



Kazakhstan, The Netherlands advance ties across board

By George D. Gleboff

THE HAGUE – Kazakhstan and the Netherlands have moved their bilateral relations to a qualitatively new level following the visit here by President Nursultan Nazarbayev on March 23. After a series of meetings, more than half a dozen bilateral documents were signed at the ministerial level and just as many business-to-business agreements were reached, advancing cooperation in areas ranging from education and research to space and agriculture and environmental protection.

The Kazakh leader arrived in the Netherlands in the morning of March 23 to pay a bilateral visit to the country first and then to participate in the 3rd Nuclear Security Summit in this city with the participation of more than 50 heads of state and government on March 24-25.

The bilateral visit began with President Nazarbayev's meeting with Prime Minister Mark Rutte at the latter's residence of Catshuis. Rutte had earlier visited Astana for the summit of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in December 2010.

Nazarbayev and Rutte discussed a wide range of bilateral and international issues, including the situation in Ukraine.

They also focused on nuclear security and disarmament, as well as expanding trade, economic, investment, science and technology and energy cooperation.



(Clockwise from top) In The Hague, President Nazarbayev met with King Willem-Alexander and Prime Minister Mark Rutte, received a street sign for the new square called Astana in Rotterdam and 'baptised' with champagne the newly bred sort of tulips presented to him by Minister of Agriculture Sharon Dijkema.

Nazarbayev told his host the Netherlands is one of the key and most promising partners for Kazakhstan in the European Union. That is seen in the sheer volume of Dutch investment in Kazakhstan as well as in the fact that there are 800 companies with the

Dutch participation that work in the Central Asian nation.

The Kazakh President underscored the importance of stronger cooperation in agriculture and innovation spheres, and invited Dutch companies to participate actively in EXPO 2017

in Astana. The two leaders also discussed environment and effective use of water resources, as well as the development of transit and transport potential and of the logistical infrastructure of the two countries.

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Kazakhstan Is Set to Create New Domestic-Service Airline

By Pavel Pribylovsky

Kazakhstan recently announced plans to create a new airline to serve domestic routes that is expected to increase the country's population mobility and boost intra-regional commerce.

The new service will be called Air Kazakhstan and is expected to include 10 78-seat Bombardier Dash 8 Q400 turboprop-powered aircraft, Umirzak Shukejev, chairman of the board of the Samruk Kazyna National Welfare Fund, announced recently.

The goal is to "register the company by May ... have the planes delivered by the end of 2014, and commence flights early next year," said Shukejev, who offered no

further details about the plane-delivery deal with Montreal-based Bombardier.

The Canadian aircraft maker refused to comment on the agreement. "We are currently in discussions with several buyers in the region and are not committed to any particular one," said Mark Duchesne, a media relations contact at Bombardier.

The announcement of the new airline follows a recent meeting between Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev and Chief Executive Officer of Canadian plane manufacturer Bombardier Pierre Beaudoin, after which Bombardier was invited to open a representative office in Kazakhstan.

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Hungarian Ambassador Says Countries' Commonalities Good Ground for Future Ties

By Jan Furst

ASTANA – Hungary and Kazakhstan are geographically distant from each other. Hungary is in Central Europe and Kazakhstan is in Central Asia, but they share common traits, traditions and customs bestowed upon them by their nomadic ancestors, which bodes

very well for the future development of multifaceted ties between the two nations, Hungary's ambassador in Astana said.

The Hungarians' nomadic past has strong links to Western Kazakhstan, according to Ambassador Imre Laszlóczki, who assumed office in November 2010.

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Astana Updates its Nuclear Narrative in a New Book

By Altair Nurbekov

THE HAGUE – The foreign ministry of Kazakhstan has updated its 2011 book, "Building a Nuclear Safe World: The Kazakhstan Way," to reflect the country's ongoing work to strengthen nuclear security, including efforts to bring an end to nuclear testing and, eventually, to create a world without nuclear weapons.

The 200-page book with several dozen photos covers the country's nuclear past and present, from the horrors of 40 years of nuclear testing at the infamous Soviet Semipalatinsk test site to the decision and mechanisms of the country's own disarmament, Kazakhstan's peaceful nuclear energy projects and current international commentary on the country's responsible nuclear example.

The revised edition includes an updated timeline marking the young nation's path from nuclear victim to moral victor, information about Kazakhstan's progress toward hosting the low-enriched uranium bank for the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and a new chapter on Kazakhstan's most recent nuclear nonproliferation initiative, the ATOM Project. Initiated by President Nazarbayev in 2012, the ATOM Project ("Abolish Testing. Our Mission.") seeks to facilitate global engagement with the issue of nuclear testing through an online petition and education campaign.

The ATOM Project Honorary Ambassador Karipbek Kuyukov, artist and survivor of nuclear testing, have spent the past few years travelling the globe, presenting the stories of Kazakhstan's nuclear past and calling on the citizens of the world to bring an end to nuclear tests.

"Today, with Kazakhstan having banished nuclear weapons and joined in creating a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia, Semipalatinsk has become a powerful symbol. It tells us that a world free of nuclear weapons is achievable," said UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon on August 29, 2010, marking the first International Day Against Nuclear Tests. Through multiple national and global efforts like the ATOM Project, Kazakhstan is working toward that goal.

In his 2001 book, "Epicentre of Peace," President Nursultan Nazarbayev wrote, "We built a new non-nuclear history for the country, laying the foundation for a new narrative tradition about how to rise above a world threat."

"Building a Nuclear Safe World: The Kazakhstan Way" in its updated edition provides the most recent pages of that narrative, as it reaches wider audiences and commands attention from more and more of the world. The new publication was distributed at the third Nuclear Security Summit, held in The Hague from March 24-25, 2014.

Nazarbayev Urges More Robust Global Efforts at Nuclear Security Summit

By Altair Nurbekov

THE HAGUE – President Nursultan Nazarbayev was among the first world leaders to address the third Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague on March 24 calling for more robust global efforts to secure nuclear materials through steps such as countering nuclear terrorism, bolstering the UN watchdog agency and, ultimately, working toward complete global nuclear disarmament as the only guarantee of nuclear security internationally.

The Kazakh President called the summits, initiated by U.S. President Barack Obama in 2009, "a platform to address the most challenging issues on the international agenda," and listed several priorities on which his country proposes focusing.

"First, general and complete nuclear disarmament is the only guarantee of nuclear security," Nazarbayev said. "Second, countering nuclear terrorism and rooting it out remains an urgent task."

At the same time, combatting nuclear-related terrorism "should not limit the right of states to pursue peaceful nuclear programmes, exchange technologies, equipment, knowledge and expertise," he said, adding that Kazakhstan plans to develop its own full nuclear fuel cycle for nuclear power stations and build new nuclear power plants.

"Third, Kazakhstan stands for further strengthening of the role and authority of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Fourth, Kazakhstan supports the creation of new nuclear-weapon-free zones, including in the Middle East," the Kazakh President said, also explaining that Astana expects the five nuclear weapon states to ratify a protocol on negative security assurances to state parties to the Semipalatinsk Treaty, which estab-



"General and complete nuclear disarmament is the only guarantee of nuclear security," Nazarbayev said at the 3rd Nuclear Security Summit.

lished the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone (CANWFZ).

He went on to list some of Kazakhstan's recent achievements and ongoing projects.

In particular, Kazakhstan ranks 15th out of 25 countries with weapons-usable nuclear materials, in the Nuclear Threat Initiative's (NTI) Nuclear Materials Security Index.

"This is explained by internal political and economic stability, effective legislation and anti-corruption policies," Nazarbayev said. "Having shut down the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site and renounced the world's fourth largest nuclear arsenal, Kazakhstan, in cooperation with the U.S. and Russia, dismantled the test site's infrastructure. We continue work to ensure the security of the former nuclear test site."

Generally, all nuclear activities in Kazakhstan are under IAEA's comprehensive safeguards, meaning the UN nuclear watchdog has full oversight over such activities.

"We have supported the IAEA initiative to establish an international low-enriched uranium (LEU) bank and are finalising negotiations on a [relevant] host country agreement,"

the Kazakh President said. The LEU bank is seen as one of the key mechanisms to ensure the security of the global nuclear fuel cycle and an indirect contribution to reduce the risk of nuclear terrorism.

He went on to mention the international climate under which the summit is being conducted and outline approaches to dealing with modern challenges.

"Our meeting takes place against the backdrop of a crisis in global security. The underlying reason for this crisis is a lack of political will to put an end to the practice of double standards and the selective use of international law," President Nazarbayev said. "We believe it is extremely important for nuclear weapon states to fully abide by all the obligations they have undertaken."

Twenty years ago, Kazakhstan, like Belarus and Ukraine, made a major contribution to global nuclear security when it voluntarily renounced considerable stockpiles of nuclear weapons and joined the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as a non-nuclear weapon state.

"That is why we should all be

deeply worried by the irresponsible statements from some politicians in Ukraine calling for the restoration of a nuclear weapon status to that country with its five nuclear power plants, fifteen nuclear reactors and the potential to develop missile technologies," Nazarbayev said.

Lamenting the lack of effectiveness of the G8 and G20 formats in dealing with global problems, the Kazakh leader extolled the opportunities of G-Global to finding ways out of the crisis.

"G-Global offers a path towards a fair, transparent, multipolar and constructive world order, which would eliminate the threat of nuclear self-annihilation by humankind," Nazarbayev said. "I am convinced there is no alternative to it."

"As we saw in the aftermath of 9/11, the world can and should unite in the face of common threats to bring about long-term and systematic approaches to shared challenges," he said. "We should all live up to the responsibility we have to our citizens and the global community to deliver political, rather than military, solutions in the name of international peace."

Global Nuclear Materials Security System Needed, U.S. Expert Says

By Altair Nurbekov

THE HAGUE – A global nuclear materials security system is needed to address the absence of universal standards and mutual accountability for securing nuclear materials, and to reduce the risk of nuclear terrorism, an American nonproliferation expert has said.

Joan Rohlfing, president of Washington, D.C.-based Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI), in a March 19 opinion for Project Syndicate, wrote that global leaders at the Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague should seek to establish a global nuclear materials security system underpinned by four key principles.

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NATION

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 2014

Senate Considers Draft Laws on Intelligence and Internal Affairs, Appoints Constitutional Council Member

By Arman Niyazymbetov



The Senate of Kazakhstan in session.

ASTANA – The Senate of Kazakhstan reviewed bills relating to intelligence services and the work of the police and appointed a member of the country's Constitutional Council on March 13.

Speaker of the Senate Kassym-Jomart Tokayev chaired the Senate's plenary session. At his proposal, the senators appointed Anar Zhailganova a member of the Constitutional Council of Kazakhstan. According to the country's Constitution, each house of Parliament appoints two members to the Constitutional Council.

The Senate also passed a law on

amendments and additions to legislation relating to Kazakhstan's external intelligence. The bill introduces amendments to laws on operational and search actions, national security bodies and external intelligence. The document contains norms specifying the entities of external intelligence and norms aimed at improving the interaction of external intelligence entities with state bodies and other organisations.

The Senate also considered a bill on internal affairs bodies that aims at identifying the rights and duties of internal affairs bodies (which primarily includes police), identifying a system for their operation, ensur-

ing legal guarantees for police officers and increasing the efficiency of their work. In accordance with regulations, the document was returned to the Mazhilis (the lower house of Kazakhstan's Parliament) with the Senate's amendments.

The Senate approved the first reading of the accompanying draft law amending the legislation regarding the activities of internal affairs bodies. The purpose of the draft is to bring the legislation in line with the draft law on internal affairs bodies currently under consideration in Parliament. The document envisages the introduction of changes and additions to three codes and ten laws.

NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

On March 18, Minister of Agriculture Assylzhan Mamytbekov reported on the results of the ministry's work in 2013 and their tasks for 2014 to President Nazarbayev. He also informed the President about preparations for spring fieldwork. The President told Mamytbekov the ministry must ensure all planting can be done well and on time. Planting has begun in the south of the country and preparations are underway in the north. The minister also talked about agricultural sector development, in particular in cattle breeding, and the implementation of sectoral programmes.

On March 19, President Nazarbayev met with Rector of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University Galimkair Mutanov to discuss the university's development and improving its competitiveness. The President noted that Al-Farabi Kazakh National University is one of the largest education institutions in the country and its graduates work in all sectors of the economy. Mutanov also reported on the university's current activity and its main goal of entering the world's top 200 universities. The rector stressed that Al-Farabi Kazakh National University aims to be a part of the innovative, knowledge-based economy. In this regard, the university intends to be an example of solving scientific and technological problems, improving the quality of education and increasing the competitiveness of the nation's educational institutions.

Minister of Healthcare of Kazakhstan Salimat Kairbekova met with health workers of the Pavlodar region during a trip there on March 19. She reported on measures undertaken to fulfil the instructions of the President. Addressing the meeting, the minister said that in his recent address, the President set several tasks in the healthcare sphere, such as developing primary healthcare (PHC) and studying the necessity of introducing compulsory health insurance. Work on introducing a per-capita financing system is aimed at balancing PHC financing in the regions and creating conditions to attract investment to the sector through public-private partnerships. These measures will help ensure equal access to the guaranteed free outpatient medical care for the population. Prevention of diseases will be the main goal of PHC institutions. The ministry's action plan to fulfill the President's instructions has been approved. An interdepartmental task force has been established under the chairmanship of the deputy prime minister.

Speaking at a March 19 media briefing at the Central Communications Service (CCS), Deputy Chairman and Head of the Secretariat of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan Yeraly Tugzhanov said the assembly had drafted a concept to develop Houses of Friendship in all regions. "As you know, the concept of development of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan was adopted last year and the government decree on adopting the concept of development of the Houses of Friendship in the regions has already been prepared as well. The concept places special emphasis on the development of our regional affiliates, establishing a unified structure for all houses of friendship that we have," Tugzhanov said.

The akimat (regional government) of Kyzylorda region and the Housing Construction Corporation of Kazakhstan signed a memorandum to build leasehold housing in the region within the Affordable Housing programme, the e-kyzylorda.gov.kz website reports. Speaking at the memorandum signing ceremony, Regional Governor Krymbek Kuserbayev said significant work has been conducted to implement the programme. In total, 4,907 houses have been commissioned in the region since 2012. The programme hopes to begin construction on five houses in the Arai micro district this year. Another five houses will be built on Shukurov Street in 2015. The akimat of the region, in cooperation with the Ministry of Regional Development, will ensure the construction of utility networks. According to head of the corporation Ruslan Khussainov, they plan to build 230 apartments this year and 180 apartments next year within the Affordable Housing programme. 2.9 billion tenge (US\$15.9 million) was allocated for implementation of the programme.

Government Seeks to Ease Barriers for Students with Physical Disabilities

By Julia Rutz

The Department for Higher and Postgraduate Education of the Ministry of Education and Science of Kazakhstan announced at an educational roundtable on March 13 that the government is assisting the education of nearly 500 students with physical challenges and is working to ease educational barriers for physically challenged students.

Overall, as announced at the roundtable by Minister of Education and Science Aslan Sarinzhypov, the ministry is developing a Concept of Inclusive Education, to be approved in 2014.

"More than 800 people are now studying at universities, among them 468 young people have been sponsored by the state. In 2012, the quota for persons with disabilities

composed 0.5 percent of the total volume of state sponsorship and then it was increased up to 1 percent," said Fatima Zhakypova, the department's director.

Zhakypova also noted the government plans to reconfigure educational campuses to reduce barriers and increase mobility for physically challenged students.

"As of now, there are only two private universities (Kunayevo University of Transport and Law and International Business Academy) and 178 colleges in Kazakhstan, which can offer barrier-free zones for students. Such universities as Pavlodar State University, Karaganda State University and Pedagogical State University of Taraz represent barrier-free zones, but partly. Right now, we are in the middle of the working process with three other

universities, which will soon create appropriate conditions for students with disabilities to study there," she explained.

The admission rules are also going to be changed to increase enrollment of physically challenged students, and professors will be offered training to better interact with physically challenged students.

Vocational and technical training programmes have also been established for the physically challenged, including painting and decorating, plastering, medicine and clothing manufacturing. The information technology degree remains one of the most popular degrees. This year, new curricula will be developed for another 10 educational programmes.

Zhakypova also reported that 80 percent of Kazakhstan graduates with disabilities are employed.



Educational roundtable works to ease barriers for students with physical disabilities.

According to statistics, Kazakhstan has 138,513 children under 18 years old with physical disabilities, which equals 2.8 percent of the country's child population.

Already, fifty-eight percent of Kazakhstan's children with disabilities have gone on to finish high school and 9.1 percent have received a university diploma.

Mono-Town Transforms into Nuclear Science, Industrial Centre

By Aigul Bidanova

EAST KAZAKHSTAN REGION – The town of Kurchatov has transformed itself from a dilapidated former military garrison with a sinister past into a town known for its abundance of elite nuclear scientists.

That transformation began May 15, 1992, when a presidential decree established that Kazakhstan's National Nuclear Centre, based on the research facilities of the former Semipalatinsk test site, would be established in the town. The decree launched the national radio-ecological research programme and allowed the centre to contribute to the country's economy.

Another landmark in the recent history of Kurchatov was President Nursultan Nazarbayev's April 4, 2003 state-of-the-nation address announcing the establishment of the Nuclear Technology Park (NTP) in Kurchatov.

Today, the park is working on producing radiation-cross-linked foam polyethylene and heat shrinkable rings and tapes as part of the Industrialisation Map for the East Kazakhstan region. A facility to treat materials for radiation, sterilise medical and food items and for radiation crosslinking of the polymer insulation of cables is also under construction.

In the country's programme to develop its mono-towns, Kurchatov is defined as a scientific-industrial cen-

tre with average growth potential. A 2013-2015 comprehensive development plan for Kurchatov calls for landscaping, support to enterprise, construction of social facilities and utilisation of the town's scientific potential.

A National Centre of Complex Dosimetry and a facility to process and store radioactive waste and sources of ionising radiation from nuclear and other industrial enterprises are also planned. The facilities will improve the radiation situation in Kazakhstan by reducing the harmful effects of radioactive substances and recyclable waste on the population and environment.

Kurchatov schools and early education centres are also being built or repaired as part of the country's mono-towns development programme. Construction of a landfill for industrial waste, better street lighting and improved street landscaping are also underway.

Kurchatov is well known abroad and visited by scientists and international figures, such as UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and International Atomic Energy Agency Director General Yukiya Amano.

The town, which has an average monthly wage of 98,800 tenge (US\$541), also has tourism potential. Kurchatov Mayor Dmitry Garikov said at a recent briefing that the radiation-safe territory of the former Semipalatinsk nuclear test site is ready to receive visitors.



Nuclear Technology Park in Kurchatov is working on producing radiation-cross-linked foam polyethylene and heat shrinkable rings and tapes.

KAZAKHSTAN
UNITED FOR GLOBAL SECURITY

The Republic of Kazakhstan is seeking a seat on the United Nations Security Council as a non-permanent member for 2017-2018. Our priorities within the United Nations reflect four primary issues facing the world today: Food Security, Water Security, Energy Security and Nuclear Security.

In the 22 years since our independence, Kazakhstan has worked tirelessly to address these issues in our own country and beyond. Among many other initiatives and achievements, Kazakhstan is currently:

- ▶ ONE OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST GRAIN PRODUCERS AND WHEAT EXPORTERS. WE HAVE DISTRIBUTED WHEAT AND FOOD TO NATIONS IN NEED.
- ▶ A CONSTRUCTIVE INNOVATOR IN WATER SECURITY COOPERATION AND TECHNOLOGIES. WE HAVE MADE GREAT STRIDES IN THE RESTORATION OF THE ARAL SEA.
- ▶ AN ACTIVE SUPPORTER OF DEVELOPING A GREEN ECONOMY AND ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCES THROUGH OUR GREEN BRIDGE INITIATIVE AND AS HOSTS OF EXPO 2017, THEME OF WHICH IS "FUTURE ENERGY".
- ▶ A GLOBAL LEADER IN NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION, DISARMAMENT AND SECURITY. AN INITIATOR OF ADOPTING A UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON A NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE WORLD AND A SPONSOR OF THE ATOM PROJECT, A WORLDWIDE PETITION CAMPAIGN TO PERMANENTLY END NUCLEAR WEAPONS TESTING.

