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Kazakhstan Sends More Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan (More than 100 rail cars deliver 6,000 tons of rice to a war-torn country)

Customs Union Helps Bring about Salary Increase for State Employees (Kazakh government raises salaries for public employees from April 1, 2010)

Kazakhstan Raises Grain Exports, Plans Reform of Agriculture Subsidies (Government considers raising subsidy of agriculture)

Kazakh OSCE Chairmanship: Stronger Co-operation with Eastern Europe (Saudabayev visits Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, advances their work with OSCE)

Kazakh Chairmanship Sets Sights High (An OSCE magazine story by Sonya Yee)

Kazakhstan Sends More Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan



Kazakhstan has delivered 6,000 tons of rice as humanitarian assistance to the Afghan city of Hayraton

Kazakhstan has sent more humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan as the country continues to put its money where its mouth is when it comes to helping its regional neighbour.

Following a decision of the government in Astana, Kazakhstan's Ministry for Emergency Situations shipped six thousand tons of rice to the frontier Afghan city of Hayraton in the middle of March. A total of 101 rail cars were required to ship such quantity of rice.

From March 27 to 30, 65 rail cars with rice have passed through the Friendship bridge on the Uzbek-Afghan border across the Amu-Darya River and were unloaded in Afghanistan. On March 27, an official ceremony of transfer of the first rail car with the humanitarian assistance took place in Hayraton with the participation of official representatives of Afghanistan, employees of the Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Republic of Kazakhstan and Kazakh diplomats working in that country.

The chief of Department of Products Quality Control of the Ministry of Agriculture of Afghanistan M.Safi has accepted the cargo, along with officials from the Agency of

Emergency of Afghanistan and the Balkh province. In an interview with the national Afghan TV channel, they noticed that, according to the second vice-president of Afghanistan M.Halili, the humanitarian assistance from the brotherly Kazakhstan will be distributed to needy families all over the country.

Earlier, Kazakhstan supplied humanitarian aid to Afghanistan to the tune of 2,000 tons of wheat, 1,300 tons of dried milk, as well as financial support in the amount of 4 million dollars for building and reconstruction of roads, hospitals and schools. Last November, an agreement between governments Republic of Kazakhstan and Afghanistan on cooperation in education was signed, whereby Astana allocates 50 million dollars to educate 1,000 Afghan students at Kazakhstan's universities over the next several years beginning in 2010.

In his address to the London conference on Afghanistan in January, Kazakhstan's foreign minister Kanat Saudabayev said Astana's focus during its OSCE chairmanship would be on Afghanistan. One of the main subjects of a proposed OSCE summit this year, according to Kazakhstan's diplomats, could also be Afghanistan, where 43 out of 56 participating states already are engaged in one way or another.

Customs Union Helps Bring about Salary Increase for State Employees



The Customs Union brings about salary increase for state employees in Kazakhstan

Since April 1, all budget organizations in Kazakhstan have seen a substantial increase in financing, which means public service employees, in turn, are having their salaries raised by 25%.

In the meantime, the republic's budget revenues are expected to grow by almost 61 billion tenge this year, following Kazakhstan's entering the Customs Union with Russia and Belarus. As it turns out,

the newly created Customs Union promoted an opportunity to realize President Nazarbayev's task and raise salaries for public service workers three months earlier than planned.

Minister of Finance Bolat Zhamishev explained the news at a government meeting in Astana on March 30. In his words, Kazakhstan has allocated 53.8 billion tenge specifically for this measure of social support. These budget expenses will be covered by customs revenues, which are expected to grow by nearly 66 per cent after the Customs Union is fully operational.

"Surely enough, taking into account that the salary increase covers nearly one fourth of the total amount of national budget expenses, we may ensure the increase of the former only through the budget revenues growth," Zhamishev noted.

Compared with the same period last year, the receipts from customs duties for goods from the third countries have grown by 7.6 billion tenge, while value added tax revenues on imports from Russia and Belarus have increased by 7 billion tenge, he stressed.

