



# Kazakhstan News Bulletin

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## Say it in Kazakh:

*Where are you  
from? --- Siz qai  
elden keldiniz?  
I am an American.  
--- Men  
Amerikandykpyn.  
I am a Canadian. -  
-- Men  
Kanadalykpyn.  
I am from the  
United States of  
America. --- Men  
Amerika Qorama  
Shtattarynanmyn.*

## **Токаев: Kazakhstan Calls for Greater Central Asia**

Kassymzhomart Tokaev, Kazakhstan's Foreign Minister said his Government supports the idea of a Greater Central Asia as a way to promote intra-regional trade and development and reconnect Afghanistan to the regional and global economy.

The Foreign Minister, speaking at an international conference in Kabul, "Partnership, Trade and Development in Greater Central Asia", on April 1, said: "As a regional leader, Kazakhstan can and is willing to bring meaningful contribution to the restoration of Afghanistan and creation of a Greater Central Asia, which we view as a civilizing and economic entity aimed at ensuring security and development of the region."

The term "Greater Central Asia" has recently come into political use as including the five traditional countries of this region, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, and, now, Afghanistan. The term reflects a growing desire by countries of the region and beyond to create favorable conditions for a revived Silk Road, connecting the economies of Central Asia, the Middle East and South Asia.

According to Tokaev, the cumulative economic potential of the Central Asian countries is high. The region boasts significant human, natural and industrial resources. Approximately 84 million people live there, and the aggregate volume of the region's gross domestic product totals more than US\$100 billion annually. Kazakhstan estimates there are at least 100 projects and development programs in Central Asia today implemented jointly by regional states, donor states and the international institutions.

Tokaev noted that to achieve the ambitious goal of developing a Greater Central Asia, efforts need to be focused on promotion of regional trade, development of energy resources and of regional transportation infrastructure.

For these efforts to succeed "serious barriers and obstacles" must be removed, Tokaev said. These include a lack of coordination of efforts among the countries in the region and the international community to develop Greater Central Asia, the continuing elements of instability in some countries, as well as differing economic priorities, laws and other complicating factors.



**Presidents Nursultan Nazarbayev (left) and Vladimir Putin dedicate the monument to Abai in Moscow.  
See story page two.**

Fighting drug production and trafficking from Afghanistan and restoring peace and stability to this country are of “vital importance” for stability and sustainable development in the region, Tokaev stressed.

The Kazakh Foreign Minister said “efforts of the regional states should be directed at overcoming the existing problems and orchestrating coordinated approaches to creating a free trade zone and regional common market.”

In addition to integrating Afghanistan into programs such as the UN Special Program for Economies of Central Asia (SPECAs), he noted said one of the specific projects which can help achieve the goal of greater regional trade and development, is a project to construct a North-South highway from Almaty through Bishkek, Osh, Dushanbe, Kabul, and Kandagar into Pakistan. It is currently being jointly financed by the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the United States and Japan.

He confirmed Kazakhstan’s willingness to provide comprehensive assistance to Afghanistan, including bilateral and multilateral cooperation in fighting drug trafficking and organized crime, assistance in reconstruction of the infrastructure, and training of the national cadres.

According to Dr. S. Frederick Starr, chairman of the Washington-based Central Asia and Caucasus Institute which co-organized the conference, it signaled “the shift from purely local approaches to development to a broader vision that seeks to place Greater Central Asia once more as the trade hub connecting the most vigorous economies in Europe, Asia, and the Middle East.”

The Kabul conference, held under the auspices of the Afghan Government, was also attended by U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Boucher.

## **Nazarbayev’s Moscow Visit Generates Stronger Ties**

President Nursultan Nazarbayev’s official visit to Russia on April 3-5, his first since his inauguration last January, produced tangible results and stronger ties between the two countries which share the world’s longest land border and more than 300 years of history.

The President’s itinerary included talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin, signing of multiple agreements and a speech to the Russian State Duma. In the Duma speech, Nazarbayev said “Kazakhstan is interested in strengthening the strategic partnership with Russia, and we see mutual interest in Russia. We have huge potential in all areas of cooperation: security, industry and energy, science and culture.”

One of the agreements reached after talks with the Russian President cleared the way for launching Kazakhstan’s first space satellite KAZSAT by June of this year. Another set of agreements prolonged Russia’s lease for several weapons firing ranges in Kazakhstan. Yet another agreement outlined prospects for cooperation between one of Kazakhstan’s largest industrial conglomerates, the Eurasian Industrial Association, and the Vneshekonombank of Russia.

