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Letters to the Editor

Anniversary and progress in Kazakhstan

Kanat B. Saudabayev, Ambassador of Kazakhstan, Washington

Today, the people of Kazakhstan will celebrate the 14th anniversary of our independence. In a short period of time, we have turned one of the most backward of the former Soviet republics into the most dynamic and prosperous nation in Central Asia with one of the world's fastest growing economies.

Kazakhstan has become known as a good example of getting rid of weapons of mass destruction, a strong advocate of nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation, and an active participant in the fight against new threats to the world. Kazakhstan has become a major oil producer and exporter. Today Kazakhstan is a model of harmony and respect among our population of 100 ethnic groups and 40 religions. Finally, Kazakhstan, as a recognized leader in economic and democratic development in its region, demonstrates a model of evolutionary development for transitional nations.

These achievements are largely due to the policies of President Nursultan Nazarbayev, and our people have supported him. On Dec. 4, in an unprecedented open and competitive election in Kazakhstan ("Kazakhstan votes," Editorial, Dec. 4), an overwhelming majority voted to re-elect Mr. Nazarbayev.

Today, Kazakhstan enters a new stage in our growth. We face an ambitious goal of expediting economic and political modernization and want to propel Kazakhstan into the ranks of the world's most competitive nations. We are very optimistic about our future, and believe that with the support of our friends and partners we will achieve our goal.

We are deeply grateful to the United States for its support and friendship over the years of our independence. Kazakhstan and the United States are bound together by common values of freedom and democracy, and a commitment to prosperity and security for our people. Our countries are firm allies in the fight against terrorism and partners in economic development.

In a recent phone call to Mr. Nazarbayev, President Bush congratulated him on his victory in the election. The two presidents expressed a common interest in developing the strategic partnership between our nations, and we look forward to the future of that relationship with great optimism.

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News Bulletin of the Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the USA and Canada

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