These issues are complex and interdependent. They require global cooperation and relationship building. Kazakhstan has come a long way in a short time because we know that cooperation is the key to success. We are dedicated to knowledge and resource sharing in order to help make the world a better, more secure place for its citizens.

The achievement and maintenance of international peace and global security are paramount to the success of the planet and its people. In Kazakhstan, we are ready to do our part to ensure that success as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council.

EURASIA&WORLD

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 2014

EXTERNAL NEWS IN BRIEF

In The Hague for the Nuclear Security Summit on March 24-25, President Nursultan Nazarbayev met with Chinese President Xi Jinping, U.S. President Barack Obama, French President Francois Hollande, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, British Prime Minister David Cameron, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and IAEA Director General Yukia Amano, among others. Issued discussed included bilateral ties, nuclear security and situation regarding Ukraine.

Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey will work together on a joint tourism project, Cities of Common Cultural Heritage, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Azerbaijan announced on March 12. The four countries are members of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation's Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC). The tourist project was the winner of a contest organised by COMCEC. The project, which is intended to support competitive and sustainable tourism, will study the potential for cultural tourism in the four countries, search for regions with similar heritage and create a tourism product that connects all four countries. It will run from April to September of this year and will be funded by a grant from the Development Bank of Turkey with the financial support of Azerbaijan's Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

In a statement on the referendum in Crimea on March 16, Kazakhstan's Foreign Ministry reiterated the country's commitment to international law and the United Nations Charter. It also called the referendum "a free expression of the will" of the population of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and said it had "understanding" for the Russian Federation's position. "We support peaceful ways of settling the crisis in Ukraine and believe it should be done by means of negotiations under the aegis of the United Nations and other reputable international organisations," the statement concluded.

On March 11 in New York, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the United Nations Kairat Abdrakhmanov and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Seychelles to the United Nations Marie-Louise Potter signed a communiqué establishing diplomatic relations between the two states. During the signing ceremony, the sides exchanged views on prospective bilateral cooperation and important United Nations issues that are significant to Kazakhstan and the Seychelles. The Seychelles was one of the first states of the African region to support Astana's candidacy to host the international specialised exhibition EXPO 2017.

Kazakhstan has begun to export processed wool to Italy, the News-Kazakhstan information agency reported on March 19. "The first 18 of 72 tonnes of semi-finished sheep wool products were sent to Italy from the Zhambyl region," according to a statement by KazAgroProduct, a subsidiary of KazAgro National Holding. KazAgroProduct signed a contract to supply the Italian company Vicotex with its products and plans to sign additional contracts providing for the supply of no less than 140 tonnes of their processed wool. The company's plans do not exclude the possibility of exporting up to 500 tonnes of processed wool per year. The current contract is for \$598,000. "The devaluation conducted by the National Bank of Kazakhstan in February created even more favourable conditions for producers," the Kazakh company said. The two companies also recently agreed to establish long-term cooperation. "The products supplied by Kazakhstan will be used for manufacturing products by such leading European brands as Benetton, Zara, Gruppo Marzotto, H&M, Fratelli Piacenza S.P.A., Lanerossi, Marchi e Fildi SpA," the statement reads. The export of wool to Customs Union member states is also being considered. The production process is controlled by Italian specialists, which has increased the quality of the product and brought it in line with international standards.

Kazakhstan, The Netherlands advance ties across board

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Following that meeting, Kazakh and Dutch officials signed two memorandums of understanding, providing for political consultations between the two foreign ministries and establishing a Business Council which brings together the two countries' largest trade and industry associations.

President Nazarbayev then moved over to the Huis ten Bosch palace to meet King Willem-Alexander. The two heads of state discussed expanding cultural and humanitarian ties as well as issues on the international agenda.

Returning to The Hague's historic Kurhouse Hotel, President Nazarbayev was greeted by a group of current and former officials who established a new Friends of Kazakhstan in the Netherlands political club. Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, former NATO Secretary General and former Dutch foreign minister, Rene van der Linden, the Dutch senator, Bernard Weinties, chairman of the VNO-NCW confederation of Dutch entrepreneurs, Rini Wagtmans, Kazakhstan's honorary consul in the Netherlands, and others spoke to the Kazakh President about ways to expand bilateral dialogue for the benefit of the two countries.

"The Dutch investment in Kazakhstan's economy has reached \$30 billion," Nazarbayev told the gathering. "Mutual trade stands at \$10 billion. Kazakhstan has been implementing an industrial and innovation programme which has already launched 500 new enterprises and provided jobs for 600,000 people. And we invite Dutch companies to work jointly. We are interested in developing processing enterprises in oil and gas, ferrous and non-ferrous metallurgy, chemical industry. For such industries, we offer preferences and create relevant infrastructure. We are also inter-

ested in cooperation in IT and agriculture."

That meeting was followed by a presentation by more than two dozen Dutch and European companies of their potential to the Kazakh head of state and other Kazakh and Dutch officials. Companies in areas such as energy, chemistry, transportation, agribusiness, space research, electronics and others participated in an exhibition, which was organised by Kazakhstan's Ministry of Industry and New Technologies and its KAZNEX INVEST arm and their Dutch counterparts and which resulted in a major boost for trade and economic ties during the visit.

A Rotterdam square is named after Astana, a new stamp featuring the portrait of the Kazakh President is issued by the Dutch Post, and a new tulip is bred called 'President Nazarbayev'

Royal Dutch Shell presented its vision of the future development of the energy sector in Kazakhstan in line with the Kazakhstan 2050 Strategy.

Royal TenCate presented its ready-to-start project with KAZNEX INVEST to produce synthetic and geocomposite materials.

Induss, an international company dealing with water management, presented a major project it has ready with United Chemical Company to clean industrial and technical waters and supply the

Taraz Chemical Park free economic zone with a central water treatment installation.

CLAAS, an international company producing agricultural machinery, presented a model of its XERION tractor that it hopes to soon be producing in Kazakhstan.

Diehl Defence Land Systems, another international company specialising in producing machines for both civilian and military use, presented its project with Kazakhstan Engineering to produce caterpillar tracks with a potential to expand the range of products made in Kazakhstan.

During that exhibition, several memorandums of understanding were signed between both companies and government ministries, including those covering cooperation in agribusiness, space research and establishing ties between Nazarbayev University and the famous High Tech Campus of Eindhoven. The latter agreement will be useful for Nazarbayev University as it presses ahead with a plan to build its own technology centre in Astana.

Another memorandum of cooperation will provide for the exchange of expertise on matters of environment protection.

The Kazakh leader's visit to The Hague had a good share of symbolism, too. During the political club event at the Kurhouse Hotel, Dutch officials presented President Nazarbayev with a stamp with his portrait issued by the Dutch Post and a street sign of "Astana-plein" for a new square named after the Kazakh capital in Rotterdam. And, in a highly symbolic gesture, Minister of Agriculture Sharon Dijksma presented him with a bouquet of special new breed of tulips called, rather expectedly, "President Nazarbayev," essentially making a full circle and returning the flower to the leader of the country where tulips are believed to have originated and still grow in the wild.

Kazakh FM Visits China, Discusses Relations

By Merey Kabiden

Kazakhstan Foreign Minister Er-lan Idrissov met with China Deputy Prime Minister Li Yuanchao, Foreign Minister Wang Yi and officials from the China Institute of International Studies during his March 19-20 official visit to China.

Idrissov visited on the invitation of Foreign Minister Wang Yi. The visit is significant as it comes on the threshold of President Nursultan Nazarbayev's state visit to China and his participation at the upcoming 4th Summit of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) this May.

The sides discussed bilateral political, trade-economic, cultural and humanitarian cooperation, as well as collaboration within regional and international organisations, such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and CICA.

The officials noted the importance of regular political dialogue at the highest level in deepening the Kazakh-Chinese strategic partnership. In less than one year, President Nazarbayev and China President Xi Jinping have held five meetings. The Kazakh President's upcoming state visit to China is expected to expand cooperation further.

Since Kazakhstan seeks closer economic and trade cooperation, as well as more investment from China, Idrissov expressed interest in more intensive collaboration in industries that are highly developed in China, such as mining and coal, mechanical engineering, chemicals, electronics and consumer goods production.

"There is a huge potential for expanding economic cooperation between Kazakhstan and China, especially in the development of high and new technologies," Idrissov said.

The focus of talks between Idrissov and his Chinese counterpart was the organization of the upcoming state visit of President Nazarbayev to China and his participation at the CICA Summit in Shanghai.

During the summit, scheduled for May 20-21, China will take over the chairmanship of CICA

from Turkey. The Kazakh Foreign Minister said he believes China's chairmanship will strengthen and develop the organisation.

Both officials also mentioned close cooperation between the two countries within the SCO, which is an important component of Kazakh-Chinese relations.

"As strategic partners, we are ready to jointly maintain ties to protect our common interests, ensure peace and stability in the region," Wang Yi said.

The parties also praised cultural relations between the countries. In April 2013, Kazakh Cinema Week was held for the first time in China. Last November also saw large-scale celebration of Days of Kazakh Culture with concerts in Beijing, Shanghai and Urumqi. Minister Idrissov noted Days of Chinese Culture in Kazakhstan are scheduled for this year.

The Kazakh Minister invited Chinese officials to participate in the Second World Anti-Crisis Conference on May 21-22 in Astana, as well as to encourage the Chinese companies to participate in the specialised exhibition EXPO 2017.

Following the talks, the parties signed a memorandum of cooperation for 2014-2016 to strengthen the strategic partnership between the countries.

As part of his speech at the China Institute of International Studies, Idrissov elaborated on the basic provisions of the Kazakhstan 2050 Strategy and the Foreign Policy Concept of Kazakhstan for 2014-2020. The Kazakh diplomat noted that the long-term strategy is a significant factor in bringing Kazakhstan and China together.

He also took part in the opening ceremony of the monument to poet and philosopher Abai Kunanbayev created by renowned Chinese sculptor Yuan Xikun and installed in central Beijing's Chaoyang Park.

China is among the top 20 countries in terms of foreign direct investment in Kazakhstan with \$10.3 billion invested since 2005. The total share of projects involving Chinese investment is more than \$17 billion. China is also one of Kazakhstan's main trading partners with turnover of more than \$75 billion in the past three years.

Global Nuclear Materials Security System Needed, U.S. Expert Says

Continued from Page A1

According to Rohlfing, these four principles are as follows:

- The system should cover all weapons-useable materials, including nuclear materials used for military purposes. (Today, only 15 percent of nuclear materials are used for civilian purposes. But no regulatory system can be effective if it applies to only a small share of the regulated items.)
- The system should employ international standards and best practices.
- All states should commit to measures that reassure other states that their security practices are sound, while protecting sensitive information.
- All states should commit to reducing and, where possible, eliminating their nuclear weapons-useable materials to minimize the risks these stockpiles pose. (In the last four years alone, 10 countries have rid themselves entirely of their weapons-useable materials.)

"Agreement on these four principles and the commitment to a global system for securing nuclear materials would be a paramount achievement for the Nuclear Security Summit process," Rohlfing wrote ahead of the March 24-25 gathering of more than 50 heads of state and government and leaders of four international organisations. "As our leaders convene to discuss the issue, let us hold



Joan Rohlfing

them accountable for achieving the goal of securing all weapons-useable nuclear materials before the summit process ends in 2016. Until that happens, the threat of nuclear terrorism will persist."

As the president of NTI, an NGO engaged in projects to secure nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction usable materials in various countries, including Kazakhstan, Rohlfing knows what she is talking about. In January 2014, together with NTI Co-chairman and former U.S. Senator Sam Nunn, she also launched the second NTI Nuclear Materials Security Index, providing a comprehensive overview of the situation with nuclear materials globally and a set of recommendations on how to improve it.

In her opinion, Rohlfing explained why action is needed now more than ever.

"Today, nearly 2,000 metric tonnes of plutonium and highly enriched uranium – the raw materials of a nuclear weapon – are

spread across 25 countries. With an amount of plutonium the size of a grapefruit, or enough highly enriched uranium to fit into a five-pound bag of sugar, a terrorist could make a bomb that could level a city. We know that Al Qaeda, groups in the Northern Caucasus and other terrorist organisations have tried to acquire these materials," she wrote.

Despite the acknowledged threat, Rohlfing argued the international community still lacks agreement on the steps that should be taken to secure nuclear materials. "While leaders have met at two previous summits, they still have not delivered what the world needs to achieve robust and lasting confidence: a global system for securing nuclear materials that holds all states accountable to a set of common standards and best practices," she argued.

The principles to ensure nuclear materials security Rohlfing and NTI advocate resonate with the actions and approaches of Kazakhstan and its President, Nursultan Nazarbayev.

In his remarks to the second Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul in March 2012, he said that "20 years have passed since Kazakhstan voluntarily closed the Semipalatinsk test site, the world's largest nuclear test site, under my decree. Within the framework of long-term cooperation to improve its physical security, Kazakhstan, Russia and the United States also provided

a model of partnership based on mutual trust."

In the two years between the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington in April 2010 and the one in Seoul, President Nazarbayev said, Kazakhstan "implemented an unprecedented project to transport 210 tons of spent nuclear fuel to safe storage."

"We keep on working on converting of the reactor to low-enriched fuel and creating a regional training centre for nuclear safety," he added. "In cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), we are creating a unique automated system of accounting, control and physical protection of natural uranium."

Kazakhstan has also joined the G8 Global Partnership against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

"We have ratified the amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and invite all participants of the Seoul summit to ratify the amendments so that they come into force before 2014," the Kazakh leader told his colleagues in Seoul two years ago.

Turning to approaches to ensure nuclear security, President Nazarbayev said "nuclear power should be developed only when absolute security is guaranteed and should be based on three main principles" – universality, transparency and efficiency, and equality and trust.

According to the Kazakh President, to ensure universality, "the generalisation and codification of international law and accumulated experience in the development of peaceful nuclear energy is required. The goal is the adoption of legally binding nuclear safety standards."

In order to ensure transparency and efficiency, "along with full and prompt attention to any incidents at nuclear facilities, the establishment of clear mechanisms for rapid response to emergencies is required."

And, to provide for equality and trust, President Nazarbayev said, "all states should be given equal rights to access peaceful nuclear technology, as well as the use of low enriched uranium from the International Nuclear Fuel Bank. Our work with the IAEA to locate the International Nuclear Fuel Bank in Kazakhstan is progressing. This is our specific contribution to the strengthening of non-proliferation and disarmament."

It was also then that President Nazarbayev suggested having a nuclear security summit every two years and offered Kazakhstan as a possible venue for a future summit.

It has already been announced that the fourth summit is to take place in the United States in 2016. There is no information yet if that will be the last summit in the series or if there will be others after 2016.

ECONOMY

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 2014

Kazakhstan Seeks to Boost Gold Exploration

By Kulpash Konyrova

ASTANA – Vice Minister of Industry and New Technologies Nurlan Sauranbayev said at a recent press briefing in Astana that Kazakhstan must develop its gold exploration efforts to extract the country's abundant gold resources.

Kazakhstan has 2,000 tonnes of extractable gold reserves and annual production between 20-30 tonnes. But experts believe the country has subsoil reserves of more than 10,000 tonnes. Gold is the basis of the global financial system and has been a symbol of wealth and stability since ancient times. Today, this precious metal is used by practically all states as an insurance reserve fund.

At the beginning of the 20th century, according to the World Gold Council (WGC), the 10 countries possessing the largest gold reserves included the U.S. (almost nine thousand tonnes), Germany and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). They were followed by France, Italy, Switzerland, Russia, Japan, the Netherlands, China and India.

In the 21st century, the situation changed slightly. In the last 10 years, Russia has increased its gold reserves to diversify its foreign exchange reserves and help the rouble become an international reserve currency.

Another neighbour, China, also aspires to give its yuan a reserve status in world trade as a result of its increased gold reserves.

As for Kazakhstan, it is now one of the leaders in gold mining in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and is among the top 10 gold-producing countries.

Kazakhstan has many natural resources and more than 200 gold deposits are scattered across all parts of the country. Its industrial production in Kazakhstan began after the establishment of Soviet power in the republic and the beginning of its active exploration.

Today, according to Sauranbayev, Kazakhstan has 1,159 tonnes of gold ready for production.

"We have another 1,107 tonnes. But these volumes need additional exploration," said Sauranbayev, speaking at a recent press briefing at the Central Communications Service.



Kazakhstan must develop its gold exploration efforts to extract the country's abundant gold resources, officials believe.

According to official data, the annual production of this precious metal in Kazakhstan does not exceed 20-30 tonnes and can be increased with additional exploration.

To increase gold mining

At the end of last year, Kazakhstan commissioned a gold refinery that is expected to process 18 tonnes of gold ore in 2014. The design capacity of the plant is 25 tonnes of refined gold and 50 tonnes of silver.

In recent years, there was a decline in production. The plant's management concluded agreements with major mining companies for the supply of raw materials and processing of gold up to 10 tonnes per year.

However, according to the vice minister, the forecast reserves of gold in Kazakhstan are about 10,000 tonnes. But these volumes are to be extracted. Sauranbayev noted in his press conference that Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev has called for gold production to reach 70 tonnes per year.

"The solution to this problem will require extensive exploration work at the expense of both state budget and subsoil users," Sauranbayev said.

In search of "closets"

This week, the ministry's geology committee announced the launch of two large-scale projects in the field of exploration: Rudny Altai (East Kazakhstan) and Sary-Arka. Both projects will be implemented in 2018-2020.

"Thirty-six billion tenge (US\$197 million) is allocated for the Sary-Arka project on exploration in the Saryarka region, which includes the Akmola and Karaganda regions," said Sauranbayev, adding that about 30 billion (US\$164 million) tenge is allotted for the Rudny Altai project in the East Kazakhstan region and half of this sum will be invested by the national company Kazzinc.

The Sary-Arka district and East Kazakhstan region have a strong resource base and the goal of the two projects is to attract investments from transnational companies in exploration, the transfer of advanced technologies and the execution of the state order on geological exploration.

Both projects will be implemented by the Committee of Geology in partnership with local authorities and large transnational companies, such as Rio Tinto, Kazakhmys and Kazzinc.

"In case of successful implementation of these two projects, we plan in the future to explore other regions of Kazakhstan using state funds and private investments," Sauranbayev said.

Geological cluster is required

The activation of exploration, according to experts, is just one of the areas to achieve the goal set for the government by the head of state. It is no longer possible to conduct exploration by the outdated methods that were used in the Soviet era. The world has moved ahead in the development of this industry. Kazakhstan is behind these trends.

"Every year, thousands of samples of various geological material are exported from our country to the United States, Australia, Canada, France, Italy, Russia, South Africa and even to neighbouring Kyrgyzstan, which have specialised laboratories, research institutes and a powerful exploration school," the vice minister said.

The number of geologists in the U.S. is almost 9,000 and the annual budget of the service is \$1 billion. In the U.K., there are more than

800 professionals in the field of exploration with an annual budget of \$55 million.

In countries where this industry received government support (Canada, Australia, the U.S., South Africa, Brazil) a significant increase in mineral reserves has been observed in recent years due to the application of new technologies that allow exploration at great depths.

