



# *Kazakhstan's Echo*

A publication of the Embassy of Kazakhstan to the USA and Canada  
with views and comments on developments in and around Kazakhstan

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## **President Nazarbayev: Kazakhstan Stands on the Threshold of Major Breakthrough in Development**

President Nursultan Nazarbayev delivered his annual state of the nation address to the people of Kazakhstan on March 1 presenting his “Strategy of Kazakhstan’s joining the world’s 50 most competitive countries.”

This document marked a new stage in social and economic modernization and political democratization in Kazakhstan. It also confirmed the continuity in Kazakhstan’s foreign policy priorities and the country’s desire to remain a responsible international partner.

Below are the key messages from President Nazarbayev’s address.

*At right:* President Nazarbayev delivers his address in Kazakhstan’s Parliament in Astana on March 1, 2006.



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Kazakhstan’s economy will continue to develop based on respect and protection of private property rights and contractual relations, initiative and entrepreneurship of all members of society.

Our goals:

- Building a free, open and democratic society; a modern secular state which guarantees full equality for all religions and inter-religious harmony.
- Preserving and developing the ancient traditions, language and culture of the Kazakh people while also providing interethnic and intercultural harmony and progress of the multi-ethnic peoples of Kazakhstan.
- Strengthening a law and order state which is based on a system of checks and balances.

Kazakhstan has been and will remain a rightful and responsible member of the international community, carrying out important functions to provide geopolitical stability and regional security.

To move the country into the group of the world's most competitive and dynamically growing countries, Kazakhstan will pursue the following seven priorities:

- **Successful integration into the world economy;**
- **Further modernization and diversification of Kazakhstan's economy as a basis for sustainable economic growth;**
- **Developing a modern social policy, protecting the most vulnerable groups of the population and supporting economic development.**

In addition to the fact, that since 2002 annual budget expenditures for social protection and benefits have risen more than twice (to reach 362 billion tenge), as of 2007 wages of government supported workers will be increased on average by 30%, while as of July 1, 2006, special state allowances for the most vulnerable members of the society will also be increased.

- **Developing modern education, with a continuous increase of qualification and retraining of personnel bringing further prosperity of culture of the people of Kazakhstan;**
- **Further development of democracy and modernization of our political system.**

According to the National Program of Democratic Reforms currently under deliberation, Kazakhstan will continue large scale political reforms in the country aimed at increasing the efficiency of political system and the state structure of Kazakhstan. The state will take into account both general laws of building a democratic and prosperous state and the important cultural and historical features and traditions of our society.

As we develop our democratic traditions we should also envision a strict enough system to protect them, and we should put a firm barrier against the spread of religious extremism.

Nongovernmental organizations will actively participate in the execution of development programs in the country.

The State Commission on Democratization will play a crucial role in developing the National Program of Political Reforms

- **Implementation of a national security strategy which is adequate to modern threats and challenges.**

Strengthening the statehood, national sovereignty and unity of Kazakhstan will be implemented according to a new military doctrine which will include creating a professional army capable of rapid deployment of forces and supplies meeting top international standards.

Strengthening and broadening international cooperation in the fight against terrorism, organized crime, illegal proliferation of weapons, drug trafficking and other similar threats require Kazakhstan's active participation in the development and practical implementation of applicable international treaties and agreements.

A comprehensive national program of fighting corruption which is a threat to national security and social stability will be consistently implemented.

- **Further implementation of a balanced and responsible foreign policy reflecting the interests of Kazakhstan and the dynamics of regional and world developments.**

Our foreign policy priorities remain unchanged. Kazakhstan will always be a responsible and reliable international partner.

Development of strategic partnership with Russia on the basis of broad integration processes between our countries.

The Kazakhstan-Russia relationship is on a high level of confidence and strategic partnership. The Russian dimension is the most important priority in Kazakhstan's foreign policy.

Strengthening mutually beneficial cooperation with China.

We will continue to implement bilateral treaties on economic and political cooperation with the People's Republic of China. Economic cooperation will be reinforced by active political dialog on issues of international security.

Strengthening the high level mutual relations with the USA.

Kazakhstan and the USA have built relations of a long term and stable partnership which are characterized by a broad range of cooperation on issues of international energy stability and security, the fight against terrorism and religious extremism, and further democratic transformations.

The agenda for our relationship includes further development of economic cooperation, creating favorable conditions for attracting American investments and introducing advanced technologies to Kazakhstan.

It is necessary to strengthen our relations with the OSCE in solving modern problems and challenges, ensuring peace and security, and providing basic human rights and freedoms.

Cooperation with the countries of Central Asia.

It is important to keep a steady pace of regional integration. We have to develop comprehensive relations with neighboring countries in Central Asia with whom we share common culture and history.

As a country which ensured peace and interethnic and inter-religious harmony, Kazakhstan can serve to act as one of the centers of inter-cultural and inter-religious dialog at international level, and is ready to contribute to widening and deepening of the dialog of civilizations and strengthening the mutual understanding between the East and West.

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