President Nursultan Nazarbayev first announced the intention to raise student state grants and salaries for public service workers, including school teachers and healthcare employees, during his 2010 state-of-the-nation address.

The President said: “We are coherent in our actions. Last year, rates of pensions, grants, wages of employees of the state-financed organizations increased by 25%. A twenty-five per cent increase in pension rates from the first of January, and in grants and wages to public employees from the first of July is provided in the national budget for the current year. I believe positive economic growth dynamics last year allows us to carry out a 25% increase of grants and salaries to public employees three months earlier, as of April 2010”.

Addressing the government on Tuesday, Minister of Labour and Social Security Gulshara Abdykhalikova added nearly 1.4 million public service employees will see improvement in their earnings.

The average salary in the public service sector will rise from 43,883 tenge up to 54,510 tenge (US\$1 = 145 tenge). In particular, a minimum wage for teachers in Kazakhstan will now amount to 52,300 tenge, and 56,720 tenge for healthcare workers.

During the meeting, the participants also specified national budget for 2010 and considered electronic procurement regulations. The officials again reviewed general provisions of a revised 2010 budget, signed by President Nazarbayev a day earlier. A draft government resolution dealing with the realization of the country’s main financial document was at once approved by the ministers.

As a result, extra-budgetary resources will be allocated for implementation of the state program on intensified industrial and innovational development, as well as for preparation of the 2011 Winter Asian Games and equipping customs and border posts within the Customs Union.

“Today, all necessary resources have been made available, we have a clear understanding of the challenges now. We should immediately start active work on all fronts,” Prime Minister Karim Massimov concluded.

Kazakhstan Raises Grain Exports, Plans Reform of Agriculture Subsidies



Kazakhstan’s grain acreage will cover 16.7 million hectares in 2010

Kazakhstan’s grain export has grown to 5.5 million tons in March 2010, Minister of Agriculture Akylbek Kurishbayev said this week during a government meeting in Astana. In addition, this year the Kazakh producers are looking for an increase in grain acreage, whereas the government is changing its model of subsidizing the agrarian sector.

In 2010, grain acreage in Kazakhstan will cover 16.7 million hectares, which remains stable at last year’s level, the minister said. The general cultivation area is expected to expand through the growth of other priority crops. The government is planning to allocate extra 1.4

million hectares of land for oilseeds, which is 16 per cent more than last year.

“Provided we gather a good harvest, it will give us an opportunity to cover the requirements of the vegetable oil market of the country. We will see an increase of about 3 to 12 per cent in the cultivated acreage of potatoes, gourds, vegetable and roughage crops, and sugar beet as well,” Akylbek Kurishbayev noted.

He said some 90 per cent of tillage and sowing machines including tractors were ready for the spring sowing campaign. Moreover, a special diesel fuel price of 60-62 tenge per liter will be provided for agricultural producers throughout the sowing campaign.

Another important innovation in Kazakhstan’s agricultural sector involves significant changes in governmental support of farmers.

“At President Nursultan Nazarbayev’s instructions, the government is reinvigorating the role of subsidizing aimed at stimulating the development of agro-industrial complex. The latter includes providing better subsidizing conditions for farmers working with modern technologies, adhering to crop rotation system, modernizing their production and raising the genetic potential of cattle,” Minister Kurishbayev emphasized.

These steps arise from the necessity to diversify crop production, which remains one of the most urgent problems of farming agriculture in Kazakhstan and causes lopsided development of the industry.

As explained by the minister, as global grain reserves are limited and declining, demand for high-protein grain in export market will be constantly mounting. A country with the market economy can regulate these processes only through comprehensive governmental support, he said. As a result, the farmers sowing roughage crops will be subsidized by 30-85 per cent, while those growing oilseeds will get nine times more subsidies than the producers of grain and industrial crops.