"The Turkish geological centre, which was founded in 1935 on the initiative of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, has an annual budget of more than \$200 million. It consists of 52 buildings, employing over 3,000 people," added the vice minister.

According to him, in the last 13 years, half a million samples of geological materials were exported from Kazakhstan. There are several reasons for this situation and one of them is the overall decline in geological science in the republic after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Secondly, there is a serious shortage of professionals, which is caused by the ageing of the workforce (average age is 65 years) and the low level of training of young specialists.

The answer is to provide the industry with substantial financial and technological support.

And this year, upon the President's instruction, geological exploration will be given a new status in an effort to attract new investments and technologies to the country.

The key will be the creation of a geological cluster, including the School of Mining, Institute of Earth Sciences and the Centre for Geological Research in Kazakhstan. The first step has already been taken. Recently in Astana, the company Kazgeologiya and Nazarbayev University signed a memorandum for the establishment of the Centre for Geological Exploration in Kazakhstan.

"The new structure will be involved in the creation in the country of a world-class exploration infrastructure. Thus, we are on the threshold of new discoveries," concluded Sauranbayev.

ECONOMY NEWS IN BRIEF

President Nursultan Nazarbayev met recently with Kazakh National Bank Chairman Kairat Kelimbetov to discuss the financial sector and banking system in the country, as well as international financial markets. Kelimbetov reported that the National Bank's gross international reserves have increased 6.1 percent to \$26 billion in February 2014. International reserves of the country, including National Fund assets in foreign currency, have grown 2.1 percent and reached \$97.6 billion. At the end of the meeting, the President instructed the National Bank to monitor and analyse the influence of global changes on the domestic economy.

According to the Finance Ministry, Kazakhstan imported more than \$154 million worth of flowers in 2013. Colombia and Ecuador were the only exporters from the Western Hemisphere. Roses seem to be most popular in Kazakhstan. More than \$29 million worth of roses were imported from Germany, Kenya, China, Columbia, the Netherlands, Ecuador and Ethiopia. Chrysanthemums, carnations and orchids also made the list. The tulip was first cultivated in Kazakhstan many centuries ago and brought to Europe by Silk Road traders.

The Kazakh government is providing increased social assistance to those in need during the holidays, Bolat Tlepov, head of the Department for Internal Policy of the Administration of Astana, said during a March 20 Central Communications Service (CCS) media briefing. Five hundred ninety low-income families received one-time payments totaling 2.8 million tenge (US\$15,363). Each district administration will also give grocery baskets to pensioners who have registered for assistance. So far, 500 grocery baskets have been distributed. Celebrations have also been organised for physically and mentally challenged children.

Astana's business community hopes small and medium-sized businesses will soon make up 80 percent of the economy of the city, Director of the Entrepreneurs Chamber of Astana Meirbek Mazhitov told Bnews.kz. "The head of state set an ambitious task to increase [to 50 percent the percentage of Astana's economy occupied by small and medium-sized businesses]. Recently approved measures to increase the ease of doing business in Astana should help this task. I think these are very serious measures, which have not been taken before by the President or the government. I believe these measures will have a good impact on development of business. Speaking of Astana, I can say that there are about 56,000 small and medium businesses in the city and 67 percent of the taxes fall on small and medium business entities," he noted. According to Mazhitov, all indicators show business is developing in Astana. "However, we have more important tasks which [include raising to 80 percent the percentage of the Astana economy that is occupied by small and medium-sized businesses]. The capital city has great potential for business development and, having analysed it, we can clearly see promising sectors of the economy in Astana. These are construction, service, tourism and trade sectors," Mazhitov said.

Speaking at a March 20 Central Communications Service (CCS) media briefing, Head of the Department of Culture of the akimat (city government) of Astana Bolat Mazhagulov reported on the amount of funds used to prepare for the Nauryz celebration. "No matter how much funds are spent for such an event as the Nauryz holiday, these funds are feasible and aimed at promotion of the status of this holiday. In total, 175 million tenge (US\$960,000) was spent to decorate the city for the holiday. Organisation of festive events cost 150 million tenge (US\$823,000)," he said. As earlier reported, about 300 events will be organised in Astana to celebrate Nauryz from March 13-25.

2014 Astana Economic Forum Celebrates International Organisations



By Michelle Witte

The May 21-23 Astana Economic Forum will not only be a gathering of world economic experts, but a platform to note the anniversaries of significant international finance organisations and events.

The UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the International Trade Centre (ITC) will mark their 50th anniversaries at the forum; the Monetary and Financial Conference of the United Nations of 1944, called the Bretton Woods Conference, will have its 70th.

The UNCTAD was established as a permanent body to deal with trade and development within the UN General Assembly in 1964. The ITC is a joint subsidiary of the World Bank and the UNCTAD and offers technical assistance to the public and private sectors of developing nations to help build their trade potential. The Bretton Woods Conference of 1944 laid the foundations for the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and

Development. This year, members of the Reinventing Bretton Woods Committee will discuss global economic problems and world financial structures.

The Astana Economic Forum, now in its seventh year, brings world leaders, experts and representatives from the business world together in Astana's Palace of Independence and Palace of Peace and Reconciliation for an international discussion to address global economic and social challenges. This year's topics are investments, innovations and infrastructure, social and cultural aspects of economic growth, the Kazakhstan 2050 strategy, globalisation and integrational processes, financial and economic stability, developing trade and competitiveness and energy and ecology. Speakers at this year's event will include Noble Prize winners and former heads of state, among others.

This year's Astana Economic Forum will also include the second World Anti-Crisis (WAC) Conference. The WAC Conference will be held within the forum and mark the 70th anniversary of the Bretton Woods Conference. This is also the second year of using G-Global, the Astana Economic Forum's web platform initiated by Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbayev that seeks to offer a way to engage the international community in finding solutions to the world's problems and to enable global decision-making.

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BUSINESS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 2014

BUSINESS NEWS IN BRIEF

According to Minister of Labour and Social Protection Tamara Duissenova, 56.6 percent of Kazakhstan's youth are involved in the country's Employment Road Map 2020, BNews.kz reported. "The youth are one of the priority groups within the Employment Road Map 2020. Presently, the road map involves more than 148,000 young people under the age of 29, which is 56.6 percent of their total number," she said. "Speaking of the particular directions of the programme, current data shows that about 5,000 people were employed under the programme's first direction – implementation of infrastructure projects," Duissenova said at a briefing at the Central Communications Service. According to the minister, the average salary for a programme participant was 47,000 tenge (US\$258). About 2,000 participants obtained micro loans for the development of farming, 107 people for opening service stations and 76 people for opening bakeries. "Presently, 23,000 programme participants have completed their education within the third direction of the programme, professional training or moving and employment," Duissenova said. About 16,500 young people were employed after completing their education.

More than 845,000 square metres of housing are to be commissioned nationally within the Affordable Housing 2020 programme in 2014, Minister of Economy and Budget Planning Yerbolat Dossayev said at a March 18 government meeting. "118.4 billion tenge (US\$650.5 million) was allocated from the national budget for implementing the Affordable Housing 2020 programme in 2013. This allowed the building and commissioning of 703,600 square metres of housing," he said. According to Dossayev, 159 billion tenge (US\$873.5 million) is provided in the national budget to implement the programme in 2014. "These funds will be used to provide loans through the housing construction savings system and leasehold housing for people on waiting lists and young families, and develop infrastructure and build leasehold housing through the Kazakhstan Mortgage Company," the minister said. "As a result, 845,300 square metres of housing is planned to be built and commissioned," he said.

According to Kairat Nukenov, head of the regional department of entrepreneurship, trade and tourism, a service centre for entrepreneurs will be established in Pavlodar through the Business Road Map 2020. The centre will be a one-stop shop that will provide six types of services to businesspeople. It will also greatly reduce waiting times for permits and other documentation, he said. "For instance, the time for coordinating technical conditions for connection to power networks will be reduced by 12 days for power requirements of up to 1 megawatt and 36 days for power requirements over 1 megawatt. The time period for registering documents for land lots will be reduced by 90 days," Nukenov said. "This will allow us to create more favourable conditions for business in the region," the head of the department said.

At a March 18 Central Communications Service (CCS) briefing, the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan said that they will take measures to attract investment to the regions of the country. According to Deputy Chairman of the Assembly Yeraly Tugzhanov who is also head of the assembly's secretariat, negotiations with representatives of small and medium-sized businesses in South Korea are already underway. "The President said the potential of the assembly should be used for the development of cooperation. It will be used to attract innovation and innovative technologies and to implement innovative projects," he said. "We have reached an agreement with the governor of the East Kazakhstan region and our deputies will visit the region soon. The region is ready to demonstrate its economic potential and our key goal is to invite large and medium-sized businesses from South Korea to Kazakhstan. For this purpose, our representatives and representatives of the Korean ethnic and cultural association will work in this sphere with the regional authorities," Tugzhanov said. According to him, such measures will be undertaken in all regions of the country.

Local, International Companies Seek to Boost Kazakhstan's Solar Sector

By Jan Furst

ASTANA – Kazakhstan has attracted more than \$180 billion in foreign investment since independence in 1991, mostly in oil and gas. The world's ninth largest country by territory holds slightly more than 3 percent of the world's recoverable oil reserves. However, Kazakhstan is also moving beyond fossil fuels and towards alternative energy.

For example, a new solar panel production plant was launched in December 2012. Since its launch on Dec. 25, 2012, the plant, a subsidiary of KazAtomProm, has produced 27,564 photoelectric modules worth 2 billion tenge (US\$13 million) with a 6.4 MW generating capacity. When fully loaded, the plant produces over 300 photoelectric modules a day, according to a representative of KazAtomProm.

International companies are also interested in getting into the solar panel business in Kazakhstan. KB-Enterprises is an international company with headquarters in Astana and offices in North America, the Middle East, Europe and Central Asia. It is one of the few foreign companies capable of building a solar power plant in Kazakhstan.

"With my partner Dr. Kurt Becker who is based in Germany, we are a financial consultancy company that represents investment companies, as well as energy companies," said KB-Enterprises Managing Director Taylan Karamanli. "We have been operating in Kazakhstan for about one year and we are seeking to boost our operations, create more jobs for Kazakh people, which will educate local people, give them new professions, upgrade their qualifications each year, pay state taxes, employee taxes, contribute into the pension funds. We would like to set up a factory that would produce solar panels eventually."

One of the challenges of operating in Kazakhstan, says Karamanli, is feeling secure in the country.

"What we want is guarantees from the government. We don't want financial help, we have the investments. We just want the guarantees, the land and permissions. If only the government could provide that, we could connect to the local network and that is exactly what we need. Other than that, once we

have the land and permissions, our engineers will set everything up. Basically, we want our investments to be secure," he explained.

Another challenge, according to Karamanli, is the "availability of high officials. We need to talk to decision makers and sometimes we get stuck at mid-level management who don't decide anything."

"We need to clearly understand who to turn to. That has been our challenge so far, whether for instance, we should turn to the city of Astana or Almaty, or a ministry. We don't know exactly who to talk to. It is not very clear. I would call these jurisdictional and procedural questions."

Based on 1 MW photo voltaic (PV) plant, Karamanli outlined some of the outputs of his future projects.

"For independent power supplies, we have designed a 1MW PV power plant with 2MW battery storage capacity and new (or existing) 3 x 400k VA diesel generators. This can cover the consumption of 400 households (1,600 people)," he explained and went very technical. "For this, the total cost is approximately \$6 million. Only the PV installation is approximately \$2 million per MW. Battery storage is approximately \$1 million per MW. For small-scale residential, four-person household in Germany, for instance, we would need approximately 5kWh PV plus 5kWh battery to stay energy independent for approximately eight months (excluding winter months). With the Kazakh winter, I assume that it should be sufficient to cover electricity supply, as well and maybe we will need a 10kWh battery, which costs approximately \$20,000. Every kWh of PV can save 0.6 kg of CO₂, which is approximately 60-90 kg/m² installation."

Part of Karamanli's success and understanding of the business environment in Kazakhstan results from his knowledge of the local mentality and culture.

"As I live here, I understand the country's needs. Although the country is rich in oil and gas, and other resources, Kazakhstan still has a deficit of energy. It needs to produce more and more," he said. "We can talk about Astana as the pearl of Central Asia and an example of a lifetime."

Kazakh Sea Vessels Deliver Grain to Iran

By Inna Mamontova

Two Kazakh bulk marine carriers are now delivering domestic grain to Iran via a long-term agreement signed by Kazmortransflot.

The agreement calls for the lease of two dry-cargo vessels with a deadweight of 5,000 tonnes each for transportation of Kazakhstan's grain from the port of Aktau on the Caspian Sea to the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The two cargo ships were acquired by KTZh Express, a subsidiary of Kazakhstan Temir Zholy. On Jan. 10, the bulk freighters were registered in the Kazakhstan international ship registry under No. 1 and No. 2 and under the names Turkestan and Beket Ata.

The Turkestan, captained by

Dmitry Nistratov with a crew of 10 began its first voyage March 8 after receiving a shipment of domestic grain delivered to the port by rail. Two days later, the cargo arrived in Iran.

Following the Turkestan, the Beket Ata cargo ship will also soon transport 5,000 tonnes of grain.

The two vessels will be able to transport up to 15 percent, or about 300,000 tonnes, of the dry cargo that is planned to go through the port in 2014.

The directive to increase the passing capacity of border crossings and the Aktau port and to simplify export and import procedures was issued by Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev in his most recent state-of-the-nation address.



Kazakhstan Is Set to Create New Domestic-Service Airline

Continued from Page A1

Despite Kazakhstan's rapid economic growth, domestic routes continue to be served by older aircraft. The development of regional aviation is an important step, not just for transportation, but also for the benefit of the population through increased mobility.

The fact that President Nazarbayev and Samruk Kazyna, which manages assets in strategic national companies worth tens of billions of dollars, are involved in the project, speaks volumes about the level of the government's commitment to increasing domestic travel.

"Aeroflot and Turkish Airlines are two success stories where the government owns a majority stake," said Dennis Vorchik, transportation analyst for Uralsib Capital, Moscow-based investment bank.

Over the past several years, the Russian government has listed reviving local aviation among its key priorities and has revamped local airports and subsidised regional air services. Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev also ordered his government to improve aviation in the vast country's far flung regions. The result was a 14 percent increase in passenger numbers in the first three quarters of 2013 and a 16 percent increase in regional flights. This totalled 8.5 million passengers in the first three quarters of 2013, which was a significant improvement over the same period in 2012 and previous years.

In what is seen as a major step in the development of Russia's regional aviation, state-owned Aeroflot introduced Aurora Airline to serve the country's far east. Aurora has four Dash-8 Q300 and two Dash-8 200, among other aircraft. Aeroflot is also launching its low-cost airline Dobrolet, which will focus on domestic routes in Russia. Other airlines, such as Ural Airlines, Rusline and UTair have



Kazakhstan plans to create a new airline to serve domestic routes that is expected to increase the country's population mobility and boost intra-regional commerce.

also significantly increased the number of their regional flights.

"I have been working in Russia on and off since 1994 and traveling everywhere by plane," said Andrew Romeo, an expat executive of a Saint Petersburg-based consumer goods company. "I use to limit trips to one city because all regional cities were reachable by air only through Moscow. Now, it is possible to leave Moscow or St. Petersburg for a regional city and fly from that city to other destinations in the same or neighbouring regions without using Moscow as a hub," he said.

The new Air Kazakhstan and existing Kazakh carrier, Air Astana, are expected to work closely on the project. Air Astana President Peter Foster said in a statement that "Air Astana has been involved in the discussions of the formation of a regional airline with our majority shareholder, Samruk Kazyna, since we retired the Fokker 50 fleet last January."

Air Astana was established in 2001 and made its inaugural flight in May 2002. It currently operates an all-Western fleet of Airbus A320, Boeing 767-300ERs, 757-200s and Embraer E-190s serving more than 60 international and domestic routes. Samruk Kazyna owns a 51 percent stake in the company with Britain's BAE Systems, Plc owning the rest.

"We welcome the decision and expect to work closely with the new airline to jointly develop these markets for the benefit of both airlines and of the traveling public," Foster added. Many domestic airports cannot serve Air Astana's all-jet fleet and the company needed to take steps to serve these cities with modern turboprops operating to internationally compliant standards. The creation of Air Kazakhstan will now allow Air Astana to focus on international routes.

Five airlines currently conduct regular flights in Kazakhstan with 28 more offering charter flights.

And Bombardier's Dash 8 Q400 is not the only option available in this plane class. Designed for mid-range flights (up to 2,430 km) at an average cruising speed of 650 km/h, the Canadian-made aircraft competes with the Russian Sukhoi Super Jet 100 (distance 3,048 km, speed 830 km/h, 98 seats), Brazilian Embraer 120 turboprop aircraft, the Czech L-410 prop engine and various other mid-range aircrafts.

No matter what the final make up of the new Air Kazakhstan fleet will be, developing regional air service in the world's ninth largest country by land mass is likely to be a boon to intra-Kazakhstan commerce and economic diversification.

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Rahmet Qasymov President Association of Petroleum Geologists of Kazakhstan

Scott Davis Managing Director Chevron Oil & Gas Almaty, Kazakhstan

EDITORIAL & OPINIONS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 2014

Bid to Join UN Security Council Seen on Track

In June 2010, Kazakhstan first declared its intention to seek a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council for 2017-18. In the fall of 2013, it formally launched its bid. It will be voted upon at the November 2016 United Nations General Assembly elections.

According to Article 23 of the United Nations Charter, the primary responsibility of the Security Council is maintaining international peace and security. Since gaining independence in 1991, Kazakhstan has achieved notable progress on the political, economic and social fronts and has made substantial contributions to global and regional security.

Kazakhstan is not looking to enhance its international prestige, but to become more involved in Central Asian and global security issues. The country also would bring useful expertise to the Security Council as the four priority pillars of its bid are nuclear, energy, food, and water security.

Kazakhstan voluntarily renounced its huge nuclear arsenal inherited from the Soviet Union. The country closed the world's second-largest nuclear test site in Semipalatinsk. In 1994, a joint US-Kazakhstan operation called Project Sapphire removed nearly 600 kilograms of highly enriched weapons-grade uranium from the Ulba Metallurgy Plant. The two countries later removed 2,900 kilograms of enriched nuclear fuel from the Mangyshlak Atomic Energy facility and have converted large amounts of weapons grade nuclear fuel into material that can be used only for peaceful purposes.

In 2009, Kazakhstan, along with other countries in the region, created a Central Asian nuclear-weapons-free zone and has been working to see other like zones established around the world.

Kazakhstan has also been one of the most active nations in ensuring the security of nuclear materials, as evidenced in the prominent role President Nursultan Nazarbayev has played in the three nuclear security summits in Washington in 2010, in Seoul in 2012, and in The Hague on March 24-25.

Pertinent to the goals of the Security Council, Kazakhstan has experience in post-conflict rehabilitation. Being an active part of the so-called Istanbul Process, Kazakhstan held the Third Ministerial Conference of the Istanbul Process on Afghanistan and allocated \$50 million to educate young Afghans at the best universities in Kazakhstan.

Indeed, Afghanistan is one particular focus of Kazakhstan's regional efforts, and it is the goal of stabilising that country that is one of the reasons for Kazakhstan's pressing ahead with its proposal to set up a UN regional diplomacy hub in its southern megapolis of Almaty.

Kazakhstan wishes to strengthen its diplomatic capabilities in order to address and solve the most difficult issues through its non-permanent Security Council membership. Over the past 20 years, Kazakhstan has chaired a number of key international organisations, such as the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in 2010, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in 2011-2012, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in 2010-2011 and the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) in 2012. In addition, the country initiated the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building in Asia (CICA) during the 47th session of the United Nations General Assembly in 1992. Working with partners, it has managed to create a fledgling security forum which now brings together 24 countries on the Eurasian continent. In May, during a summit in China that country will take over the CICA chairmanship from Turkey.

