



# Kazakhstan News Bulletin

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*In this issue:*

**Nazarbayev Offers Kazakhstan as Model for Iraq's National Development**

**President Nazarbayev Visits Jordan to Strengthen Political, Economic Ties**

**"Borat" Movie Hot Topic as 6<sup>th</sup> Annual EAMF Begins**

## **Nazarbayev Offers Kazakhstan as Model for Iraq's National Development**

Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbayev said that Iraq today has much in common with Kazakhstan 15 years ago and suggested that Kazakhstan be a model for future Iraqi development.

In an article for the *Spectator*, a British news magazine, said that both countries have suddenly emerged from authoritarian political regimes, Muslim majority populations, substantial oil reserves, and have been subject to political change from external forces. When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, Kazakhstan faced numerous and political challenges, just like Iraq today, Nazarbayev said.

Yet Kazakhstan has made dramatic economic and political progress since independence, particularly in recent years. In particular, Kazakhstan has privatized more than 80% of its economy and is likely to become one of the world's top five oil producing countries over the next decade. Additionally, in the past five years, Kazakhstan has reduced the number of people living below the poverty line from 40 to 16 per cent and achieved 10 percent growth or more each year during the same period, Nazarbayev said.

The President said that much of Kazakhstan's successes came from the fact that Kazakhstan's government made maintaining stability and instituting economic reforms top priorities.

"I put economic reform before democratic reform, not because I judged it to be more important but because I knew that democratic reform would stand a much greater chance of success if matters were prioritized in that way," he noted.

Kazakhstan has succeeded in becoming a more democratic nation by instituting reforms gradually, Nazarbayev said. "We accept that past elections have not been flawless, but at each election our democratic institutions run stronger," Nazarbayev said.

Kazakhstan, who has been a staunch ally of the United States and the West in fight against terror, and who has strongly supported the U.S.-led coalition in Iraq, said these lessons from Kazakhstan's history should be kept in mind when rebuilding the nation of Iraq.

"Nation-building cannot be achieved on the basis of rigid timetables or utopian blueprints; nor can it be a wholly top-down process," Nazarbayev said.

## **President Nazarbayev Visits Jordan to Strengthen Political, Economic Ties**

Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbayev visited Jordan this week at the invitation of the Middle Eastern country's King Abdullah II Bin-Husayn.

During the two day visit, the President and the King held made agreements strengthen economic and cultural ties and to discuss recent international developments.

Talks between Nazarbayev and Abdullah will help to increase foreign investment and to improve trade between the two countries. Additionally, both leaders reviewed the latest developments in the Middle East and Central Asian regions.

The two leaders reiterated their support for the Iraqi's government's efforts to build a stable, fully reconciled nation. They also discussed efforts to solve the conflict between Israel and Palestine in accordance with international resolutions.

During the visit, the first meeting of the Kazakhstan-Jordan intergovernmental commission for trade, economic, cultural, and humanitarian cooperation was held in the Jordanian capital of Amman.

An intergovernmental commission was formed in November 2005, when King Abdullah visited Kazakhstan. In addition to the commission, President Nazarbayev and King Abdullah signed an agreement to form a partnership between Amman and Kazakhstan's new capital Astana.

President Nazarbayev's visit to Jordan came at the same time as U.S. President George W. Bush visited the country, where Bush met with Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki and rejected calls for U.S. troop withdrawal from Iraq as unrealistic.

## **“Borat” Movie Hot Topic for Next Eurasian Media Forum**

At the first briefing of the 6<sup>th</sup> annual Eurasian Media Forum (EAMF) in Almaty last week, journalists from the National Press Club in Kazakhstan met to announce the dates for the EAMF's next annual conference and also took time out to discuss the movie “Borat.”

At annual EAMF conferences, local and international journalists, politicians, academic experts and business leaders meet to support professional development of news media in the region where the European and Asian continents meet. Journalists and other professionals discuss how the regional events affect the news media, and how, in turn, news media affect regional events.

The 6<sup>th</sup> annual EAMF will be held in Almaty on April 19-21, 2007. Discussion topics will include news coverage of events in Iraq and other areas of the Middle East, the implication of the nuclear policies of Iran and North Korea, and the status of free speech regulations in the Central Asian region.

Participating media include CNN International, RNA Novosti, International Herald Tribune, and Al Jazeera International. The first five Eurasian Media Forum conferences, also held in Almaty, were attended by more than 500 people from 60 different countries. The EAMF conference in April will feature lectures, interviews, debates, and other forms of discussion.

EAMF briefings, which are held every two months, allow organizers opportunities to make logistical decisions and to discuss pertinent world events as they occur. During the November briefing, the main topic of discussion was the movie “*Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan.*”

The movie stars Sacha Baron Cohen, who plays a bumbling journalist from Kazakhstan who visits America. Since its November release, the movie has drawn global attention to Kazakhstan. At a recent press conference, Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbayev laughed off the film and invited Cohen to visit the real Kazakhstan.

In addition to Kazakhstan, countries in the Eurasian region include Turkey, Russia, Georgia, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan. To prepare for the EAMF, forum organizers held meetings in London, Hong Kong, Istanbul, and Moscow earlier this year.

For more information about the EAMF, visit the EAMF Web site at [www.eamedia.org](http://www.eamedia.org).

## Things to Watch:

- The Embassy has uploaded on [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) a new video, *Kazakhstan – Undiscovered, Untouched, Unforgettable*. If you would like to see it, please click [here](#).
  - Fifteen million people in Kazakhstan will celebrate the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the country's independence on December 16. Major festivities are planned across the country.
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