Following his talks with Putin, Nazarbayev announced Kazakhstan and Russia had agreed on the expansion of the Caspian Pipeline Consortium’s pipeline to its full projected throughput capacity of 67 million tons of oil annually. Currently, the 950-mile pipeline from Tengiz, the world’s sixth largest oil field in western Kazakhstan, transports 28 million tons of oil to the Russian Black Sea port of Novorossiysk, from where the crude is shipped by tankers to markets in Europe and beyond. In addition to Russia and Kazakhstan, with 24 and 19 percent in the pipeline respectively, U.S. companies such as Chevron and ExxonMobil are shareholders in the pipeline and have been using it since 2001.

Another energy related agreement reached at the meeting was the decision of Kazakhstan and Russia to jointly develop the Kurmangazy field located in the Caspian Sea with a 50-50 split.

As part of the visit, the two presidents jointly dedicated a monument to Abai Kunanbai, considered the greatest Kazakh poet and philosopher. “The fact that there will be a monument to Abai in Moscow is not just paying homage to the past, but is a symbol of truly historic perspectives and hopes that Kazakhstan and Russia have regarding each other,” the Kazakh President said.

A monument to Russian poet Alexander Pushkin will be erected in Astana later this year.

## **New Bolashak Specialties Reflect Growing Economic Diversification and International Ties**

The commission overseeing Kazakhstan's prized Bolashak scholarship program this week approved new specialties to be supported by it setting new directions.

The new list of Bolashak supported scholarships reflects the growing impetus in the country's priorities of diversifying the economy beyond raw materials extraction sector, as well as the expansion of ties to the world economy.

The list includes specialties such as international commercial arbitration, intellectual property protection, hospitality industry, insurance, as well as forestry, construction and technical exploitation of aircraft and their engines.

In the past, the majority of Bolashak students were getting their masters' degrees in business administration, international economy and international relations, finance and banking. The focus then shifted to more technical specialties such as computer science, oil and gas exploration and development, and geology.

Bolashak was established as a presidential scholarship for Kazakh students to get education abroad in 1993 and it is offered as a complete financial package. By 2005, the program had financed a total of 800 students who mostly got their masters from universities in the U.S., Britain and Germany. In 2005, the scope of the program was expanded 30 times, from approximately 100 to 3,000 students supported by the Government each year. In that year, the program also expanded to cover bachelor's degrees and Ph.D.'s.

## **ISTC Approves Four Projects in Kazakhstan**

The International Science and Technology Center (ISTC) approved financing for four new projects by Kazakh scientists worth US\$1.1 million at its recent board meeting in Moscow.

The ISTC, established by the U.S., EU, Japan, Canada, Russia and South Korea, as a nonproliferation program in November 1992, has helped hundreds of former weapons of mass destruction scientists in Russia, Kazakhstan and other former Soviet states find more peaceful and profitable applications for their expertise. Through its political, legal and financial frameworks, the ISTC contributes to fundamental research, international programs and innovation, and commercialization, by linking the demands of international markets with a pool of scientific talent available in research institutes in these countries.

Kazakhstan, which had been home to key elements of nuclear and biological weapons programs of the former Soviet Union, joined the ISTC in 1995. Since then, Kazakh scientists have received grants worth in excess of US\$50 million.

The four Kazakh projects recently approved may be beneficial in solar energy production, medicine, and the oil and gas industry. They include:

- Developing electric concretion of thin films of semiconductors to be used in the creation of highly effective solar elements.
- Exploring new antibiotics from actinomycetes in Kazakhstan's soils which can be used to treat resistant staphylococci infections.
- Monitoring brucellosis in humans and animals in Kazakhstan.
- Complex inspection and development of technologies to liquidate exploratory oil wells in the flooding zone by the Caspian Sea in the Mangistau region of Kazakhstan.

## **Things to Watch:**

- A new Theater of Satire and Humor opens in Almaty this weekend with plays and parodies of politicians, cultural performers and the arts.

- The fifth annual Eurasian Media Forum will take place in Almaty April 20-22 bringing together more than 300 journalists, media experts and opinion leaders from across the world.
  - The fifth annual festival, *Jazz from A to Z*, will take place in Almaty from April 27 through 30 gathering together performers from countries Kazakhstan, the United States, France, Germany, Japan, Turkey, and Kyrgyzstan.
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