In 2013, Kazakhstan hosted two rounds of the P5+1 talks on Iran's nuclear programme, which are believed to have paved the way for

the Geneva talks on this matter later that year.

Kazakhstan's proven mediation abilities would be a solid asset to the Security Council. Fully supporting the United Nations Charter, Kazakhstan is committed to enhancing cooperation with regional organisations in Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America to maintain peace and prevent potential conflicts.

Kazakhstan's peacekeeping battalion Kazbat participated in demining operations in Iraq and its members acted as military observers in a number of operations. Kazakhstan has contributed to and is capable of continuing to contribute to these operations. Astana also not only financially supports the efforts of the UN in carrying out peacekeeping missions, but also supplies military observers to serve in UN peacekeeping missions.

In regards to other human security issues, Kazakhstan, as one of the top global grain exporters, is ready to address food security challenges, including through the creation of Islamic Organisation for Food Security and planned establishment of the Kazakhstan Agency for International Development (KazAID).

Kazakhstan, as a landlocked country, attaches great importance to water security. The country implements extensive irrigation projects and is working to resolve one of the world's biggest environmental challenges, the shrinking of the Aral Sea. Kazakhstan actively participates in resolving the water issues relating to its trans-boundary rivers with neighbouring countries. Kazakhstan has developed ambitious plans to become a green economy that revolves around increasing living standards and minimising human impact on the environment. EXPO 2017, which will be themed around new energy sources, will be held in Astana.

"Kazakhstan recognizes the key central role of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security, the promotion of sustainable development and the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms," the country's Minister of Foreign Affairs Erlan Idrissov said in September 2013 when formally outlining the bid. "We believe that the multifaceted and interconnected challenges and threats facing the world today can be best addressed through a reformed and strong United Nations."

"As a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council, Kazakhstan will cooperate fully in contributing to maintaining international peace and security, as well as to the activities of the Security Council as a body that can effectively address the full range of challenges and threats facing our world," Idrissov noted then.

Generally, Kazakhstan stands for very balanced, well-informed, collective UN-supported approaches to resolving challenging and difficult situations internationally. For example, in the current situation in Ukraine, Astana has argued repeatedly for upholding the principles of the international law and the stressed the importance of the observance of the UN Charter.

2017 will be a milestone for Kazakhstan because it will mark 25 years of the country's membership in the United Nations. If elected a member of the UN Security Council for 2017-18, Kazakhstan will become its member for the first time, and this will confirm the balance and equitable geographical distribution in the Asian group.

So far, only Kazakhstan and Thailand are competing for the Asian group's slot on the UN Security Council in three years. Three years is a long time in politics, but with the vote on the nominations set for the fall of 2016 the decision time is approaching fast and Kazakhstan seems to be doing its part to prepare for it in the best possible way.

Kazakhstan-U.S. Strategic Partnership on the Rise

By Kairat Umarov

The United States was the first country to recognise our independence and establish diplomatic relations with Kazakhstan in December 1991. During the short period since then, bilateral cooperation has intensified in almost all areas and the relationship between the two countries has been firmly established at the level of strategic partnership.

Political dialogue at the highest level creates the necessary conditions to further strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation with the current U.S. administration. The constructive and cordial relationship between the two leaders, Nursultan Nazarbayev and Barack Obama, is one of the most important facilitators of the growing partnership. Our leaders meet each other annually on the margins of various international events. The previous such meeting took place during the G20 summit in St. Petersburg in September 2013. The leaders also regularly exchange messages on contemporary issues. The close and trust-based relationship between the two leaders was once again reaffirmed during their recent phone conversation, which covered strategic partnership issues and the situation in Ukraine.

As President Obama pointed out in his congratulatory message to our head of state on the occasion of our Independence Day last year, although the strategic partnership between our countries "is young, it continues to develop, reflecting the cooperation between our governments and people." Given the United States' recognition of Kazakhstan's international leadership in nonproliferation, the next meeting of our leaders is scheduled to take place during the Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague on March 24-25. The meeting will give the leaders an opportunity to compare notes on topical issues on the bilateral and international agendas. President Obama has said he appreciates President Nazarbayev's leadership on nuclear nonproliferation, which has led to "growth and prosperity in his own country."

American experts also note the successes of Kazakhstan's diplomacy. Frederick Starr, chairman of the Central Asia-Caucasus Institute at Johns Hopkins University, believes that "Kazakhstan has managed to do what no other country has done: maintain cordial and balanced strategic partnerships with China, Russia and the United States." In his opinion, "U.S. links with Kazakhstan are among this country's most promising relations in the Muslim world."

Richard Weitz, senior fellow and director of the Centre for Political-Military Analysis at the Hudson Institute, notes that "Kazakhstan's growing role in its extended neighbourhood advances significant U.S. interests." He states that through "its increasing economic engagement in Eurasia - which has involved direct investment and trade as well as support for improving regional commercial and transportation infrastructure - Kazakhstan is helping transform Central Asia and the Caspian region into an 'arc of opportunity' rather than an 'arc of crisis.'"

A visit by Kazakhstan's Foreign Minister Erlan Idrissov to the U.S. in July 2013 gave a significant impetus to the development and strengthening of bilateral cooperation and was groundbreaking in a number of key directions.

The co-chairmanship of the Strategic Partnership Dialogue Commission was elevated to the heads of foreign ministries. Among all Central Asian states,



the U.S. has established a Strategic Partnership Dialogue Commission only with Kazakhstan, while with other countries in our region Washington conducts annual bilateral consultations. Another main outcome of the visit was the launch of the mutual issuance of five-year visas from August 1, 2013. The high level and intensity of the foreign minister's meetings with heads of key U.S. agencies indicated recognition of Kazakhstan's growing political importance by official Washington as well as its readiness to be Kazakhstan's partner in implementing the Kazakhstan 2050 Strategy and the National Concept of the Transition to a Green Economy through the participation of advanced corporations.

The November 2013 visit to Washington, D.C., by Minister of Defence Adilbek Dzhaksybekov acquired a critical urgency in the context of the U.S. troop withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2014. During the visit, Dzhaksybekov and U.S. Secretary of Defence Chuck Hagel and other officials had a comprehensive exchange of views on regional security issues, as well as the strengthening of military and technical cooperation.

It is also important that contacts were established with enterprises of the U.S. defence industry complex and bilateral military-technical cooperation was brought to a qualitatively new level.

As a practical follow-up to the meetings, a number of major U.S. defence companies plan to take part in the KADEX defence technology exhibition in Astana in May 2014.

Overall, cooperation in this area is developing in accordance with the third five-year plan for military cooperation for the period 2013-2017, which was signed in November 2012.

The plan provides for the development of peacekeeping capacities (including through the Steppe Eagle military exercises); assistance in the field of military education; the establishment of contacts between defence companies and training for special operations units of Kazakhstan's armed forces, including psychological training.

In the law enforcement sphere, the official visit of Prosecutor General Askhat Daulbayev to Washington last December, the first in the history of bilateral relations, and his meetings with the U.S. Attorney General and the head of the FBI laid a good foundation for the development of a constructive partnership.

Interparliamentary relations have also been revitalised and mutual visits of parliamentary delegations take place.

The unprecedented participation of 30 U.S. congressmen and senators in the Kazakhstan-American Conference and the reception on the occasion of Kazakhstan's Independence Day in December 2013 is evidence of the growing interest in our country.

The number of members of Congress in the Friends of Kazakhstan Caucus on Capitol Hill is growing.

A parliamentary delegation led by Deputy Speaker of the Senate of Kazakhstan Alexander Sudyin visited Washington in May 2013

to mark the 10th anniversary of the success of the initiative of our President to convene and host the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions.

In honour of Kazakhstan's delegation, Congressman Eni Faleomavaega handed to Senator Sudyin his Congressional Record statement recognising Kazakhstan's contribution to promoting interfaith dialogue. The U.S. congressman thanked Kazakhstan and President Nazarbayev for his initiative to convene the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions 10 years ago, noting that today "it has become an effective forum in which the leaders of world religions may promote a unified approach to achieving the most important goal - the establishment of inter-religious dialogue."

Kazakhstan and the U.S. continue to maintain dialogue on nuclear nonproliferation. The Americans have always appreciated Kazakhstan's contributions in this area, singling out Kazakhstan as an example for other countries. Most recently, U.S. Senator Ed Markey chose to announce his introduction of the SANE Act (Smarter Approach to Nuclear Weapons Expenditure) to the Senate at a reception organised by the Embassy of Kazakhstan in the historic Kennedy Caucus Room of the U.S. Senate. This indicates the value he places on cooperation with Kazakhstan in the field of nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament. The reception was part of the PNND (Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament) Assembly, where Kazakhstan's delegation included Senator Byrganyim Aitimova and member of the Mazhilis of Kazakhstan Viktor Rogalev, as well as representatives of the online education and petition initiative, the ATOM Project.

The relocation of the International Science and Technology Centre in Kazakhstan, as well as the creation of the International Atomic Energy Agency's low-enriched uranium fuel bank and the construction of the Central Reference Laboratory in Almaty are among the breakthrough projects in the field of nonproliferation coming in the near future. Another of Kazakhstan's concrete contributions to nonproliferation, the U.S. believes, came in the hosting of two rounds of talks between Iran and the six nations of international mediators in Almaty, which helped launch the actual mechanism of a diplomatic resolution to the Iranian nuclear programme.

Our two governments pay special attention to creating favourable conditions for the development of investment and trade and economic cooperation. The volume of U.S. foreign direct investment in Kazakhstan in the first half of 2013 amounted to \$1.2 billion, 12.8 percent more than in the same period in 2012. Most American foreign direct investment goes to the mining industry (18 percent), real estate and business services (16 percent), the financial sector (5 percent) and activities of professional organisations and industry associations (3 percent).

Mutual trade during the nine months of 2013 amounted to \$1.9 billion, which is 5.6 percent more than that of the first nine months of 2012. Major American companies such as Boeing, General Electric, Hewlett-Packard and others have accomplished their business plans in Kazakhstan. Some companies have been successful in establishing joint ventures. One success story is the joint venture of GE Transportation and Kazakhstan Temir Zholoy to manufacture locomotives. As part of its strategy of business ex-

pansion, this joint venture plans to manufacture and assemble diesel engines.

American companies are also leaders in terms of investment in Kazakhstan's energy sector. The Joint Kazakh-American Commission on energy partnership plays an important coordinating role in energy cooperation between the two countries. It aims to develop and implement a detailed and concrete action plan in all areas of energy partnership. The work of the commission over the past years has shown that cooperation in the field of renewable energy, energy efficiency and clean energy technologies is becoming increasingly important. In a short period of time, both sides have managed to establish a permanent expert dialogue and advanced to implementing specific projects. The 10th meeting of the commission is scheduled to take place this year.

An important event in Kazakhstan-U.S. bilateral cooperation is the international exhibition EXPO 2017. The main theme of the exhibition corresponds to the long-term objectives that U.S. President Barack Obama has set for his country, namely achieving full development of energy-saving and alternative energy technologies by 2033.

Work on the scientific and technological track within the framework of the Kazakhstan-U.S. Strategic Partnership Commission and its establishment in the form of a separate Joint Commission on Scientific and Technological Cooperation last year facilitated important steps in the development of long-term cooperation in this area. The inaugural meeting of the commission took place in June 2013 in Astana, which resulted in the adoption of a joint action plan for 2013-2015. In recent years, the number of U.S. industrial and manufacturing companies interested in entering Kazakhstan's market has grown.

Today, the United States sees Kazakhstan as a reliable partner and a regional leader in Central Asia, a country that effectively transmits domestic successes into the world arena and makes significant contributions to global and regional security.

President Nazarbayev's state-of-the-nation address, "Kazakhstan 2050 Strategy: New Political Course of the Established State," has been positively received by U.S. official, analytical and business circles. The address gives a new opportunity for widening bilateral collaboration, especially in the field of investment, technology and innovation.

U.S. officials and experts believe the address is a solid and positive road map that clearly identifies Kazakhstan's development priorities for the long term. Our focus on an innovative economy and sustainable development should give a powerful boost to the work of the Strategic Partnership Dialogue, whose agenda intersects with the ambitious goals of the 2050 strategy. We will need to maintain a dynamic foreign policy in order to reach the goals of joining the world's 30 most developed countries and creating a favourable environment for attracting new technologies and investment.

According to American experts, implementing long-term programmes will ensure political stability and economic development. U.S. business circles also positively note the economic initiatives outlined in the address and underline the ambitious and timely priorities that will play an important role in the transformation of Kazakhstan's economy.

The strategic partnership between Kazakhstan and the United States is experiencing a new stage of growth, exemplified by our common strategic goals and similar approaches to achieving them.

The author is the ambassador of Kazakhstan to the United States.

THE ASTANA TIMES

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KazPost Subscription index: 64572

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The Astana Times is printed at "Media Holding "ERNUR" LLP, 30 Sileti Street, Astana.

The Astana Times is published since November 2010. The Astana Times is re-registered by the Ministry of Communications and Information of the Republic of Kazakhstan under the registration No. 14037-G of 20 December 2013.
The newspaper is typed and made into pages at the computer centre of "Kazakhstanskaya Pravda". Published biweekly, the size of 8 pages.

ORDER: 220

PRINT RUN: 6,000

OPINIONS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 2014

Carbon Trading's Benefits for the Green Economy



By Bakhyt Yessekina

In his state-of-the-nation address, President Nursultan Nazarbayev gave the nation the task of studying international experience in the transition to a green economy.

The implementation of this task requires basic and applied research in key areas of the government's Concept for the Transition to a Green Economy. The World Economic Forum in Davos clearly demonstrated that the issues of climate change, investment in renewable energy and the introduction of clean technologies are areas of study of not only international organisations, but transnational companies, as they increase their competitiveness in global financial markets.

One of the recognised sources of financing for green technologies is the participation of enterprises in the trading of carbon and quotas for greenhouse gas emissions. This win-win market mechanism to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, despite a slight decrease of carbon trading transactions due to the

slowdown of the world economy, has great prospects. In general, the scheme is based on the principle of cap and trade, in which a release limit is imposed on the total volume of emissions of companies involved in the scheme. Participants may then buy or sell quotas within the established limits.

Since the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol, the internal emission trading system (ETS) has been developing in the European Union, the United States, Japan and China. According to international consulting firm Point Carbon, the main sellers of quotas are currently the countries of Eastern Europe (the Czech Republic, 33 percent; Estonia, 15 percent; Poland, 7 percent). Major buyers of quotas are Japanese public and private companies, with 61 percent of world trade, Spain with 14 percent, and then American and Western European private companies.

In Europe, the ETS operates in parallel with energy-saving initiatives. The incentive to reduce emissions through carbon trading is not directly related to energy saving, but energy-saving measures lead to reductions in carbon emissions—and thereby enterprises accumulate quotas for sale.

Overall turnover of the European market of emission permits in 2012 was about 120 billion euros. The penalty for one tonne of emissions is 100 euros, adjusted for inflation. As noted above, in connection with the financial crisis in the EU there has been some reduction in auction trading, but the possibility of new entrants in the organisation, especially countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), is not excluded.

Active internal trade has been

observed recently between U.S. states, particularly California. According to forecasts, California's carbon market will grow from \$1.7 billion in 2012 to \$10 billion in 2016.

In Japan, the initial reduction commitment was about 6 percent from 1990 levels, but in 2013, the government revised its commitments to reduce them by 3.8 percent to 2020 compared with 2005. The penalty for failing to fulfil obligations is \$600 per tonne plus a 1.3 time-cost of compensation for excess emissions. Overall, the Tokyo prefecture has undertaken a commitment by 2020 to reduce emissions by 25 percent from the level of 2000.

In China, according to the country's 12th five-year plan, the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions per GDP unit must reach 17 percent. As of 2013, participants in quota trading are the cities of Beijing, Chongqing, Shanghai, Tianjin, Hubei and Guangdong, which represent more than 2,500 companies. From 2015, other cities throughout the country will get involved in this trade. Chinese emission trading exchanges have different formats and sales and in Beijing the scheme includes all emission sources with over 10 tons of carbon dioxide per year.

The most active participant in the ETS among CIS countries is Ukraine. In 2013, Ukraine carried

out transactions on bilateral agreements with Belgium, Germany, Spain, the Netherlands, Poland, France, Switzerland, Sweden and Estonia, 104 transactions in all, which allowed Ukraine to earn more than 30 million euros. In the first period of the Kyoto Protocol, the country earned about 470 million euros through emission trading.

The national system of emissions trading in Russia is regarded

for participation in carbon trading. The country ratified the Kyoto Protocol in 2007 and is a relying party of application A, which gives it the right to participate in joint projects and the mechanisms of clean development. At the same time, Kazakhstan adopted voluntary commitments to reduce emissions by 15 percent in 2020 from the level of 1990.

Earlier this year, Kazakhstan's government approved the Second National Allocation Plan for Greenhouse Gas Emissions in 2014-2015, developed in accordance with Article 16 of the Environmental Code and provisions of international treaties in the field of climate change. It includes 166 enterprises in the energy, coal,

oil, gas and processing industries of the country, the baseline emissions of which are greater than 20 tonnes of carbon dioxide.

As noted in the Concept of the Transition to a Green Economy, sectors like the electric power industry, which uses coal, and the mining and transport industries account for the bulk of emissions. Current emissions exceed the limit values for Europe; particulate matter exceed emissions by 50 percent of total emissions, nitrogen oxides by 60 percent and sulphur oxides by 47 percent.

Much work is being done by the Kazakhstan Ministry of Environment and Water Resources and

the Zhasyl Damu company to introduce amendments to the Environmental Code, to specify areas of activity for the quota system, to improve the system of monitoring and reporting, to transition from the old method of granting quotas to benchmarking and to introduce international standards to regulate the work of verifiers.

There is much work to be done, both in legal and institutional terms, to launch the national carbon market. However, the effect of the ETS development for domestic business and the country as a whole is obvious.

An important component of this green economy direction is the understanding and support of government and business organisations, as well as qualification of potential players in the cap and trade system. As part of its mission, from 2014, the Green Academy Research and Education Centre will carry out systematic training of companies on the inventory, monitoring and verification of greenhouse gas emissions with the support of the U.S. Agency for International Development and Consus Carbon Engineering of Poland. We hope that this training will contribute to domestic enterprises' readiness to work in accordance with the new climate agreement scheduled for adoption in 2015.

In general, the launch of the national system of emissions trading and the effective participation of Kazakh companies in it will help to ensure greater stability in the national economy in the long term.

The author is the Director of the Green Academy Research and Educational Centre.

Mazhilis Deputy Says Family Should Be Strengthened to Achieve Goals of Kazakhstan 2050

By Adiya Kenzhegulova



Aitkul Samakova, the deputy of the Mazhilis and the head of the Social Council of the Nur Otan party faction in the lower chamber of Parliament, is a former long-time chair of the National Commission on Family Affairs and Gender Policy under the President and a former minister of the environment of Kazakhstan. She spoke to The Astana Times about challenges the country faces in developing a more socially conscious state, including through efforts to promote the rights of women and of physically and mentally challenged people.

What are the most important aspects of the President's Address "Kazakhstan's Path 2050: Common Goal, Common Interests, Common Future" that you would like to highlight?

As always, the President's address is a very powerful, serious, calibrated and bold policy document. It develops goals for the Kazakhstan 2050 Strategy.

The plan to enter the top 30 most developed countries is ambitious and requires a step-by-step programme. The task is not easy, but feasible.

The document outlined by the President determines the baseline direction and ways to achieve Kazakhstan 2050's goals, including annual GDP growth of no less than 4 percent, growth of labour

productivity up to \$126,000 and increase of per capita GDP to \$60,000.

