askar Mamin held talks with United Arab Emirates (UAE) Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Presidential Affairs Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan.

The visit was part of executing the agreements reached during Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan's trip to Astana in July and his talks with Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev.

A joint project company has been created with Borealis (Mubadala) for polyethylene production and the feasibility study is being developed. The issue of providing the project with raw materials has been fully resolved. The project has an estimated capacity of 1.25 million tonnes of polyethylene and the cost is \$6.5 billion.

In addition, the Arab side confirmed its interest in joining the project to produce polypropylene in the Atyrau region. The estimated capacity is 500,000 tonnes and the cost is \$2.6 billion.

The parties noted the potential for cooperation in the aerospace industry based at the Baikonur Cosmodrome and discussed an investment project to modernise Gagarinsky Start complex No. 1 and launch spacecraft on Soyuz-2 type carrier rockets. A tripartite

(Kazakhstan, Russia and the UAE) group has been formed which holds regular consultations. A market evaluation to launch spacecraft services has been completed, with the decision on the project to be made in the first quarter of 2019. www.primeminister.kz

Culture & Identity Modernisation



President Nazarbayev's article calls for deeper exploration of steppe civilisation

"Seven Facets of the Great Steppe," President Nursultan Nazarbayev's article dedicated to the history of Kazakhstan, notes its people need to realise and accept their history in all its versatility and multidimensionality.

The chronicles contain many well-known facts, including the political, economic and historical changes pursued by Kazakh ancestors in the vast spaces of Eurasia.

The article focuses on the equestrian culture, ancient metallurgy and the Great Silk Road. In discussing horse breeding and equestrian culture, it indicates domesticating horses occurred for the first time on Kazakh territory, a fact proven by excavations at the Botai settlement in the northern part of the country. Archaeological studies have shown the Botai people tamed horses in the fourth millennium BC and tens of thousands of horse bones have been found at the settlement site. Archaeologists have also unearthed scrapers, knives, ceramics, jewellery, arrowheads and spears.

Nazarbayev proposed starting work on major projects such as Archive 2025, Great Names of the Great Steppe and Anthology of Steppe Folklore.

The article is considered a continuation of the Rukhani Zanghyru (Modernisation of Kazakhstan's Identity) programme.

"The new components of the nationwide programme will update the centuries-old heritage of our ancestors making it understandable and demanded in the digital age," notes the article. www.kazakh-tv.kz



Also In The News...



- **Kazakh President meets with Uzbek Legislative Chamber Speaker**

Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev recently welcomed Uzbek Oliy Majlis Legislative Chamber Speaker Nurdinjon Ismoilov, highlighting the positive relations between their countries. “Today, our relations are at a good level. We meet with [Uzbek President] Shavkat Mirziyoyev several times a year and discuss all the pressing issues in the field of economic and political cooperation. An important role in the implementation of the signed documents and the agreements reached is played by the parliaments of the two states,” he said. Ismoilov conveyed greetings on Mirziyoyev’s behalf and spoke about the results of past negotiations between the nation’s parliamentarians. “Indeed, recently cooperation between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan has reached a high level of development. This is primarily due to the warm and friendly relations between the presidents of the two states, who opened a new era of cooperation between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. You have realised the hope of our peoples - to live together in peace and harmony. We are very grateful to you for this,” he said. www.akorda.kz