The new model of subsidizing is reasonable enough, as Kazakhstan has not yet solved the problem of last year’s poor harvest sales. Despite a significant increase in Kazakhstan’s wheat export by 1.3 million tons in March 2010, as compared with the same period last year, the situation with grain sales remains difficult.

In 2009, Kazakhstan gathered 22.7 million tons of grain, one of the best harvests in the past five years. The country, however, has come across difficulties with grain sales. Major wheat importers from Kazakhstan, including former Soviet republics and the European Union, were stepping up their own wheat production. This situation negatively affected Kazakhstan’s domestic market: traders were in no hurry with grain purchases and assumed a wait-and-see posture. Due to the absence of grain shipments, elevators in the country’s major grain-growing regions have been overfilled with grain.

Akylbek Kurishbayev asked the government to seek early adoption of a resolution regarding raising the state subsidies from 20 to 40 US dollars per ton for the grain transportation to foreign markets through the territories of Russia and China. In addition to that, the Ministry of Agriculture is to allocate 10 more billion tenge for cheapening transportation, thus providing a chance to export another four million tons of grain until the new harvesting period.

Kazakh OSCE Chairmanship: Stronger Co-operation with Eastern Europe

OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Kazakh Secretary of State and Foreign Minister Kanat Saudabayev has visited Eastern European countries from 30 March to 1 April. During his three-day official trip, Kanat Saudabayev met with political leaders and representatives of political parties to discuss OSCE-related topics, including the work of the OSCE field operations.

Saudabayev in Minsk: Belarus to Contribute to Strengthening European Security

On the first day of his Eastern European tour in Belarus, Kanat Saudabayev met with President Alexander Lukashenko, Foreign Minister Sergei Martynov, the Chairperson of the Parliament Vladimir Andreychenko, and representatives of political parties and civil society.

President Lukashenko said Belarus strongly supports Kazakhstan's priority initiatives during its OSCE chairmanship and firmly believes they will be fully realized. Alexander Lukashenko expressed readiness of his country to participate in preparation of the OSCE Summit agenda, which is planned to take place in Astana this year.

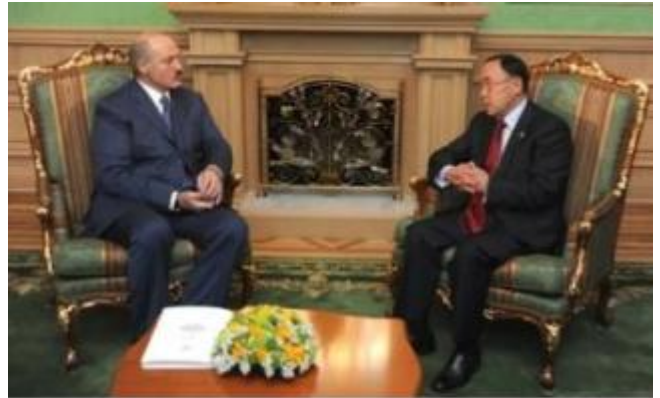
Kanat Saudabayev stressed Kazakhstan and Belarus were uniquely positioned, given their shared history and transition experience, to contribute to strengthening the Organization's work.

"The overarching goal of Kazakhstan's OSCE Chairmanship is to strengthen our common organization and increase its effectiveness and usefulness to the 56 participating States," Kanat Saudabayev said. He noted Belarus makes an important contribution to addressing security challenges such as trafficking in human beings and illegal migration, as well as with ensuring border security.

OSCE Chairperson-in-Office stressed the important role of Belarus in the economic and environmental dimension of the Organization's work, as chair of the economic and environmental committee of the Vienna-based OSCE Permanent Council, and the host country that ensured successful conduct of the Second Preparatory Conference to the 18th Economic and Environmental Forum. This conference was the first OSCE-wide event to take place in Belarus.