The share of the middle class will increase and 70 percent of Kazakhstan nationals will live in cities. The first modern urban centres will become major cities of the country – Astana and Almaty, Shymkent and Aktobe. Life expectancy will grow to 80 years.

In my opinion, prospects for the development of the social sphere are especially important in the address. The head of state has repeatedly said that Kazakhstan should become one of the most safe and comfortable countries for living. That is, everyone will have the opportunity to study, to work and to realise potential.

The document says that the social well-being of ordinary people should be a key indicator of progress towards our main goal. What changes are expected in education and healthcare?

In the field of education by 2020, we will provide 100 percent coverage of children aged three to six with preschool education. Also, an objective has been set to reduce school overcrowding in Kazakhstan over the next three years.

All secondary schools will improve their level of teaching and reach the level of the Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools. The state will guarantee technical education to young people.

The leading universities are tasked to transfer to academic and administrative autonomy with the creation of effective systems to support students with high achievements.

As for healthcare, a top priority is development of primary healthcare. The President has directed the officials to study the issue of compulsory health insurance with the prospect of its introduction. The joint liability of the state, the employer and the employee for his or her health should be the main principle of the whole healthcare system.

People with disabilities will be broadly involved in active life and

realise themselves as useful workers.

Currently, there are more than 625,000 physically and mentally challenged people in Kazakhstan, of whom 65 percent are of working age. People with disabilities can work in consumer services, the food industry and agriculture. The possibility of introducing a special quota of 5-10 people per organisation to promote employment among the physically and mentally challenged will be considered in the near future.

Every year, more and more attention in our country is paid to people with disabilities. And if earlier we spoke about the size and type of benefits for them, now a wide system of social support and vocational rehabilitation is being formed in the republic.

Can you elaborate on the new document which is to enshrine the core values of the Kazakhstan society – the patriotic act "Mangilik Yel"?

I think that we need such a document. As the President said, "Mangilik Yel" (Kazakh for Eternal Nation) is the national idea of our common home, Kazakhstan. During the years of independence, the country has created the values that unite all people and make up the foundation of the future of our country.

This is national unity, peace and harmony in our society, economic growth through industrialisation. This is the Society of Universal Labour, the participation of our

country in addressing global and regional issues.

We must unite to meet the new breakthrough challenges set in the President's address to build a stable and prosperous Kazakhstan.

For almost ten years you headed the National Commission on Family Affairs and Gender Policy under the President. And what are the priorities in your current activity in the Social Council of the Nur Otan faction in the Mazhilis (lower chamber of the Parliament)?

The question of demography is most closely associated with the theme of family. And one of the main levers that can be used to solve the demographic problem is a family policy of the state. In our country, the state is constantly taking measures to enhance the institute of family and to raise its status. Only the family has prospects to increase fertility and only in a family environment can three, four and five children be born. To achieve the goals of the state in the field of population issues, it is necessary to include the problems of demographic development in government documents and strategies of economic and political development. The issues of promoting health and healthy lifestyles and increasing active living should be cornerstones of demographic policy.

Actually, the Social Council is an advisory body and its main function is to ensure legislative activity on issues of social policy, social development and participation in the development of specific recommendations to improve the existing legislation. We organise and hold meetings and roundtables and take an active part in parliamentary and public hearings,

international and national conferences.

In fact, the Social Council is an interactive platform to discuss the most pressing social issues. Thus, we organised a public hearing to discuss a draft code on people's health and the healthcare system. And it should be noted that many important proposals were made. For example, the need to introduce in the code a special status of cardiovascular diseases and cancer.

Also, we took an active part in consideration of the draft Code "On Marriage and Family" and Mazhilis members introduced in it the whole chapter on surrogacy, as the number of childless couples in the country is quite large (16 percent).

We studied the situation with orphans in Kazakhstan and made progress on this issue: now they receive an allowance of 10 minimum payment indicators and are provided with housing. Previously, they were removed from the queue after reaching the age of 23. Today, they remain in the waiting list until they obtain housing.

Our council initiated the development of the law "On State Guarantees of Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Men and Women in the Republic of Kazakhstan" and we drafted the bill "On Prevention of Domestic Violence."

The members of the council constantly visit regions, take part in meetings with people and are involved in public receptions of Nur Otan, which allows us to

identify problems and solve them effectively.

In general, we have a lot of work and it is important work because it addresses the pressing problems of the population. My experience suggests that any case must be treated responsibly and seriously. And such a platform is a great opportunity to meet people, to be in the thick of things and be aware that you have a real opportunity through the legislation, and sometimes directly, to help people.

What about demographic problems in Kazakhstan and efforts to address them?

The question of demography is most closely associated with the theme of family. And one of the main levers that can be used to solve the demographic problem is a family policy of the state. In our country, the state is constantly taking measures to enhance the institute of family and to raise its status. Only the family has prospects to increase fertility and only in a family environment can three, four and five children be born.

To achieve the goals of the state in the field of population issues, it is necessary to include the problems of demographic development in government documents and strategies of economic and political development. The issues of promoting health and healthy lifestyles and increasing active living should be cornerstones of demographic policy.

Why, in your opinion, is the role of women in contemporary society becoming increasingly relevant?

The role of women in the modern world is defined by their right not only to work actively, raise children, but also to directly participate in social life. Today, women occupy top positions and at the same time it does not prevent them caring for the family. Career development and personal growth become important for many women. It is also important for a woman to be independent. And progress made by small-sized business today allows them to work even at home.

EURASIA&WORLD

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 2014

Hungarian Ambassador Says Countries' Commonalities Good Ground for Future Ties

Continued from Page A1

More recently, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, during his visit in 2012, called President Nursultan Nazarbayev his older brother. This is not the only time relations between the two nations have been described as brotherly.

"In May 2013, when Hungarian economic minister Mihály Varga met with Kazakh Prime Minister Serik Akhmetov during the Astana Economic Forum, the two passionately discussed how to properly cook and serve sheep's head, alongside other important issues," the ambassador told The Astana Times.

The ambassador explained that Kazakhs and Hungarians have three distinguishing similarities. "Food. We also eat horsemeat. It might not be available at every market in Hungary, but it is still possible to find smoked, and even fresh horsemeat. We drink kumys, which is fermented horse milk and we eat cooked kuyrdak and a lot of lamb dishes. Transportation. Both countries are also nations of horses and horsemen. Housing. Both nations are inhabited by the descendants of those who used to live in yurts and play kobyz. In Astana, there is only one yurt producer, while in Hungary, there are over 20 yurt factories. Another trait is hospitality. Hungarians are very hospitable, like Kazakhs."

According to the ambassador, "The Hungarian language belongs to the Finno-Ugric branch of languages. Yet there are words like alma for apple, ata meaning dad, khan shatyr for the khan's dome, aryk meaning water ditch, kish meaning junior, balta for axe and over 3,000 other words in Hungarian that sound alike in Kazakh."

"Kazakhstan has always been our main strategic partner in [Central Asia] and it is no coincidence we have our regional embassy there." – Imre Laszlóczki

"There are approximately 200,000 people in Hungary calling themselves descendants of Kipchaks, a tribe that used to roam western Kazakhstan, now living in Hungary. Two Hungarian government ministers are Kipchaks. Of course, they are not exactly the same as the people who live in Kazakhstan today, but they share the same ancestors as the Kipchaks of modern Kazakhstan. Since we have only eight ministers, I usually say, a quarter of the Hungarian government belongs to you [Kazakhstan]," he said. "Hungary has kept very close ties with Kazakhstan and some even say that Hungarians are the most Westerly Kazakhs and Kazakhs are the most Eastern Hungarians," he said.

Hungary and Kazakhstan have always had good bilateral relations, the ambassador explained. "Hungarians are the only nation in Europe with a nomadic history and we are very proud of it. We are the descendants of tribal nomadic cultures that once lived in western Kazakhstan, that in the eighth century went west hoping to expand their pastures. We, like Kazakhs, consider ourselves the descendants of Attila [the Hun], who had his headquarters near the Hungarian city of Szeged. This summer, a new monument in his honour is planned to be erected in Hungary."



Ambassador of Hungary Imre Laszlóczki

According to the ambassador, Hungary is very interested in facilitating Kazakhstan's interactions with the European Union. "Kazakhstan has always been our main strategic partner in [Central Asia] and it is no coincidence we have our regional embassy there and Kazakhstan chose Budapest for its regional outpost for the Balkans and surrounding countries. The new Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Budapest is very active and does a lot for Kazakh businesses [in Hungary] in just about every regard."

The diplomatic work in general can be divided into five main areas. It refers mainly to the relevant articles of the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, the ambassador explained. "The first is representing Hungary in Kazakhstan. I attend all Kazakh official events, receptions and other functions. Secondly, I am the one who is responsible for organisation of high level bilateral meetings. Third, I am entitled to legally collect political and economic information on the host country. Fourth, I offer consular assistance to Hungarian legal and physical entities, and fifth, which is by far the most interesting, is developing bilateral relations between our nations through every possible means. As for me, I consider the second and the fifth duties as most challenging and important."

Kazakh Foreign Minister Erlan Idrissov visited Hungary in November 2013 in a trip that "was called historic by both countries," the ambassador said. Four agreements were signed during that visit. They include a Joint Work Plan of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for 2014-2015 that includes a visit by President Nazarbayev to Hungary in June 2014 and other high-level official visits to Hungary by the Speaker of the Mazhilis (lower house of parliament) Nurlan Nigmatulin, Chair of the Cultural and Social Development Committee of Mazhilis Dariga Nazarbayeva and Minister of Transportation and Communications of Kazakhstan Zhenis Kassymbek. Minister of Agriculture Assylzhan Mamytbekov, who has been invited three times previously, is also invited again. The second important agreement signed during Idrissov's visit to Budapest was the Educational and Scientific Cooperation Agreement, according to which 40-45 scholarships will be provided to students by both countries. The third was a cooperation agreement between the Ministry of Justice of Hungary and the General Prosecutor's Office of Kazakhstan. Finally, the fourth agreement was signed by Zsolt László Szabó, acting CEO of the Media Service Support and Asset Management Fund (MTVA), and Nurbakh Rustemov, Kazakh ambassador in Budapest, who signed on behalf of Scramble News Agency. These agreements will also play major roles in future bilateral efforts," the ambassador explained.

Before the global financial crisis of 2008, trade between the two countries totaled about \$500 million, including \$403 million in the Hungarian exports, but plummeted by a third after global economic slowdown. "As ambassador, I did many things to facilitate and increase trade between the two countries, including holding high-level meetings between government officials," the ambassador said.

In 2012, export from Hungary to Kazakhstan totaled \$156.2 million and \$210 million in 2013. "Fifty-four million dollars was cut by the Finnish cell phone maker Nokia in 2012; after seeing losses, they shifted their business elsewhere. Now, our goal is to triple last year's numbers and bring them close to \$1 billion," he underlined.

Among the main areas of economic cooperation, like trade, oil and gas sector, is agriculture, especially after the successful talks between Hungarian businessmen and Chairman of KazAgro Dulat Aitzhanov. Hungary is highly developed in the field of agriculture. "That includes heavy machinery, seed production, seeds that can provide better yield and withstand rigorous weather conditions, as well as the pharmaceutical sector. Hungarian pharmaceutical giant Gedeon Richter considers opening a factory in Atyrau in the future. The ice has been broken. I think it is possible to triple trade between our countries," the ambassador said.

"However, in all honesty, Kazakhstan is not a very convenient market for Hungarian small and medium-sized businesses due to the large distance. It is quite difficult to have a business in Kazakhstan without physically being in the country," the ambassador quipped.

Another goal the ambassador has is to open direct flights between Astana and Budapest. Although the "gray list" may pose challenges in this area, things are looking good. "We offered Air Astana the opportunity to fly directly to Budapest and even offered to cover their losses in the first six months' expenses. Nowadays a low-cost Hungarian airline seems to be very interested in flying to Astana for 150 Euros (US\$208) as well."

For Ambassador Laszlóczki, who speaks Russian, Arabic, Portuguese, English and Italian alongside his native Hungarian, Kazakhstan is the seventh place he has lived at as part of his career. He had postings in Iraq, Libya, Morocco, Kuwait, Russia and Portugal. His personal impressions about Astana are all positive, except for those about the cold Astana winters that at times are too harsh and lengthy even for the locals. "I have many friends here, my stay here in Astana greatly exceeded my expectations."

At the moment, the Hungarian embassy is working on bringing up to 50 Hungarian companies to EXPO 2017. "A special EXPO 2017 Committee has been established in Hungary and charged with fulfilling this task."

According to the ambassador, the embassy is also planning to build a Hungarian House to serve as a cultural centre and a Hungarian store. They are also looking to move there the embassy as well. "We hope that during the visit of the Kazakh president to Hungary in June, we will be able to present a miniature model of the cultural centre that will hopefully open soon," the ambassador said.

"I would like to wish all Kazakhs a happy Nauryz and with it being the start of a new year, I wish happiness and new successes," the ambassador said.

Parliamentarians Urge Global Leaders to Work Toward Eliminating Nuclear Weapons



Senator Byrganym Aitimova (c) addressed the PNND assembly in Washington, DC, flanked by Viktor Rogalev from the Mazhilis (l) and Jonathan Granoff, president of Global Security Institute (r).

By Altair Nurbekov

WASHINGTON – Members of Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (PNND) have urged the global leaders converging in The Hague early next week for the Nuclear Security Summit to "commit to include in the agenda of your next meeting work on substantive plans to achieve the universal, legally verifiable elimination of nuclear weapons."

"If this summit process cannot include this issue in its agenda, we strongly urge you to establish a parallel process at the same high political level. We commit to support such efforts in our respective legislative bodies," the PNND said in its statement, adopted at the end of the PNND assembly held in Washington, DC, in late February.

PNND is a nonpartisan forum for parliamentarians to share resources and information, develop cooperative strategies and engage in nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament issues, initiatives and arenas, nationally and internationally. It brings together members of national and regional parliaments from around 80 countries and regions, including Bangladesh, Canada, the Czech Republic, Germany, Japan, Kazakhstan, Scotland, South Korea and the United States.

At their Washington meeting meant to highlight the humanitarian imperative to achieve a nuclear weapons free world, legislators welcomed the upcoming summit in The Hague on March 24-25 and said they "support these efforts and commend the U.S., South Korea and the Netherlands for hosting, President Obama for initiating this work to make the world safer by gaining better control over dangerous nuclear materials."

It was in 2009 that U.S. President Barack Obama proposed convening nuclear security summits every two years with a goal of giving a powerful impetus to securing nuclear materials around the world. The first such meeting took place in April 2010 in the U.S. capital; the second summit took place in Seoul in March 2012. The summits focus exclusively on the safety and security of the world's nuclear materials, and purposefully do not include nuclear disarmament issues on their agenda.

This, however, should change, the PNND's recent statement says. "The existence of bomb-grade nuclear materials creates the risk of the use of a nuclear weapon. Any use would have catastrophic humanitarian and environmental consequences, causing immeasurable suffering. This must be prevented," the Feb. 27 PNND statement said.

"The highest level of commitment by the leaders of nuclear weapons states, and others, is required to reduce this risk by gaining control over these materials."

"Similarly, the highest level of political commitment is needed to achieve the global common good of ending the risk that nuclear weapons will ever be used by a terrorist – or a state – by accident, design or madness. Only by eliminating nuclear weapons will this risk be eliminated. We believe that achieving this global common good requires efforts at every level – local, national, and global," the statement continued.

"However, the existential imperative of ending the threat of nuclear weapons requires the highest level of political commitment, cooperation, and action. We therefore strongly urge you to commit to include in the agenda of your next meeting work on substantive plans to achieve the universal, legally verifiable elimination of nuclear weapons," the PNND assembly said, urging the establishment of a parallel process at the same high political level if the summit process cannot include this issue in its agenda.

Two members of Kazakhstan's Parliament, Byrganym Aitimova from the Senate and Viktor Rogalev from the Mazhilis, participated in the PNND assembly in Washington, DC, which concluded with a major gathering at the U.S. Senate.

Karipbek Kuyukov, honorary ambassador of the ATOM Project, a global education and online petition campaign, also participated in that event, presenting his paintings and urging parliamentarians to work more vigorously toward a nuclear weapons free world.

President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan, who participated in both the Washington and the Seoul summits, is expected to take part in The Hague's summit, too. Overall, more than 50 heads of state and government and leaders of international organisations participated in the previous two gatherings and are scheduled to come to the Netherlands next week.



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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 2014

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Country Celebrates Nauryz

By Alina Usmanova

ASTANA – Nauryz is the celebration of the New Year on the solar astronomical calendar for Persian and Turkic peoples. Nauryz is also a national tradition in Kazakhstan, restored to its full glory during the late 1980s.

The origin of this holiday, which has no direct relationship to Islamic traditions, is rooted in the pre-literate era of human history. It acquired an official status in the Achaemenid Empire as a religious holiday of Zoroastrianism. It continued to be celebrated after the Islamic conquests until the present time. In modern times, it is celebrated in days of the vernal equinox.

Nauryz is a very important holiday for Kazakhs as it marks the beginning of a traditional new year.

Under the current law, it is celebrated for at least three days starting March 21, the day of the spring equinox. This year, because of the holidays falling on a weekend, the Nauryz is to be celebrated over five days, from March 21 to March 25.

Continued on Page B8



Nauryz is a very important holiday for Kazakhs as it marks the beginning of a traditional new year.

Astana Hosts UN Disarmament Resolution Seminar

By Rufiya Ospanova

ASTANA – The capital of Kazakhstan hosted a seminar March 11-12 on the contribution of Resolution 1540 (2004) in regional and global disarmament and non-proliferation dedicated to the 10th anniversary of the resolution in the “Central Asia +” format.

The Kazakhstan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) and the Committee of the UN Security Council 1540 (1540 Committee) organised the event. It brought together representatives of five countries that

are permanent members of the UN Security Council, along with ambassadors and representatives from more than 30 other countries, as well as members of international and regional organisations, including the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), European Union (EU), International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and others.

The seminar, held on the eve of the 10th anniversary of Resolution 1540 and the Nuclear Security

Summit in The Hague on March 24-25, provided an opportunity for stakeholders to share experiences on the implementation of Resolution 1540 at the national level, to assess its contribution to regional and global non-proliferation and disarmament, and to make suggestions to strengthen regional and international cooperation in the field of non-proliferation and counterterrorism.

On April 28, 2004, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1540 under Chapter 7 of the UN Charter, which affirms that the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological

weapons and their means of delivery constitute a threat to international peace and security.

With the adoption of Resolution 1540, a special Committee 1540 was established to inform the UN Security Council on the implementation of the requirements of the resolution by UN member states.

The resolution obliges states, among other things, to refrain from supporting by any means non-state actors from developing, acquiring, manufacturing, possessing, transporting, transferring or using nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their delivery systems.

Continued on Page B8

Kazakh Legal Mediation Programme Resolves Conflicts

By Rufiya Ospanova

ASTANA – There is still a lot of work to be done in getting Kazakhstan’s mediation services up to par. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Kazakh government have introduced a mediation system in the courts and it is already having a visible impact on the country, Gulmira Tulesbayeva, the project manager, told The Astana Times.

What are the terms and objectives of the project?

The project officially started in January 2012 and will last until December 2014. The project was initiated by the UNDP and the Supreme Court, which is the project’s official partner. The \$400,000 project is funded by an associated grant between the Supreme Court of Kazakhstan and the UNDP. Other partners of the project are professional mediation organisations in Kazakhstan, the Academy of Public Administration, the prosecutors’ office, the American Bar Association and the Samruk Kazyna Centre for Social Partnership Fund and Mediation.

