

Kazakhstan National Day

Sustainable development, strategic ties

YERLAN BAUDARBEK-KOZHATAYEV
AMBASSADOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN



Today the Republic of Kazakhstan celebrates the 26th Anniversary of its Independence. During this short period, under the leadership of President Nursultan Nazarbayev, Kazakhstan

has become an example of sustainable economic growth and stability. It is widely recognized as an important player on the regional and global stage.

In the recently published World Bank's 2018 Doing Business report, Kazakhstan was ranked 36th for ease of doing business. Kazakhstan has become a favorite destination for foreign investment in the region with foreign direct investments totaling more than \$265 billion.

Now we are on the way to achieving the goal that is outlined in the development strategy Kazakhstan 2050 — to be in the top-30 most-developed countries of the world.

In this regard, in 2017 our president proposed several initiatives to push forward political, economic and cultural modernization of the country.

Modernization 3.0

The third Modernization of Kazakhstan, which was announced in the president's address to the nation, involves the creation of a new economic model supporting further growth and competitiveness of the country. It includes such priorities as accelerated technological modernization of the economy, improving and expanding the business sphere, strengthening macroeconomic stability, improving the quality of life, institutional reforms, as well as security and fighting against corruption.

Also, great attention is being paid to implementing a large scale project, a Western China-Western Europe international route, which aims to revive the country's historical role as a connecting bridge between Europe and Asia. As a result of implementation of this mega-project by 2020, the volume of cargo traffic passing through the country should increase by nearly two times and subsequently make up at least 50 million tons a year.

Constitutional reforms

This year, Kazakhstan also introduced constitutional reforms aimed at further democratization of the political system. These reforms transferred a number of functions from the president to the government and parliament, redistributing power. For example, a prime minister and governmental ministers will be chosen by parliament and the procedure to motion a vote of no confidence on a sitting ministerial cabinet has been simplified.

The role of the president has shifted to one that focuses on strategic matters, foreign policy and national security, as well as that of a supreme arbiter in relations between the different branches of government.



Astana EXPO-2017 was held from June 10 to Sept. 10, under the theme of Future Energy. Pavilions from 115 countries and 22 international organizations were visited by about 4 million people. EMBASSY OF KAZAKHSTAN

Modernizing national identity

One more initiative in 2017 is the modernization of Kazakhstan's national identity. It elaborates upon a number of desired attributes for Kazakh citizens. The personal qualities of openness, cultural tolerance and pragmatism are all identified as fundamental for a harmonious society, while proficiency in foreign languages, computer literacy and high standards of education will enable Kazakh citizens to compete in a global economy. As a part of social modernization, Kazakh language will be gradually switched from a Cyrillic to a Latin alphabet by 2025.

Astana EXPO-2017

This year Astana hosted one of the greatest events in its history, EXPO-2017, which focused on the theme Future Energy. The expo lasted 93 days and became one of the

most spectacular events of the year. 115 countries and 22 international organizations participated in the expo and the event attracted about 4 million visitors.

EXPO-2017 provided an excellent opportunity to demonstrate the intellectual and technological potential of our entire planet. About 140 scientific inventions in the field of renewable energy sources were exhibited in Astana.

The exhibition has once again showed our country's commitment to the idea of developing green technologies and we hope this exhibition has made its unique contribution to the global development of clean energy.

Bilateral cooperation

In 2017 Kazakhstan and Japan celebrate the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. Kazakhstan and Japan have created a solid foundation for mutually beneficial cooperation, and I would like to highlight that Japan was among the first countries that recognized the independence of Kazakhstan.

So far, our leaders exchanged visits several times including the official visit of our president in 2016 that further intensified bilateral cooperation in all areas of mutual interest.

Last year, trade turnover between our countries amounted to \$1.2 billion. Currently, there are more than 70 branches and representative offices of companies with Japanese involvement in Kazakhstan. The flow of Japanese investment into Kazakhstan's economy for the last decade comprised more than \$6.3 billion. However, the figures do not reflect the existing potential for cooperation. Recently, the interest of Japanese companies operating in Kazakhstan's free economic zones has increased in line with their interest in using

the transit potential of Kazakhstan for transporting cargo, including the use of our terminals in foreign markets.

Another important direction of bilateral relations is close partnership in the field of nuclear nonproliferation. Our countries share a moral responsibility to prevent tragedies caused by nuclear weapons, thus we are among leaders of world nuclear nonproliferation movement.

In September, Kazakhstan and Japan

completed the two-year chairmanship in the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). Both countries issued a historic joint statement on the CTBT at the summit level in October 2015 in Astana, followed by the issuance of another joint statement in March 2016 on the occasion of the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington D.C.

Being elected as a non-permanent mem-

ber of the U.N. Security Council for 2017 to 2018, this year Kazakhstan and Japan are closely working in the framework of the Security Council on various important international issues, including the problem of the North Korean nuclear program.

I hope that dynamically developing relations between Kazakhstan and Japan will further expand the horizons of our partnership strengthening bilateral political, economic, cultural and humanitarian cooperation.

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on the Occasion of
the 26th Anniversary of
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