Following his meeting with Alexander Lukashenko, Minister Saudabayev emphasized Belarus's positive engagement in the OSCE and expressed gratitude for the support for Kazakhstan's initiative to hold an OSCE summit in 2010. He emphasized that the Organization stood ready to continue co-operation and provide assistance as requested.

"My meetings here were constructive and fruitful, and we had interesting discussions on how we can further deepen our partnership, also through the OSCE Office



Meeting with President Aleksandr Lukashenko, Kanat Saudabayev said the Organization is ready to continue co-operation with Belarus

Photo by Ilyas Omarov

in Minsk, which works in the country in accordance with its mandate and remains an important tool for efficient co-operation between the OSCE and Belarus.”

Meetings in Kyiv: OSCE-Ukraine Initiative Illustrates Tangible Co-operation



Kanat Saudabayev met the new leadership of Ukraine, including President Viktor Yanukovich, hailing the cooperation with OSCE and the recent presidential election

In Ukraine on March 31, Kanat Saudabayev met with President Viktor Yanukovich, Prime Minister Mykola Azarov, the Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada Volodymyr Lytvyn, Foreign Minister Kostyantyn Hryshenko and representatives of political parties. They discussed key aspects of the dialogue on European security between participating States of the Organization, and how the OSCE could support the domestic priorities of the new Ukrainian leadership.

“This is the first high level meeting between the OSCE and the new leadership of Ukraine,” Minister Saudabayev said. “Ukraine plays an important role in the region, and we intend to work together to achieve our common goal of strengthening mutual understanding and trust in the sphere of responsibility of our Organization within

the framework of the Corfu Process.”

“The recent presidential election in the country, which met most OSCE and international commitments according to the international observation mission’s interim report, is a victory of democracy in Ukraine, and the OSCE stands ready to provide further assistance as requested,” Saudabayev said at the news conference following the meetings.

Minister Saudabayev highlighted the fruitful co-operation between Ukraine’s authorities and the OSCE’s Project Co-ordinator acting in accordance with its mandate in such areas as promoting democratization and good governance, as well as combating corruption and human trafficking. He stressed the importance of joint activities, including a continuing large-scale project to dispose of thousands of tonnes of melange, a highly toxic obsolete rocket fuel component. More than 1,500 tonnes of melange have already been removed from Ukraine.

“The OSCE-Ukraine initiative is an excellent example of tangible and effective co-operation that contributes to the security of people living in the OSCE area,” said Saudabayev.

OSCE Chairperson meets Transdnistriean leadership, expresses firmest support for Moldova’s integrity

On April 1, the last day of his tour of East Europe, Kanat Saudabayev met with the Moldovan government in Chisinau and officials in Tiraspol. He urged the sides to

continue their dialogue and work towards renewing official talks on a comprehensive political solution to the Transdniestrian conflict.

“Kazakhstan’s 2010 OSCE Chairmanship is committed to building on the efforts of previous Chairmanships to address protracted conflicts in the OSCE area. We have seen positive developments in the Transdniestrian settlement process in recent months, including the consistent promotion of direct contacts and the resumption of the Expert Working Groups on Confidence-Building Measures,” Saudabayev said.



Kazakh and Moldovan Foreign Ministries have signed a memorandum of cooperation

“My meetings here have been encouraging and productive, and I urged the sides to continue their constructive dialogue. The 5+2 will meet in Astana in May at my invitation, and I am confident that we will be able to further build on the positive dynamic developed through the efforts of all involved in the process for the benefit of ordinary people.”

In Chisinau, Saudabayev met Acting President and Parliamentary Speaker Mihai Ghimpu, Prime Minister Vlad Filat, Deputy Prime Minister Victor Osipov, the Moldovan chief negotiator for Transdniestrian conflict resolution, and Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration Iurie Leanca. He also met representatives of the opposition Party of Communists. In Tiraspol, he met Transdniestrian leader Igor Smirnov.