The project is part of the UNDP strategic goal to expand citizen ac-

cess, including that of the socially disadvantaged, to justice and to ensure civil and human rights, as well as to assist the Kazakh government in implementing the Law on Mediation, adopted in 2011.

The project entails the studying of the world’s best mediation and mediation training techniques, suggesting legislative reforms, holding training modules for professional and non-professional mediators, training mediators outside of the city centres, as well as conducting outreach campaigns on public awareness about the benefits of using mediation as an effective way to solve disputes without tangible financial costs, while saving time and preserving relations between conflicting parties.

Can you provide an example of the best practices applied?

A study tour to Singapore was organised for professional mediators in 2012 by the Supreme Court and the Ministry of Justice. Singapore was chosen because of its exemplary use of alternative methods of dispute resolution, including mediation and a strong mediation culture.

Continued on Page B5

New Production with Kazakh-American Tenor to Premiere in Los Angeles

By Michelle Witte

Kazakh-American Timur Bekbosunov and his band, Timur and the Dime Museum, will be premiering their new collaborative production, “Collapse,” described as a sardonic, post-ecological requiem for the planet, at Los Angeles’ Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theatre (REDCAT), from March 27-29. The multimedia requiem was composed by Daniel Corral and produced by Beth Morrison Projects.

The interactive show tells different stories through a four-piece

band and Bekbosunov’s tenor. Bekbosunov plays Moloch, a God of human sacrifice, and global environmental degradation is embodied, lamented and repeated.

Corral has re-imagined the traditional requiem as a band-driven song cycle in which each aria describes an ecological scourge. Nuclear testing and the search for new energy resources are among them. Video artist Jesse Gilbert and fashion designer Victor Wilde contribute to the decadent spectacle of the devastating human impact on the planet.

Continued on Page B2

Viktor Kell Exhibition Opens in Astana



Visitors of Kell’s exhibition.

By Natalia Kurpyakova

ASTANA – An exhibition of the works of internationally renowned artist and Kazakhstan native Viktor Kell is being held in Astana.

Kell, one of Kazakhstan’s most prominent artists, was born in the Tula region, but moved early with his family to Tselinograd (now

Astana.) where he has lived since. During his career, Kell decorated the interiors of many buildings around the capital and his landscape sculptures gave special colour to the Korgalzhyn reserve museum. His works can be found in private collections in Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, the Baltic States, Europe and Turkey. Kell is a mem-

ber of the Kazakhstan Academy of Arts, a participant in many national and international exhibitions and his name is included on the list of the world’s most famous artists, which was compiled in Moscow in 2011.

Kell has worked with different genres using a range of mediums. Two years ago, his personal ex-

hibition in the Russian Centre of Science and Culture won viewer attention with a series of watercolours known as the “Streets of Old Akmolinsk.” At this exhibition, professionals and amateurs have unanimously praised another watercolour series, “Winter in Astana.”

Continued on Page B2

THINGS TO WATCH MARCH – APRIL

ASTANA OPERA

March 26 at 19:30 Evening of vocal music
March 28 at 19:30 Screen melodies
April 4 at 19:00 Birzhan and Sara Opera

CENTRAL CONCERT HALL KAZAKHSTAN

March 30 at 19:00 Toto Cutugno Jubilee concert

CONGRESS HALL

April 3 at 19:30 Mono-performance of Ivan Okhlobystin

MAXIM GORKY STATE THEATRE

March 29 at 11:00 Thumbelina
March 30 at 11:00 Little Red Riding Hood

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 2014

Female Educator Achieves Business Success

By Lyubov Dobrota

SHYMKENT – The secret to success in business is dedication and optimism, believes Shymkent businesswoman Ardakzhan Zhakenova.

Zhakenova was the head of the department of English Philology at Mukhtar Auezov South Kazakhstan State University in the mid-1990s. While trying to establish cooperation with higher institutions and schools, she noticed there were not many English learning resources available in Shymkent. The situation was also worsened by a lack of textbooks and good methodological know-how.

So Zhakenova opened a training centre and held free workshops for school teachers and university faculty to teach them modern teaching methods. She then initiated professional Oxford and Cambridge English courses. The people were not only able to study colloquial speech, but also the most sophisticated aspects of the English language, which prepares them for international language proficiency exams.

“Any activity, business or occupation must be fueled by motivation; learning a foreign language is no exception, as it is not an easy task. In any case, knowledge of at least one foreign language does a great deal for the life of any person. It broadens their perspectives and enhances self-esteem, because at every step, there is a new challenge to be faced,” said Zhakenova.

Annually, dozens of foreign language courses open in Shymkent. Most of them fail and close within months. However, the popularity of Zhakenova's Inter Press international language centre is growing. At any time now, there are more than one hundred classes doing studies at Inter Press groups, each consisting of ten students.

An emphasis on professionalism is what makes the company successful. A graduate of Almaty Pedagogical Institute of Foreign Languages, Zhakenova could have become a professional diplomat. She even worked at Kazakhstan's embassy in India. That was dur-



Ardakzhan Zhakenova opened Inter Press foreign language courses in Shymkent.

ing a time when many foreign language teachers left the field for the diplomatic corps. She returned to teaching, sharpened her professional skills and took one-year internships in England and the United States.

In 2006, an independent expert council on teaching English called Inter Press one of the best English language programmes in Kazakhstan. The programme is affordable for average income families, and low income students are not charged tuition. Every year, about one hundred such children complete courses at Inter Press.

Zhakenova is a mother of four sons and knows firsthand how much decent education costs. She believes that business cannot be based only on a desire to maximise profit and that business must not forget charity. She also says women should not be afraid to seek success.

“Women can be as equally successful as men. We can manage a team, establish business relationships and solve problems. We should not be afraid of starting our own businesses. Doing it with enthusiasm and optimism is key,” the self-made businesswoman said.

Everest Remains a Dream for Accomplished Kazakh Climber

By Gulyaim Tulesheva

ALMATY – Svetlana Sharipova is one of the few mountaineers from Kazakhstan to conquer peaks of more than 8,000 metres without supplemental oxygen.

Sharipova, a Central Sports Club athlete, says she has fallen in love with the mountains. She was first drawn into the sport by its scenery and the sensation of being out on the trails. Now, Sharipova is one of Kazakhstan's big name climbers. She has reached the peaks of Nursultan, Manshuk Mametova, Mayakovskiy, Amangeldy and others and has won 12 high-speed mountain races.

She says Almaty's geographical location probably helped get her into climbing, albeit relatively late, at the age of 32. Her husband Nurlan Sharipov supported her and mountain climbing became a family hobby.

“I never thought that I would become an athlete. In my school years and even later, I did not climb peaks higher than Medeu. Physical activity is my life, I love jogging, skiing, mountain biking and the like,” she said.

As she began to hike with colleagues, Sharipova longed for something more exciting and extreme and took up mountaineering professionally. In 2002, she won the women's race to the top of Nursultan and later set the record for speed climbing Elbrus, which is still unsurpassed.

Sharipova is now delving deeper into the mountaineering world. There are 14 peaks of more than 8,000 metres in the Himalayas and the Karakoram, constituting the so-called “Crown of the Earth,” and to conquer them all is considered the highest achievement and dream of every high-altitude mountaineer. So far, a little more than three dozen athletes have made it.

Kazakhstan's first woman to climb the highest mountain in the world, Mount Everest, was Lyudmila Savina. In 1997, as a participant of the national team, she climbed 8,848 metres, using supplemental oxygen. Sharipova has climbed two peaks higher than 8,000 metres without oxygen equipment.

“To me, the mountains are not measured in metres, they are measured in how much they put you in unison with nature,” Sharipova



Mountaineer Svetlana Sharipova plans to climb the highest mountain in the world.

said. “Nothing compares to the bliss and heavenly beauty you feel, although it is a huge stress and there are extreme conditions and the sport causes enormous strain on the body, which is already experiencing a shortage of oxygen. Without training, which includes acclimatisation for a few weeks, you will not make it. Not everyone can adapt to the high altitudes.

“These ascents are not only about conquering peaks, they're also about conquering yourself and your fears and it's just great!” she said.

Sharipova, however, also has other things to attend to. She is happily married and raising her 2-year old daughter Diana. The climber says her family is most important, but that conquering Everest remains a dream.

Viktor Kell Exhibition Opens in Astana

Continued from Page B1

The series “Winter in Astana” consists of 50 miniature pictures depicting the young capital.

“Graphics is an incredible innovation. It seems very personal to me,” said Director of the Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art Nelly Shivrina. “Watercolours allow no superficiality. They require concentration and the ability to stop the moment and convey its mood. Kell's watercolours reflect his perception of the world; they encourage viewers to think carefully, to scrutinise the world around them and listen to their own feelings.”

Last summer, his watercolours received a warm welcome in Crimea, where Kell presented 50 miniature paintings devoted to nature and the region's scenery. The exhibition was held in the Bakhchisarai and was called “Doublet,” because it presented the works of two artist-brothers, Viktor and Vyacheslav Kell.

“This is our first joint exhibition; it is a dream come true,” Viktor Kell said. “Southern artists are completely different, but we understand each other and I gifted my watercolours to my Crimean friends.”

The artists continued to develop their Crimea theme in a recently completed series of wa-

tercolours, depicting Balaklava, Sevastopol, Bakhchisarai, the famous Khan Palace, the bell in Chersonese, ancient columns, fortresses and seascapes.

The next part of the Astana exhibition is devoted to portraits.

“These are the portraits of my family, friends, those dearest to

me and someone unfortunately no longer with us,” Kell said.

It is obvious that the Renaissance is especially close to this artist. His self-portraits are done in Renaissance style and his other works include his favourite themes from his art history lectures at Kazakh Saken Seifullin Agrotechnical University. Kell has been working with students for more than 20 years.

At the opening of the Astana exhibition, his friends and colleagues congratulated the artist on winning the Kurmet (Honour) of the Kazakhstan Union of Artists, which was awarded by the Chairman of the Konyr Mukhamediyev Association.

“I am happy that people like my work. I love working with students. They inspire me and allow me to travel through centuries and epochs. The exhibition is called ‘All that I love.’ I am happy to share it with you,” the artist said.



Viktor Kell and his works.

Ranger Devotes Himself to Protecting the Forest

By Alexander Kuzennyi

AKMOLA REGION – They say a forest needs care and skillful management. If this is the case, Aslan Zakirin, a ranger at the Gustoroschino Forestry, is just the man for the job.

The Zakirin family has conserved and planted many trees over the years. Aslan Zakirin is in charge of a 17-hectare area, but, like most rangers' families, his family has only a modest income. However, Zakirin does not complain and does his job lovingly and with enthusiasm.

He is a busy man who spends his time battling nature, unwanted growth and poaching. He has seen albino deer in his 17-hectare area, which are rare in the wild. The

presence of such rare species is indicative of the pristine nature of the area and it is conservationists, such as Zakirin, who protect that environment. The Zakirins have put a lot of effort toward protecting the forest.

Close proximity to urban areas and visitors picking mushrooms and berries during summer puts a strain on the area's ecosystem. But Zakirin's forest is unique. It offers the feeling of being in the wild while only five kilometres off the highway.

The forest is well tended and full of birches with large, succulent leaves. Luscious greenery can be seen everywhere in summer. The grasses are robust and make good dairy herd feed. The landscape is a feast for the eyes.



Aslan Zakirin, a ranger at the Gustoroschino Forestry, is just the man for the job.



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The Astana Times

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CULTURE

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 2014

New Production with Kazakh-American Tenor to Premiere in Los Angeles

Continued from Page B1

Bekbosunov, who graduated from the California Institute of the Arts, was described by LA Weekly as “an architect of tension.” Timur and the Dime Museum, which formed in 2010, has been called “smashing, romantic, noisy,” by the same publication and “a genre-bending project that blurs the line between indie rock and smoky cabaret,” by Short and Sweet NYC.

Bekbosunov was born in Kazakhstan but moved to the United States after high school. He is a classically trained opera singer, but frequently chooses projects that reject the elitism and strictly circumscribed nature of high art, though he has made solo appearances with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Opera Boston, the National Folk Orchestra of Kazakhstan and others. The singer has also collaborated on projects related to Kazakhstan, including Anne LeBaron’s large-scale project, Silent Steppe Cantata, a sonic portrait of Kazakhstan that made its debut at Astana’s Congress Hall in 2011.

REDCAT showcases interdisciplinary contemporary performance



REDCAT showcases interdisciplinary contemporary performance art pieces in a high-tech, versatile setting.

art pieces in a high-tech, versatile setting. After Collapse’s premiere

at REDCAT, the show will move on to the Miami Light Project per-

formance art series and the Operadagen Festival in the Netherlands.

Kazakh Film Inspired by Hemingway Nominated for Nika Award



Yerbolat Toguzakov, winner of the best male actor award.

By Julia Rutz

According to the Kazakhfilm press office, the Kazakhstan movie “Shal,” which was inspired by Ernest Hemingway’s “The Old Man and the Sea,” has been nominated for best movie in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Baltic States at Nika 2014. The movie is directed by Yermek Tursunov, the acclaimed director who is renowned for his previous movie “Kelin.”

“An additional four films were nominated for the award: “Capitalism at the Cross Roads,” directed by Ivars Seletskis (Latvia), “Passion,” directed by Temir Birmazarov (Kyrgyzstan), “Haytarma” directed by Ahtem Seytablyayev (Ukraine) and “Excursionist,” directed by Audrius Juzenas (Lithuania).

The best film in the CIS and Baltic States award has been given since the 16th Nika Award Ceremony in 2003.

“Shal” is not the first movie produced in Kazakhstan nominated for this award. Earlier, these Kazakhfilm movies were included on the list of nominees: “Prayer of Leila” directed by Satybaldy Narymbetov, “Renaissance Island” directed by Rustem Abdrashev, “Notes of a Wayman” directed by Zhanabek Zhetiruo, “Swift” directed by Abai Kulbayev, “Farewell, Gulsary” directed by Ardak Amirkulov and “The Gift to Stalin” directed by Rustem Abdrashev. However, the award was received only once by Serik Apymov in 2005 for his film “The Hunter.”

Nika is a national film award, established by the Nika Russian Academy of Motion Picture Arts. Its first award ceremony took place in 1988. Prize winners are awarded statuettes of the winged Greek goddess Nike. Winners are chosen during a secret ballot voting ses-

sion by members of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts, which includes representatives of all cinematic specialties from the regional offices of the Union of Cinematographers of Russia. In 2013, renowned Russian director Andrei Konchalovsky became President of the Russian Academy of Motion Picture Arts. The founder and artistic director of the award is Yuli Gusman.

The 27th National Awarding Ceremony Nika for 2013 will be held April 1, 2014 at the Moscow State Academic Operetta Theatre.

“Shal” is based on the famous novel by Ernest Hemingway, “The Old Man and the Sea” and tells the story of a family consisting of an old man, a daughter-in-law and a grandson, who live on a remote steppe.

The film was released on Oct. 11, 2012. In October 2013, the film was submitted for the best foreign-language Oscar. In November 2013, “Shal” was nominated for an annual Asia Pacific Screen Awards (APSA) in two categories: “Best Actor” and “Best Cinematography.” In February, the film took part in the main competition of the World Panorama of the 32nd International Film Festival Fair in Iran and received a prize for outstanding technical and artistic achievement.

“Shal” has been presented at different international film festivals all over the world, including the 3rd Beijing International Film Festival, the Moscow International Film Festival and the 25th International Film Festival in Palm Springs in the U.S.

The film was named Kazakhstan’s best movie of 2013. It was also awarded first place at the Kinoshock festival and starring actor Yerbolat Toguzakov won the best male actor award.

Kazakh Movie Wins Grand Prix at French Festival

By Alina Usmanova

The Kazakh movie “Nagima” directed by Zhanna Issabayeva won the Grand Prix at the Deauville Asian Film Festival held March 5-9 in France.

Chairperson of the jury was French film director Claire Denis. Actor and writer Rene Bonnel, actress and producer Roxane Mesquida and actor Samir Guesmi were also part of the jury. “Nagima” premiered at the prestigious Pusan film festival in South Korea earlier. And in February, it was shown at the 64th Berlin International Film Festival.

Issabayeva’s film tells the story of two young people who grew up together in an orphanage. Nagima moonlights in a canteen and all the money she earns is used to pay rent on a shabby hut in the slums for her and her friend, Anya, who is eight months pregnant. Nagima and her friend are trying to survive in a harsh world and represent the struggles of women against poverty everywhere. In the film, Anya was not able to register at

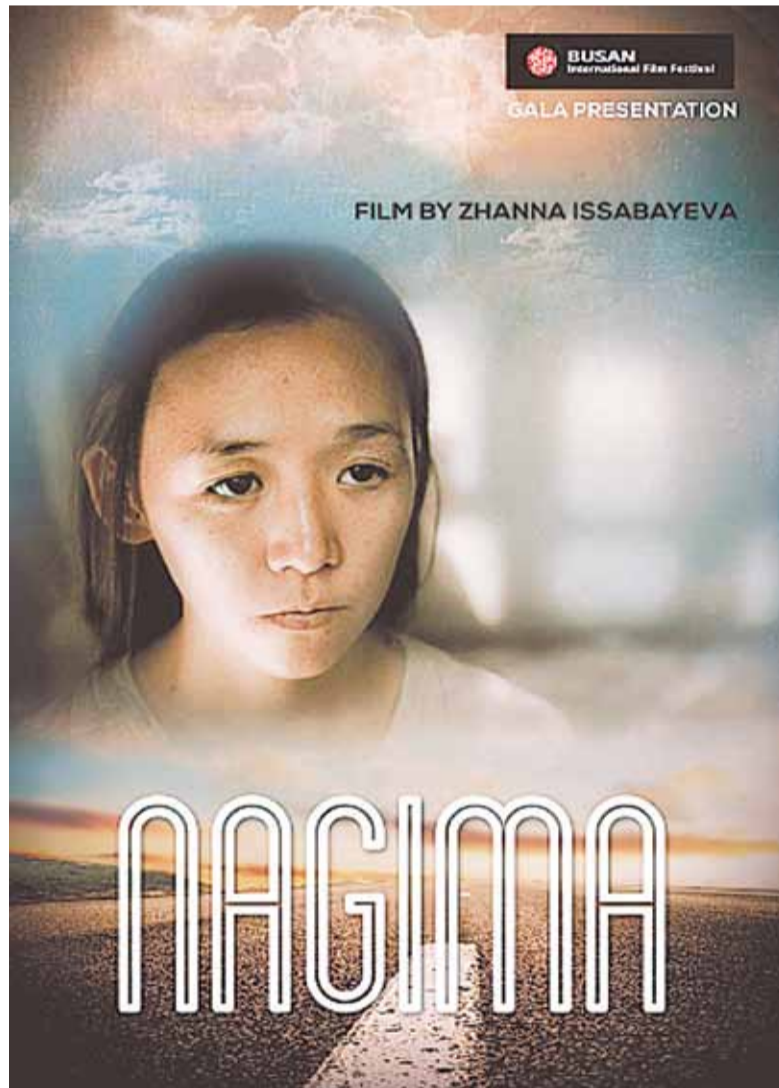
the local hospital and was never examined by a doctor during her pregnancy. Suffering pain and bleeding, Anya finally gets to the hospital where she dies during childbirth.

Left alone, Nagima decides to find her mother who abandoned her 18 years ago. But the woman many years later again refuses to have contact with her daughter.

“I am very proud and happy to show my film in France. Especially to get the Grand Prix, it is a great honour for me. I am happy that others care about the things that I care about. I am very happy and proud of it,” Issabayeva said.

The festival’s jury prize was awarded to “Han Gong-Ju” directed by South Korean Lee Soo-Jin and “Ugly” directed by Anurag Kashyap from India. The critics’ award also went to the South Korean film “Han Gong-Ju.”