- **OECD Eurasia Week anniversary meeting held in Paris**

A Kazakh delegation headed by Minister of National Economy Timur Suleimenov participated in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Eurasia Week meeting dedicated to the 10th anniversary of the Eurasian Competitiveness Programme. Suleimenov presented the development priorities within the Kazakhstan 2050 strategic programme, noting its goals and objectives are largely dictated by OECD standards and criteria. The audience was particularly interested in measures taken in areas such as digitalisation, the fight against corruption and ensuring the country’s transport connectivity. Madina Abylkasimova, Minister of Labor and Social Protection of the Population, spoke in detail about the results of activities aimed at strengthening the country’s gender equality indicators and improving staff skills by introducing professional standards. Vice Minister of Agriculture Gulmira Isaeva talked about the support for agricultural cooperatives. One important point was the negotiations between Suleimenov and OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría. The latter noted “extremely productive cooperation with Kazakhstan” supported the nation’s aspirations for closer cooperation with the organisation and its structural divisions. A number of concrete steps have been outlined to strengthen Kazakhstan’s involvement in the global dialogue within OECD. Suleimenov also met with U.S. Permanent OECD Representative Andrew Haviland to discuss interaction issues between Kazakhstan and its structural divisions, which the United States is helping to develop. www.mfa.gov.kz

- **Kazpost issues stamp commemorating Kazakhstan’s membership on UN Security Council**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs held a postage stamp cancellation ceremony from the memorable and anniversary dates series on the theme “Membership of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the UN Security Council (UNSC).” The event was attended by Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Yerzhan Ashikbayev and Kazpost Managing Director Baurzhan Ainabekov. Kazakhstan’s membership on the UNSC is one of the most important foreign policy achievements in the country’s 27 years of independence, noted Ashikbayev. “It is symbolic that today’s ceremony was held on the eve of the Day of the First President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev, whose merit is rightly central to the election of our country as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council,” he said. The postage stamp is made by offset printing a sheet of ten stamps in four colours. Circulation will be 20,000 copies at a per copy price of 250 tenge (US\$ 67). www.mfa.gov.kz

- **13th Meeting of Central Asia + Japan senior officials dialogue held in Tokyo**

First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Mukhtar Tleuberdi participated in the 13th meeting of the Central Asia + Japan senior officials dialogue in Tokyo. The meeting addressed cooperation issues among the countries in regional security, tourism, transport and logistics, agriculture, trade and investment. The session also discussed agenda items for the seventh meeting of the Central Asia + Japan Ministers of Foreign Affairs dialogue, to be held in Tajikistan in the near future. Tleuberdi met with Japanese First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Toshiko Abe, Parliamentary Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Kenji Yamada and Chairperson of the Parliamentary Friendship League with Kazakhstan Takeo

Kawamura to discuss bilateral relations issues, as well as topics on the regional and international agenda. He congratulated the Japanese side on winning the bid to host EXPO 2025 in Osaka on the theme “Creating the future society for our lives.” He shared his country’s experience in holding EXPO 2017 in Astana on “Energy of the Future.” Held since 2004, the Central Asia + Japan dialogue facilitates cooperation in five main areas: political dialogue, developing intra-regional cooperation, business promotion, intellectual dialogue and cultural ties and humanitarian exchange. www.mfa.gov.kz

- **EBRD: Kazakhstan has decade to prepare for economic diversification**

Kazakhstan has 20 years to diversify its economy away from oil and other hydrocarbons and reform public finances as the world begins its green economic transition, according to the Eurasian Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) report published Nov. 22. The report focused on the vulnerabilities of major fossil fuel exporters in a future world that will use less oil. EBRD experts believe the changing dynamics in global energy markets, including the development of alternative energy sources, falling costs of cleaner energy technologies and countries’ commitments to achieving global climate goals, are likely to put pressure on fossil fuel exporters. This will mean that export revenues may fall, due both to lower exports and lower oil prices, by up to 40 percent in the next two decades. The latter may lead to unsustainable levels of countries’ public debt. Kazakh oil is a main source of government revenue, which may put pressure on the state budget. Therefore, EBRD believes good fiscal risk management will be an important priority for fossil fuel-exporting countries. The most significant fiscal impacts are projected to occur in the late 2020s, suggesting there is a window of opportunity of approximately 10 years in which Kazakhstan could take action to address these impacts. The report proposes four areas of reform for Kazakhstan, which are also relevant to most other emerging markets reliant on oil exports: diversifying revenue sources, effectively managing oil revenues, good fiscal policies and medium and long-term planning of public finances. www.astanatimes.com

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