During Kanat Saudabayev’s meeting with Iurie Leanca, the sides signed a memorandum of cooperation between the Moldovan and Kazakh Foreign Affairs Ministries. The agreement describes the joint steps that will be taken to solve the Transdniestrian dispute and to stimulate the economic development of the two countries. The Moldovan foreign minister appreciated the role played by the OSCE and other European partners in the settlement process and in identifying a solution that would be acceptable to all the parties.

The OSCE Chairperson-in-Office also praised the constructive role played by the OSCE Mission to Moldova in the Transdniestrian settlement process. He emphasized that the OSCE, through the Mission and its Institutions, including the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities and the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, remained an important resource at the disposal of the country to support its democratic development.

Kazakh Chairmanship Sets Sights High

The following is a story by Sonya Yee, Press and Public Information Officer at the OSCE Secretariat in Vienna, which was published in OSCE Magazine, issue #1 of 2010.

Few OSCE Chairmanships have been ushered in with quite as much fanfare — and scrutiny — as Kazakhstan’s this year. The first Central Asian and post-Soviet State to lead the Organization, Kazakhstan has been the focus of heightened attention since the participating States decided in Madrid in 2007 to give the Chairmanship to the country.

Speaking at the first session of the OSCE Permanent Council in Vienna on 14 January, the 2010 Chairperson-in-Office, Kazakhstan’s Secretary of State and Foreign Minister Kanat Saudabayev, said Kazakhstan’s Chairmanship “demonstrated the desire of the OSCE itself to really bring the countries to the east and the west of Vienna closer together and to modernize and strengthen the Organization in order to adapt it to the present-day realities.”

2010 also marks the 20th anniversary of the Charter of Paris for a New Europe and of the Copenhagen Document — groundbreaking texts marking the end of the Cold War and outlining the human rights commitments agreed by the States — and the 35th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act, the OSCE’s founding document. Combine all this with the fact that the OSCE participating States are engaged in a challenging, high-level dialogue to address the future of European security, and it’s clear that 2010 will not be business as usual at the OSCE.



OSCE Press Office in Vienna dedicates OSCE Magazine’s first issue in 2010 to Kazakhstan’s Chairmanship

Aiming for a summit

The Kazakh Chairmanship is meeting the challenges head on, with a far-reaching programme to tackle regional security questions and the ambitious aim of holding a summit this year, which would be the first in 11 years, since the Istanbul Summit in 1999.

“Now is the time when the leaders of the OSCE participating States should demonstrate their political will and focus on solutions to the difficult challenges facing our nations. A summit would not only give a powerful impetus to adapting the OSCE to modern challenges and threats, but would also increase the confidence and respect enjoyed by the Organization itself among our peoples,” said Kazakhstan’s President Nursultan Nazarbayev in a video address to the Permanent Council.

Consensus is required for a summit to take place. In December the OSCE foreign ministers noted the summit proposal with interest, and tasked the Permanent Council to engage in exploratory consultations. That is happening now in Vienna and between capitals. And, with tongue firmly in cheek, the Chairmanship has even gone so far as to draw up a short Kazakh-Russian-English phrasebook featuring as one of its key phrases: Summitti otkizeik! — Let’s have a summit!

Setting the agenda

In the meantime Kazakhstan — under the guiding principles of “Trust, Tradition, Transparency and Tolerance” — is moving ahead with its priorities for the year, including working to resolve protracted conflicts, addressing terrorism and promoting tolerance, as well as reconstruction of Afghanistan and co-operation on transport.

Taking the torch from the 2009 Greek OSCE Chairmanship, the Kazakh Chairmanship has also pledged to advance the Corfu Process, the OSCE-anchored dialogue on the future of European security. Following up on the Athens Ministerial Council Declaration on the OSCE Corfu Process and the accompanying Decision tasking the 2010 Chairmanship to take the discussions forward, delegations in Vienna have begun identifying areas of possible agreement and developing proposals capable of attaining consensus.