The film “Nagima” was the debut of leading actors Dina Tukubayeva and Mariya Nezhentseva. ARTISHOCK theater actress Galina Pyanova and Zhol movie actor Nazar Sharkhan also starred in the film.



Astana Opera’s First International Tour Opens at Mariinsky Theatre

By Rufiya Ospanova

The first international tour of the Astana Opera opened at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, Russia on March 8 with a performance of “Atilla” by Giuseppe Verdi.

Mariinsky Theatre Maestro Valery Gergiyev conducted the performance with Italian production director Pier Luigi Pizzi of the Teatro Dell Opera di Roma. Bulgarian performer Orin Anastassov played the part of Atilla, Italian Claudio Sgura played Ezio, Kazakh Zhupar Gabdullina played Odabella and Italian Luciano Ganchi played Foresto.

“Atilla” first premiered on March 17, 1846 in the Teatro La Fenice in Venice. After that, the opera was rarely performed, despite the complexity of Verdi’s themes. The basis of this premiere production is the performance created by Pier Luigi Pizzi for the Rome Opera.

Verdi’s dramatic themes of love, passion, jealousy and revenge, sacrifice, friendship, treachery, betrayal, pride and death are well rep-

resented in this opera. The director portrays Atilla as a determined individual who saved the library from fire and forgave his enemies who conspired against him.

According to Pizzi, the Astana Opera troupe’s extraordinary choir became a revelation for him.

“It is very difficult to find a choir so dedicated to its work, so determined,” the director said. The Astana Opera also performed a gala ballet concert at the Mariinsky Theatre. A collection of the best ballet scenes of the world’s choreographic masterpieces was presented on March 9. The virtuoso performances included works by Adolphe Adam, Ludwig Minkus, Camille Saint-Saens, Alexander Borodin, Pyotr Tchaikovsky, Boris Asafiyev, Yevgeny Brusilovsky, Jules Perrot, Tursynbek Nurkaliyev, Galiya Buribayeva and others.

Based on the classics, but not excluding new styles and trends, the young troupe also performed scenes from the recent works of renowned theatre director Charles Jude.

Astana Opera dancers Madina Basbayeva, Tair Gatauov, Aigerim

Beketayeva, Zhanibek Imankulov, Gauhar Usina, Serzhan Kaukov, Doszhan Tabyldy, Anel Rustemova, Yerkin Rahmetullayev, Bakhtiyar Adamzhan, Arman Urzov and others were well received at the Mariinsky Theatre. Many of these performers have won international awards.

The troupe’s visit to St. Petersburg also included a March 10 performance of Birzhan and Sara by Kazakh opera composer Mukan Tolebayev. The role of Birzhan was performed by Mariinsky Theatre soloist, honoured artist of Russia and People’s Artist of Tatarstan Akhmed Agadi in tandem with Kazakh laureate and People’s Artist of Kazakhstan and Tatarstan Nurzhamal Usenbayeva.

Birzhan and Sara first premiered Nov. 7, 1946 at Abai State Academy of Opera and Ballet in Almaty. The first performers of Birzhan and Sara were Anvar Umbetbayev and Kulyash Baisseitova. The Russian premiere took place in 1948.

More than half a century later, the same opera opened the Astana Opera on June 21, 2013 and became the hallmark of the young theatre. The opera tells the story

of fortitude and love between folk singer Birzhan Sal and gifted poetess Sara, and reveals the harshness

of attitudes from bais (landowners). It centres around the motives of the struggle for freedom of a

creative person, the right to love and happiness. The finale of the opera is tragic as Birzhan dies.



Astana Opera performers at the Mariinsky Theatre.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 2014

French Salsa Instructors Perform at Almaty Spring Festival 2014



A French Salsa instructors' master class in Almaty.

By Assel Uskumbayeva

ALMATY – Dancers from around Kazakhstan gathered in Almaty March 14-16 for the Almaty Spring Festival 2014.

This year's event was organised by the Viva La Salsa school of social dance, which invited two of Europe's best salsa instructors,

Terry Tauliaut and Cecile Ovide, to participate.

The event opened at the Escape Club nightclub with competitions in the Salsa Cubana and Salsa Los Angeles styles.

Novices and dance masters from four Almaty dance clubs participated in the competition. The

dance clubs included Viva la Salsa, Habana Buenos Aires, FV Dance Studio and Afro-Latin Vibes.

Winners received cups, medals and certificates from the organisers of the Cup Viva La Salsa.

The second day of the festival began with master classes taught by Tauliaut and Ovide.



In the evening, dancers headed toward the Medeo Skating Rink for a "Girls in Green, Boys in Yellow" themed party hosted by Trader Vic's! restaurant.

The next day, the French teachers continued their master classes. The festival ended at Emotions restaurant with a dance perfor-

mance by Almaty school teachers.

Tauliaut and Ovide opened Salsalianza dancing school in August 2007 in Paris. Since then, Salsalianza has become increasingly popular and well known all over the world. The couple also travels a lot and their show "Silencio" was a great success in Europe and

the United States. Their new show first presented at the Congress in Monaco in 2009, was also well received.

They also teach Zouk and Bachata to students from around France and to students who travel from as far away as the United States.

AgriTek 2014 Exhibition Held in Capital

By Alex Lee

ASTANA – The AgriTek 2014 exhibition was held March 12-14 at the Korme Exhibition Centre in Astana.

"The AgriTek exhibition has been held since 2006," said Genadiy Dyakin, AgriTek director. "The goal of this exhibition is to create a meeting platform for agricultural machinery manufacturers and their consumers."

The exhibition has been approved by the UFI, the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry, which indicates the quality of events and that the events' statistics are reliable. According to AgriTek statistics, the exhibition hosted 4,430 visitors, 94 percent of which were part of the industry.

"The exhibition was opened by the Executive Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan Arman Yevniyev, Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of Canada to Kazakhstan Stephen Miller and Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of Belarus to Kazakhstan Anatoly Nickasov," Dyakin said.

AgriTek used to be exhibited in Almaty, however, AgriTek was "really interested to host it in the capital and decided to move it," Dyakin explained. "And it was justified as the exhibition is constantly growing each year," he added.

"Our target audience is exhibitors who produce or sell equip-

ment for agriculture, machinery and equipment, spare parts, irrigation technology and fertilisers, seeds and seedlings, plant protection products, equipment and technologies for poultry and livestock, fodder, veterinary technology, etc. Simply put, farmers," Dyakin explained.

Dyakin, who is not a regular Astana visitor, noticed the growth and changes in the capital.

"During each visit to Astana, I notice changes, a lot of new unique buildings. The weather was always rough during previous exhibitions. It has always been stormy, rainy and slushy. This year, the weather has pleased us for the first time – a light frost and almost no wind," Dyakin said.



The opening ceremony of AgriTek exhibition.

Women Creating "Quiet Revolution" in Business



By Kulpash Konyrova

ASTANA – Speaking at a briefing in Astana, Chairwoman of the Damu Entrepreneurship Development Fund Lyazzat Ibragimova said Kazakhstan's women are very active in business.

"In Kazakhstan, every second entrepreneur is a woman," she said. "Experts call this mass involvement of women in business in recent decades a 'quiet revolution.' Kazakhstan's citizens have options: to be employed or self-employed. Women increasingly choose the latter."

Women in Kazakhstan prefer to start businesses in fields in which they have knowledge and experience. Many women doctors with regular clients have created their own specialised medical centres and teachers previously engaged in tutoring have opened training centres. Many women are involved in the hotel business, in food and catering, Ibragimova said.

General Director of Tamak LLP Gulmira Tamasheva believes that domestic spaghetti could be quite popular in Europe and that domestic noodles manufactured from top-quality grain could compete with Italian pasta. A tenth of the products manufactured by her small company have long been

exported abroad. In January of last year, Tamasheva began to export noodles as well as sochni, the very thin sheets of dough used in the traditional Kazakh dish, beshbarmak, to the United States. This year, the entrepreneur plans to double her exports.

"The idea of the project was prompted by life itself. Our women today are very busy. They have to be successful at work, take care of the family and children and at the same time be beautiful and attractive. That's why I decided to produce noodles, to help housewives save time when cooking national dishes," said Tamasheva. The Damu fund helped her to implement the idea. Tamak LLP now has more than 80 employees.

Gulnara Bokebayeva, head of another LLP, Astana Florinter, also told the briefing about her business.

"I am a professional biologist, a Ph.D., and I know all about plants. I always wanted to create a company that would be involved in landscaping. But in the harsh climatic conditions of Astana it was difficult to implement such an idea. However, having received a grant to develop my business, I invested money in building a greenhouse, where we now grow flowers,"

Bokebayeva said.

Today, she said, there are new opportunities to develop her business. Through the Damu fund, Bokebayeva received training in Germany. During the training course, she met an interested potential business partner. At the briefing, Ibragimova also discussed the problems and difficulties of entrepreneurs.

"First of all, there is the lack of knowledge and information. Second is a shortage of funds," she said speaking of challenges she and others like her have to tackle.

For entrepreneurs who have started their own businesses but do not have the skills and knowledge they need, four years ago, Damu created a business advisor programme. This network of free consulting centres is now active in all regions of Kazakhstan.

"During this time, we have provided training to more than 52,000 beginners and existing entrepreneurs. More than half of them are women," Ibragimova said.

Damu also helps entrepreneurs access funding for their businesses.

"Women entrepreneurs are ready to start even with a small investment. That's why the fund has been implementing a microcredit programme for women's entrepreneurship for four years. During this period, more than 5 billion tenge (US\$27.5 million) in loans were granted and every third credit guarantee was given to a woman entrepreneur," Ibragimova added.

Loans through the women's microcredit programme come through commercial banks that partner with the fund and operate according to certain restrictions.

"That is, the banks can only lend this money to businesses that are owned or co-owned by a woman and the interest rate on the loan should not exceed 14 percent per year," Ibragimova said.

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Kazakh Legal Mediation Programme Resolves Conflicts

Continued from Page B1

There is no law on mediation, but the practice of mediation is widely developed in settling almost all administrative and civil conflicts. There are specialised mediation centres for family matters, financial disputes, as well as individual centres to resolve disputes at the community (district) level. It should be noted that Singapore is a multiethnic and multicultural country and all mediation organisations try to select mediators that share commonalities in mentality with the involved parties.

Who is involved in the project?

The project involves international experts and national consultants represented by mediation organisations.

For example, Tatyana Dronzina, a renowned international expert in mediation, a professor of Granada University and the University of Sofia, analysed how mediators are trained in Kazakhstan. She was also actively involved in the development of mediation in Kazakhstan and has worked in Astana, Aktau and Kokshetau.

The Mediation Centre and the International Human Rights Centre were involved in the development of modular training programmes on mediation and holding regional training sessions. They are among the leading mediation centres in Kazakhstan. As a result of training, more than 200 mediators and 53 coach mediators were trained, which helped create a corps of professional mediators in Kazakhstan with the presence of mediators in each area.

Do you train organisations in mediation as well?

The UNDP project trains members of regional courts, the General Prosecutor's Office and Ministry of Internal Affairs staff in the theory and practice of mediation in criminal and civil trials. Lead-



A UNDP Mediation Programme training.

ing business coaches from the Kazakhstan Mediation Centre, experts from the U.S. and Germany, together with the American Bar Association and the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ) provided the training. It is noteworthy that judicial and law enforcement agencies understand the importance of mediation and reconciliation procedures in reducing the workload of judges and the level of conflict and social tension.

The Kazakhstan General Prosecutor's Office, along with the Supreme Court, Ministry of Justice, UNDP and other international organisations held a conference on developing a draft concept of "Reconciliation [in criminal and civil proceedings]" in June 2013, which is being finalised and will be submitted to the government. This will allow for legislation expand-

ing opportunities for mediation procedures and other non-judicial mechanisms on resolving legal conflicts and improving extrajudicial dispute resolution to be introduced. The document combined basic advanced ideas in this area, including those based on the experience of foreign countries. The main objective of the concept is to reduce the number of criminal and civil cases under court consideration by at least 30 percent by 2017 through the development of reconciliation instruments. In order to achieve these results, a number of legislative changes will be needed, such as the use of settlement agreements at trial, expansion of the categories of disputes subject to mandatory pre-trial settlement.

Are there different types of mediation?

Extrajudicial mediation and mediation in the judicial process is used mainly for civil disputes (family, community, property and divorce issues). The use of mediation in relatively small criminal cases is also possible. Under the current law "On Mediation," mediation is not applied to resolving a dispute if one of the parties involved is the state. As in most countries, in Kazakhstan, divorce cases and family conflict matters are turned over to mediators. In addition, juvenile courts transfer most cases to mediators.

Can you provide some statistical information on mediation cases?

Since the mediation procedure is confidential, statistics on disputes resolved by extrajudicial mediation are not kept. However, the General Prosecutor's Office

of Kazakhstan, which is the main developer of the draft bill "Reconciliation [in criminal and civil proceedings]" has begun keeping statistical records of court cases and of pre-trial law enforcement investigations terminated due to successful mediation.

According to the analysis of mediation development in Kazakhstan conducted in our project by the International Human Rights Centre, courts saw 123 civil disputes weighed by mediators in 2012. In the first half of 2013, 477 such cases were claimed, 458 of which were settled by the mediation procedure.

At the same time, statistical analysis of the Supreme Court shows that in 2013, in comparison to 2012, the number of civil cases settled through mediation increased 10-fold (from 122 to 1,276 cases.) The number of cases settled with settlement agreement decreased by 4 percent (from 9,730 to 9,335 cases). These findings suggest that the courts have not sufficiently taken steps to reconcile with the involved parties. The greatest number of cases settled through mediation is observed in the Kostanay (326), South Kazakhstan (176), Atyrau (165), East Kazakhstan (122) regional courts. The smallest number of such cases is in the courts of Almaty (6), Pavlodar (4) and North Kazakhstan (1) regions.

What are the major problems faced by the project?

Lack of public knowledge about mediation and its benefits is and always has been a major issue. Since the beginning of the project, information campaigns in Astana and Almaty, Atyrau and Shymkent were carried out through roundtables with representatives of local state bodies, judiciary, law enforcement and professional mediators. Representatives of regional organisations of mediators in Asta-

na, Almaty, Uralsk and Kokshetau got mini-grants to conduct awareness campaigns and create informational materials on mediation in their regions.

Since mediation is based on the study of the source of the conflict, possessing mediation skills and techniques is largely encouraged, not only from a professional point of view, but also in terms of social relations. Therefore, in a society, much is spoken about the need to instill a culture of mediation from childhood that will help us raise a new generation with an already acquired culture of mediation that will help them further develop harmoniously and realise themselves in life.

What are the plans of the project?

Further plans include training mediators outside of the city centres, including in rural areas, training professional and non-professional mediators, conducting research to improve the standards of training of mediators, studying international experience on the introduction of the position of judge-mediator in the courts, as well as an extensive media campaign to increase the awareness of how mediation can be used as an alternative method for solving legal disputes that saves time and money and keeps decent relations between parties that, in general, contribute to the overall improvement of relations in society. The main problem is building public confidence in these mediators. Mediators must do more to reach out to the general public in hopes of informing the masses. At the same time, they need government support in terms of legislative changes regarding the use of mediation in the judicial process and in assuring that they are paid for their services, particularly when assisting the socially vulnerable.

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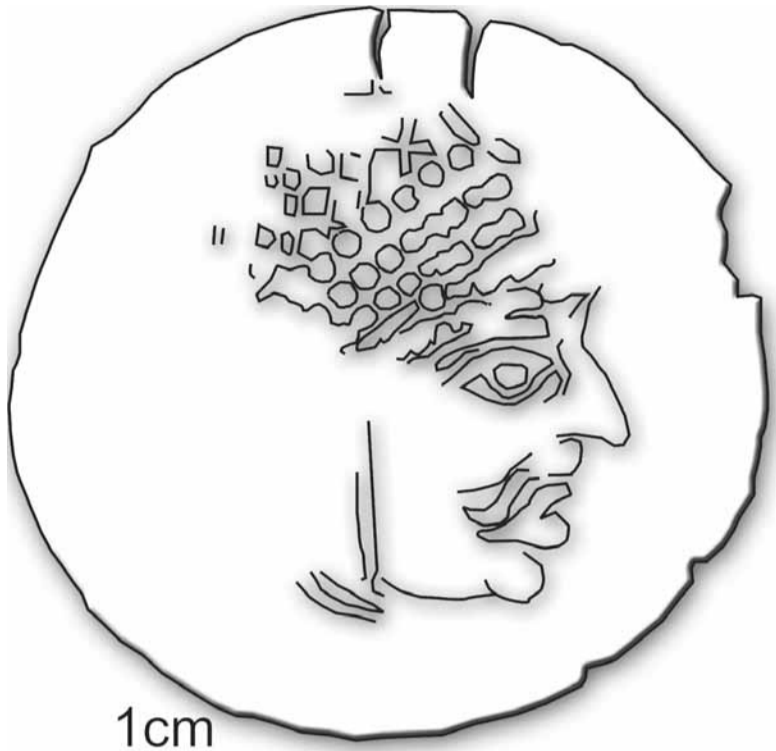
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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 2014

New Projects Unearth Kyzylorda's Ancient Past



By Galia Shimyrbayeva

An archaeological expedition is set to begin work in the Aral Sea region, an area called a "node of ethnogenesis of the Kazakhs," by prominent Soviet researcher Sergei Tolstoy.

The history of the Aral Sea region and the lower Syr Darya River dates back to remote ages. Here, Palaeolithic and Neolithic monuments of hunters, fishers and ancient farmers have been discovered, as well as the necropolis of Tegisken, where tribal chiefs of the Bronze Age were buried. The largest mound of Tegisken, not only a funerary monument but also an ancient temple, was as grand as Tamerlane's famous Gur Emir mausoleum in Uzbekistan.

The Aral Sea region and its land conceals a huge historical archive, which must be studied by archaeologists in order to create a comprehensive picture of the past and to organise an open-air museum, complete with ruins of ancient cities, burial mound complexes, dry channels and irrigation systems, which gave life to the land.

"This museum must be interesting and available not only to our citizens, but to tourists from other countries," said Kazakh archaeologist Karl Baipakov. "It must be created as quickly as the Western China-Western Europe highway. The longest section of this road runs through the territory of the region."

The scientist said that the Kyzylorda region could become one of Central Asia's tourist centres in the near future. This will allow them to develop tourist infrastructure like hotels, restaurants, entertainment, public transportation and communication, which will have a positive impact on the welfare of the city and the region on the whole. The region also contains historical areas, such as Zhetyasa, a tract with perfectly preserved ancient settle-

ments, necropolises and irrigation systems.

A scientific advisory board for studying cultural heritage was created under the oblast administration. The board, headed by Regional Governor Krymbek Kusherbayev, has already developed projects to give a complete and vivid historical picture of the region. The prospective excavations are closely related to the conservation of monuments and to the development of tourism, which will bring tangible economic benefits and burnish the historical image of Kazakhstan.

According to Baipakov, the prospects for archaeological research in the Aral Sea region are limitless. This primarily refers to the project, "From time immemorial to the stars," which organisers hope will have a significant economic effect on the region and become a milestone in domestic and international tourism. The main idea of the project is to create a park at the Baikonur Cosmodrome and use it to promote tourist interest there.

A globally significant project aims to get Silk Road monuments in the Syrdarya region inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List. Despite its long history and many historical and cultural sites, Central Asia is still under-represented on the list. So far, the five countries that make up the subregion have only 11 cultural sites inscribed on the list. In Kazakhstan, they are the Mausoleum of Khoja Akhmet Yasawi and the Tamgaly petroglyphs.

The country has now set the goal of inscribing 31 sites in the World Heritage List as part of a serial, multinational nomination. The first series of monuments nominated for inscription are the network of roads in the Tien Shan corridor of China, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, where Kazakhstan has eight historical and cultural heritage sites.