Minister Saudabayev followed his inaugural address in Vienna with a trip to Brussels to discuss the Chairmanship's priorities with European Union (EU) officials. In Brussels he also met North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen.

Engaging with Afghanistan

On 28 January he attended the London Conference on Afghanistan, where he informed the international community about plans for enhancing engagement with the country, which borders three OSCE Central Asian States. He later endorsed the Communiqué of the London Conference, which underlines the international community's continuing commitment to Afghanistan, highlights the importance of Afghan leadership and recognizes the critical role of regional organizations, including the OSCE.

"Today the concept of European security goes far beyond the borders of the European continent and encompasses the vast expanse of Eurasia. Accordingly, we intend to focus particular attention on Afghanistan," said Minister Saudabayev in his Permanent Council address. "Helping the Afghan people to transform their war-torn country into a peaceful, productive and self-sustained society, based on democratic principles and values, is an important task for the OSCE and the whole international community."

He emphasized that the OSCE Chairmanship would play an active role in implementing and co-sponsoring projects to strengthen Afghanistan's borders with Central Asian countries, to develop cross-border co-operation and to enhance law enforcement activities.

In February Minister Saudabayev travelled to Washington, where he addressed the United States (U.S.) Helsinki Commission and met U.S. officials, including Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and then on to New York, where he addressed the United Nations (UN) Security Council and met UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. "I strongly believe that a better use of the OSCE's capabilities would help the UN and its Security Council to more effectively prevent security threats and respond to them," Saudabayev said.

Field visit

In his first trip to a region with OSCE field operations, the Chairperson-in-Office then visited Azerbaijan and Armenia, where he met with the respective Presidents, Foreign Ministers, other officials and representatives of political parties to discuss the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and the work of the field presences there. "Kazakhstan is the first ex-Soviet State to chair the OSCE, and we will seek to fully utilize the shared history and similar mentality of our peoples, as well as the trust and good relations between our countries' leaders to achieve possible progress in resolving

the protracted conflicts in a peaceful way. This is one of the top priorities of our Chairmanship,” he stated.

Minister Saudabayev completed his trip to the South Caucasus with meetings in Tbilisi, where he discussed both OSCE activities on the ground and the Geneva Discussions that aim to sustain stability in the areas affected by the armed conflict in August 2008.

He was accompanied by Ambassador Bolat Nurgaliyev, the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office for Protracted Conflicts, who has also engaged in a tireless schedule of shuttle diplomacy since the start of the year.

As Co-Chair of the Geneva Discussions with the UN and EU representatives, Ambassador Nurgaliyev held talks in Sukhumi, Tskhinvali, Tbilisi and Moscow ahead of the last round of the Geneva Discussions on 28 January. In February, he met Moldovan and Transdniestrian authorities in Chisinau and Tiraspol, prior to an informal meeting in Vienna on 2 March in the “5+2” format, which includes the sides, the mediators from the Russian Federation, Ukraine and the OSCE, as well as observers from the U.S. and the EU.

Other Chairmanship priorities for 2010 include countering illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs, energy security, combating trafficking in human beings — with a particular focus on trafficking in children —, advancing the participation of women in public and political life and supporting the rule of law, in particular with respect to judicial independence, the prevention of hate crimes, freedom of movement and the situation of Roma and Sinti.

Conference call

Minister Saudabayev also announced a number of high-level meetings scheduled for this year, which will focus on Chairmanship priorities in all three dimensions, including a High-Level OSCE Conference on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination to be held in Astana on 29 and 30 June.

“Given our extremely positive experience in securing inter-ethnic and inter-confessional harmony in our own country, we intend to make tolerance and intercultural dialogue within the OSCE area a major priority of our Chairmanship,” he said.

Continuing the practice initiated by Greece last year with the informal ministerial meeting on Corfu in June, Minister Saudabayev has invited the OSCE foreign ministers to an informal meeting in Almaty this summer.