Another project will study the



Saka culture, including its ancient capital, the Chirik Rabat settlement. The findings are expected to contribute to the understanding of the first stage of urbanisation associated with the formation of the Saka state.

One project will explore the history of the Oghuz tribes in the region. The Oghuz tribes, who created their own state in the Middle Ages, played an important role in the history of the Middle East and in the ethnogenesis of such modern nations as the Turks, Azeris, Turkmen, Gagauz and Kazakh peoples.

This project hopes to shed light on issues of their history, economy, social life and ethnogeny. The project has already attracted interest from Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan and Turkey.

According to Baipakov, the project will conduct large-scale excavations of the Dzhankent (1-13th centuries) and Myntobe (13-18th centuries) settlements.

Baipakov says it is necessary to conduct archaeological examinations of all projects under construction: roads, oil and gas pipelines,

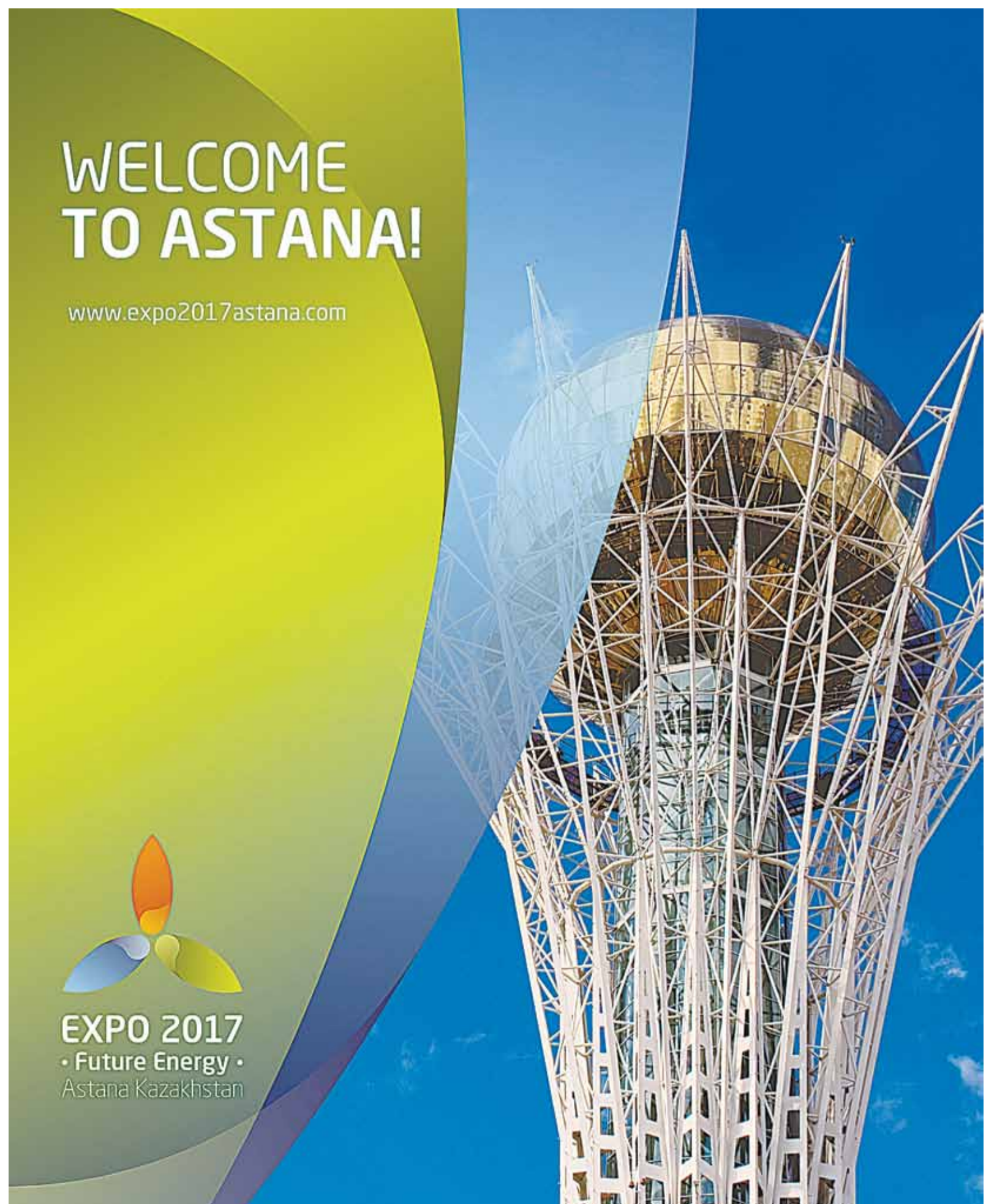
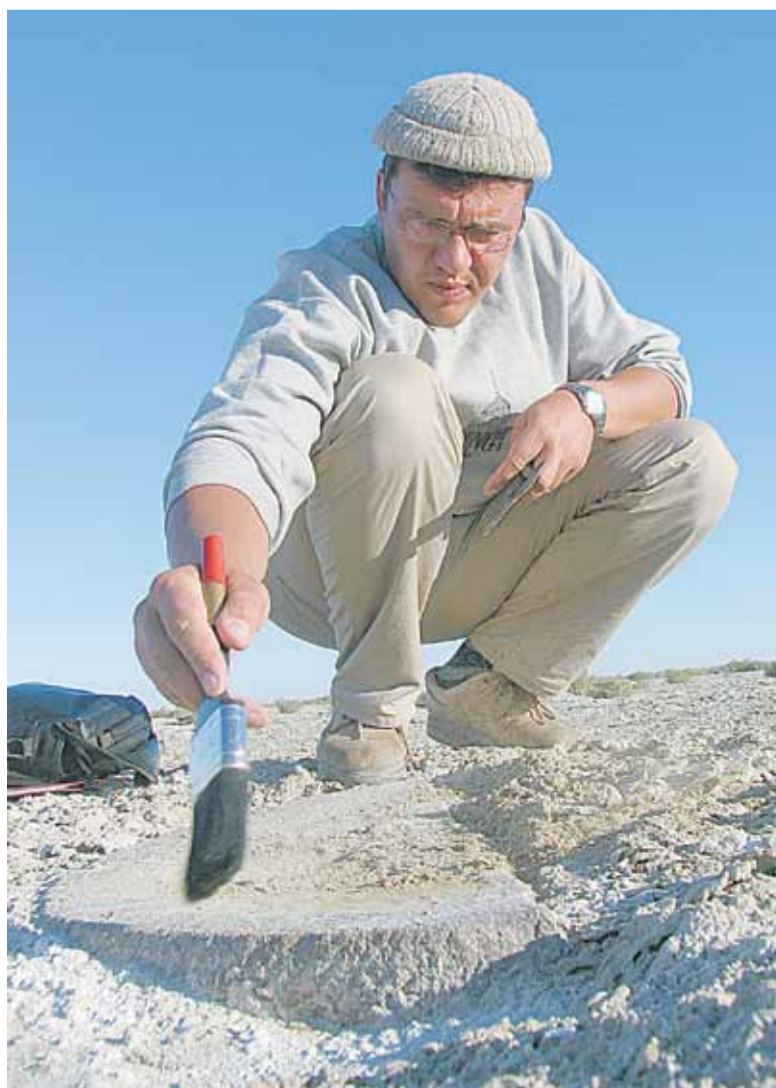
channels, agricultural areas, the sites of probable mineral deposits and construction work.

"We need regular monitoring of such works. It is necessary to examine the sites that fall within the risk zone, which may be irretrievably lost," said the scientist.

It is planned in the near future to publish a book in Kazakh, Russian and English, dedicated to the rich historical and cultural heritage of the Kyzylorda region. It will describe the monuments of the Stone and Bronze Age, Saka burial

mounds, settlements and cemeteries of the Kanguiy people and medieval cities on the Silk Road and the items found within them.

Some chapters of the book will be devoted to Kazakh applied arts, including carpet and felt production, ornaments, clothing, headgear and jewellery. Kazakh art preserves the artistic traditions of the Saka, Usun, Kanguiy, ancient Turk, Oghuz and Kipchak peoples. The edition will be illustrated with graphic materials, maps and aerial and satellite photos.



WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 2014

Barys Stage Comeback to Keep Gagarin Cup Series at 1:2, Keeping Chances Alive

By Ilyas Omarov

ASTANA – The first playoff round of the KHL (Continental Hockey League) for the Gagarin Cup (equivalent of the Stanley Cup in the NHL) has already produced upsets. Two-time cup winners Ak Bars from Kazan and Dynamo Moscow have already been eliminated.

Only one team from Ufa, Salavat Yulayev, made it to the second playoff round by beating Torpedo and now faces Barys from Kazakhstan. Barys made it to the second round for the first time in the club's history by ousting Avtomobilist from Yekaterinburg.

The first two games against Salavat Yulayev were held in Astana to a sold-out arena. In the first encounter, the home team lived up to expectations. The squad in blue jerseys (Barys) scored first. The first line opened up a good play and defenseman Mike Lundin scored. In the second period, Salavat Yulayev had a power play, thus raising the tempo of the game. But Salavat Yulayev didn't score until the third period and then quickly dispatched Barys in overtime.

In game two, also in Kazakhstan's capital, the first period ended 2:1 with the away team ahead. Astana allowed two goals and scored one. Kristián Kudroč, the two-metre giant scored his



Barys made a strong comeback in the game after trailing early to win and tie the series 1:1.

first very important and very timely goal for Barys. In the second period, the blue jerseys scored on a power play. Presuring the opponent, creating a number of good opportunities and eventually setting up Konstantin Rudenko, who didn't

miss his chance to score. The tying goal energized the Barys who continued to pressure the net. Andrey Gavrilin successfully took a face off and gave Kam Barker a chance to take good aim while Konstantin Pushkaryov screened the goal tender and the puck found its way into the net's far corner. This happened as the last minute was announced. The away team had one more chance but the experienced Barys keeper Vitaly Eremyev was on guard.

The highlight reel was the third period goal by Andrey Gavrilin. It was his first goal this season, but an important one as it gave Barys a comfortable lead. However, after that goal, the game so intensified that 10 minutes before the end there were 30 minutes of penalties and one 10-minute penalty. Salavat Yulayev's penalty box looked like a Starbucks line at rush hour. At the end of the period when the teams finally got back into a five-on-five format, Dustin Boyd scored again for Barys making the final 5:2.

Barys made a strong comeback in the game after trailing early to win and tie the series 1:1.

On March 24, Barys lost its first away match in Ufa, 5:2, making the series score 1:2.

The next game is scheduled for March 25. If the series is tied, there will be at least one more game in Astana on March 27.

Kazakh Pilot Breaks Through to Formula Russia

By Jan Furst

Seventeen-year-old Lyubov Andreyeva is young, promising and fast enough to earn a seat in Formula Russia, the equivalent of Formula 3, which starts May 10 in Kazan, Russia. She will be the first Kazakh driver to represent Kazakhstan in a Formula Russia race.

Andreyeva raced karts since her childhood and won numerous championships in Kazakhstan. Currently, she is readying for her first start and looking for sponsorship.

Formula Russia will include nine stages this year, with back to back stages in Sochi (Sept. 27-28 and Oct. 11-12)

where the champion will be unveiled.

Until then, young talents like Andreyeva will try to win one of the series' nine races and gain attention. Formula Russia is considered one way for young drivers to advance to Formula 2 and eventually to Formula 1.

Formula Russia racing is based

on the Italian chassis Tatuus FA010 with a four-cylinder petrol turbo engine with a capacity of 1.4 litres, 180 horsepower and 250 Nm torque. All the cars are the same and that helps spot the fastest driver on the track. Race car driving is hugely popular in Russia and the country hopes to attract Formula 1 events.



Lyubov Andreyeva is promising and fast enough to earn a spot in Formula Russia.

MMA Fighter Dzhetpisov Knocks Out American Veteran



Shakhmaral Dzhetpisov knocked out "Snowman" in extra time at the Diamond Fight – Friendship Tournament in Almaty.

By Almir Isakov

ALMATY – Kazakh Mixed Martial Arts fighter Shakhmaral Dzhetpisov knocked out "Snowman" Jeff Monson in extra time on March 22 at the Diamond Fight – Friendship Tournament in Almaty.

During the tournament held as part of the national Nauryz celebrations, Dzhetpisov outlasted Monson in a close fight in the 90 kilogrammes category.

The 43-year-old American is a two-time winner of the Abu Dhabi Combat Club (ADCC) Submission Wrestling World Championship and a No Gi Brazilian jiu-jitsu world champion. He has also competed in the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC), PRIDE, Dream, Strikeforce, M-1 Challenge, Sengoku, Impact FC, and Israel FC. And, despite his age, he didn't make it easy for Dzhetpisov. Monson constantly sought to wrestle Dzhetpisov to avoid the Kazakh's longer reach.

Two, five-minute rounds were

not enough to determine the winner of the fight and a third deciding round was fought. The younger Kazakh had the obvious advantage at that stage of the fight and after a heavy punching exchange, managed to knock Monson out and even threw a few more punches while Monson was down before the referee rushed to end the fight.

For Monson, who is approaching the end of his professional career, this was his 18th loss and fifth straight. A fight between Monson and Chaban Ka planned for April 4 could also be in jeopardy for Monson, as the American sought medical attention and could not get to his feet for a few minutes after the hard knockout.

In Monson's earlier career, he faced the sport's most intimidating fighters and, to Kazakh audiences, he is best known for fights with the Yemelianenko brothers. He lost to Fyodor Yemelianenko in 2011 and beat Alexander Yemelianenko a year later.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26, 2014

Country Celebrates Nauryz



During the celebration, Nauryz kozhe is offered to all guests in any Kazakh city or village. Other traditional Kazakh meals, such as beshbarmak, kuyrdak, boursaks and many types of meals made from milk are also offered.

Continued from Page B1

Nauryz means "new day" and symbolises goodness and wealth, happiness and love. It is also a day that unites because it is celebrated by many nations.

During Nauryz celebrations, past offenses are forgiven and forgotten and everybody makes a wish to leave negativity behind and bring renewal to the New Year.

During the Nauryz holiday in Kazakhstan, large and small cities, as well as villages become festival centres, felt yurts – traditional nomad houses – are erected in city centres and a rich

dastarkhan (table) is laid down in each of them.

City squares are filled with yurts and live performances. Visitors can learn about Kazakh culture, the lifestyle of nomads and see people wearing beautiful traditional clothing. They can also listen to Kazakh songs and play national musical instruments. Traditional gifts and souvenirs are also sold in the squares.

Young people usually also gather around Altybakan, a large hanging swing with colourful decorations, where songs are sung and traditional games are played. During Nauryz, many famous stars also give concerts in cities

and the holiday is completed with fireworks.

The main dish served during Nauryz is Nauryz kozhe, which is also the main symbol of the holiday. Nauryz kozhe is special for its unique recipe. Traditionally, seven ingredients are added to Nauryz kozhe. They vary, but usually include water, meat, salt, milk or yoghurt, one type of grain, chosen from rice, corn or wheat and others. Seven ingredients symbolise seven virtues, such as joy, success, intelligence, health, wealth, agility and security.

During the celebration, the kozhe is offered to all guests in any Kazakh city or village. Other

traditional Kazakh meals, such as beshbarmak, kuyrdak, boursaks and many types of meals made from milk (yoghurt, kurt, cream, butter and cheese) are also offered.

Between 1926-1988, when Kazakhstan was a Soviet Socialist Republic, Nauryz was not officially celebrated in the republic. In 2009, three days beginning each March 21 were declared national holidays in Kazakhstan.

On Sept. 30, 2009, Nauryz was included in the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by the UNESCO. Since then, March 21 has been known as the International Day of Nauryz.

Astana Hosts UN Disarmament Resolution Seminar



Representative from Kazakhstan, Ambassador at Large Barlybai Sadykov (r) is delivering his speech at the UN Disarmament Resolution Seminar.

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Resolution 1540 imposes binding obligations on all states to adopt legislation to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery, and establish appropriate domestic controls over related materials to prevent their illicit trafficking. It also encourages enhanced international cooperation on such efforts.

The resolution also affirms support for multilateral treaties that seek to eliminate or prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and the importance for all states to implement them fully. It reiterates that none of the obligations in Resolution 1540 shall conflict with or alter the rights and obligations of States Parties to the

Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention, or the Biological Weapons Convention or alter the responsibilities of the IAEA and OPCW.

Kazakhstan has consistently pursued non-proliferation of WMD and adopted measures to implement provisions of Resolution 1540.

In 2011, Kazakhstan held a similar seminar to strengthen cooperation and implementation of the resolution at the regional level.

According to the country's foreign ministry, Kazakhstan is a candidate for non-permanent membership on the UN Security Council in 2017-2018 and, if elected, intends to promote non-proliferation and nuclear security within this UN body.

Indian Embassy Celebrates ITEC Day in Astana



By Ruffiya Ospanova

ASTANA – The Embassy of India in Kazakhstan celebrated ITEC Day 2014 (Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation) on March 18. More than 120 people attended the event, including ITEC Alumni, senior officers from the Kazakhstan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, representatives from the Ministry of Finance, Kaztromptom and Kazakh defence organisations and members of the media, cultural organisations, universities and the Indian community. Indian Ambassador Ashok Kumar Sharma gave the opening remarks and talked about the ITEC Programme.

Raghu Gururaj, first secretary of the Embassy of India welcomed the participants of the event and spoke about ITEC.

According to Gururaj, the ITEC programme was launched in 1964 as a bilateral assistance programme of the Indian government. It is an earnest attempt by India to share the fruits of its socio-economic and technological achievements with other developing countries. The ITEC programme helps partner countries in creating skilled manpower, capacity building and technology transfer.

"Kazakhstan has been a valued and active ITEC Partner since

1992. Since then, the Embassy of India has provided over 800 ITEC scholarships to Kazakhstan citizens who have successfully received various types of training in India. The number of ITEC scholarship slots open to Kazakhstan citizens has increased over the years; we are currently offering 55 ITEC scholarships, most of which are being utilised," he said.

Graduates of ITEC also took the floor and shared their experiences in India and told about the programme's advantages.

At the event, it was also noted that India is offering several scholarships for defence personnel. The most popular courses have been in information technology, English proficiency, financial management, agricultural practices, parliamentary studies, defence, environmental technology and biotechnology.

In total, 156 countries in Asia, Eastern Europe, Central Asia, Africa and Latin America are ITEC partners. India spends about \$12 million annually on ITEC activities and, since 1964, has provided over \$2 billion worth of technical assistance through the programme.

The ITEC programme includes five components: training in India, projects and project related activities, such as feasibility studies and

consulting services, deputation of Indian experts abroad and study tours and aid for disaster relief (ADR).

Across India, 45 institutions have been conducting 206 training courses. The training courses cover a wide variety of subjects, including information technology (IT), parliamentary studies, accounting & finance, mass communication, English language, rural development, teacher training and bank management.

India also offers defence training services in some of its prestigious institutions, such as the National Defence College in New Delhi, the National Defence Services Staff College, in Wellington in Tamil Nadu, the National Defence Academy and the Indian Military Academy. The training covers a number of fields such as security and strategic studies, defence management, artillery, electronics, mechanical engineering, marine and aeronautical engineering, anti-marine warfare, hydrography, logistics and management, as well as qualitative assurance services. More than 150 defence personnel from Kazakhstan have taken advantage of these scholarships.

Under this scheme, the Indian government provides return airfare, accommodation, and tuition fees along with a daily living allowance.

"This programme has contributed in its own way to the strengthening of our overall bilateral relations with Kazakhstan and we look forward to utilising the full potential of the programme, and to its further strengthening, in the years ahead," Gururaj said.

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