“In the Alatau mountains, rising 3,000 metres above sea level and among the flowering alpine meadows, we could in the spirit of Corfu continue the open and free exchange of views on the most pressing problems in the OSCE’s area of responsibility and ideally reach a consensus on an agenda and timeframe for the summit,” he said.

Also in the News:

- Kazakhstan is to spend 96 billion tenge (KZT 150 = 1 USD) in 2010-2014 to finance the *Balapan* state program of preschool education, Education and Science Minister Zhanseit Tuimebayev said. As noted earlier by Prime Minister Karim Masimov, the main purpose of this program is to ensure all Kazakh children are covered by preschool education by 2020.

- The Permanent Mission of Kazakhstan to the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) began its work. The move is aimed at strengthening the country's cooperation with the influential international union, which involves 57 nations from Europe, Asia, Africa and America. The opening of the mission has particular importance in light of Kazakhstan's chairmanship of the OIC next year. Bakhyt Batyrshaev was appointed as head of the Permanent Mission of Kazakhstan to the OIC.
- President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan signed the law "On Ratification of the Loan Agreement for the Western Europe - Western China transport corridor between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Asian Development Bank". The Western Europe - Western China international transit corridor will be the main route for freight traffic in Central Asia. The project will serve three main freight routes: China - Central Asia, China - Kazakhstan, China - Russia - Western Europe.
- The construction of the Uzen-Gurgan (Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran) railway will enable Kazakhstan to increase grain exports to Iran up to five million tons by 2012, chairman of the KazAgro board Asylzhan Mamytbekov informed. The governments of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Iran have pledged to work for its simultaneous completion and commissioning in December 2011.
- Astana hosted two international exhibitions, Book Fair "BookExpoAstana-2010" and the exhibition and forum of information and communication technologies "e-Kazakhstan-2010. The BookExpoAstana-2010 exhibition brought together publishers, writers, librarians, booksellers, and printers from Kazakhstan and other states. The e-Kazakhstan exhibition provides an opportunity for participants to learn about prospective projects and trends in domestic industry of telecommunications.
- As reported in Astana Calling for March 30, the Government of Kazakhstan and the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction program broke ground in Almaty, for a central reference laboratory that will be part of an international effort to detect, diagnose and respond to natural and bioterrorist infectious disease outbreaks. This \$ 103 million worth laboratory is set to house highly secure Biosafety Level 2 and 3 research areas containing state-of-the-art molecular diagnostic and research equipment for the study of contagious animal and human diseases.

Things to Watch:

- Issues of bilateral economic cooperation between Georgia and Kazakhstan in Astana will be discussed during a working visit by Prime Minister of Georgia Nikoloz Gilauri on April 8 and 9. The Georgian side will participate in the meeting of the intergovernmental commission on economic cooperation, where it will be represented by Economics Minister Zurab Pololikashvili.
- President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan will participate in the Global Nuclear Security Summit in Washington on April 12 and 13. There, more than 40 leaders will discuss issues of vulnerability of nuclear materials and their protection

from terrorists. It is expected President Nazarbayev will have a bilateral meeting with President Barack Obama on April 12.

- On April 7 through 10, Moayad Samman, President of the King Abdullah II Design and Development Bureau, will visit Astana at the invitation of the Ministry of Industry and New Technologies. The sides will discuss the cooperation in defense industry and new technologies, as well as the establishment for this purpose of a joint venture.
- In 2010, Kazakhstan is planning to implement the Euro-3 international ecological standards, Deputy Minister of Environment Eldana Sadvakasova said. “Since July 15 last year, we have implemented Euro-2 international ecological standards. As soon as domestic factories will be able to introduce new technologies, we will implement more modern international standards,” she stressed.
- Heads of government of countries - members of the Customs Union (Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan) on May 21 will discuss key issues relating to the formation of the Customs Union and the launch of the Customs Union in full from July 1, 2010.



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