



High Level OSCE Conference in Astana Seeks Ways to Strengthen Tolerance
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High Level OSCE Conference in Astana Seeks Ways to Strengthen Tolerance



President Nazarbayev delivered a welcome speech at the High-Level Conference on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination, Astana, 29 June 2010.

Photo by the Foreign Ministry

The High-Level Conference on Tolerance and Non-Discrimination is being hosted by the Kazakh OSCE Chairmanship in the Palace of Peace and Accord (the Pyramid) in Astana on 29-30 June 2010. The conference has brought together senior government officials, politicians and public figures from 56 OSCE

participating states aiming to contribute to further strengthening of interaction between different cultures and civilizations, and to implement the related OSCE commitments and values.

Heds of key OSCE institutions - the Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) Janez Lenarcic, High Commissioner on National Minorities Knut Vollebaek, three Personal representatives of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on tolerance and non-discrimination, as well as Ministers from Turkey, Montenegro, Israel, and other officials and public figures participated in the event.

Opening the forum on Tuesday, Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev noted the “lack of experience in applying new methods of control, the complexity of ethnic composition, unsolved problems of the past and weakness of civil society make the issues of tolerance the top priority of the OSCE’s Eurasian direction of activity.

The President came out with a number of initiatives aimed at improving the situation over interethnic and interreligious cooperation, including the idea of establishing the OSCE Central Asian Regional Centre for tolerance and non-discrimination destined to neutralize negative aftereffects of the latest events in Kyrgyzstan.

“As you all know, the “four T” strategy, standing for tolerance, trust, transparency and traditions reflects the major approach of Kazakh OSCE chairmanship to the organization’s activity in 2010. In this context we have good reasons to believe it is high time to establish the OSCE centre for tolerance and non-discrimination”, Nazarbayev stressed.

“Central Asia is a region of complicated ethnic pattern where different nations and various religions co-exist together. The bitterest consequence of the conflict in Kyrgyzstan is that the seeds of mistrust can be sown between other peoples of the region. This represents a significant challenge to stability in the region and a threat to all OSCE participating States”, he said.

Speaking on Kazakhstan’s initiative to hold an OSCE Summit in Astana, the Kazakh leader offered to include the problems of tolerance into the agenda. “I suppose we should work together over generalizing some serious latest changes in the policy of tolerance which have taken place over the last few years and elaborate a single document, which I would call the “OSCE and tolerance in the new decade”. We suggest including the issue into the OSCE Summit’s agenda”, Nazarbayev underscored.

Nursultan Nazarbayev also highlighted the necessity to actively promote the role of the Organization in resolving interethnic and interreligious problems and initiated establishing the post of OSCE High Commissioner on interreligious tolerance.

Addressing the conference, Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights Janez Lenarcic underlined the importance of human rights in fostering understanding between communities: “The provision of human rights is a precondition for notions of respect and mutual understanding to unfold their essence. To put it bluntly: it is not an achievement to “tolerate” members of our society who do not have the right to freely speak their mind or enjoy the panoply of other rights that should be available in a democratic society”.

UN High Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations Jorge Sampaio expressed readiness of his organization to cooperate with OSCE with a view of fulfilling its commitments on local, national and regional levels. “I will be glad to provide a number of recommendations and concrete measures, which we offer to our member states, in order to implement them in the nearest future, including national and regional strategies as the directions of our joint priority actions”, he said.

Mevlyut Cavusoglu, President of the Council of Europe’s Parliamentary Assembly noted the significant role of Kazakh President in settlement of the crisis in Kyrgyzstan: “We are grateful to President Nazarbayev who exerts every effort to resolve the conflict situation”. In his words, OSCE participating state should unite their efforts and seriously think over the current humanitarian crisis in Kyrgyzstan.

OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities Knut Vollebaek said: “If we want to create and safeguard cohesive societies, tolerance has to be more than just acceptance of differences. We need to strive for positive tolerance founded on respect for each individual”.

Dunja Mijatovic, the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media, emphasized that freedom of expression is a basic precondition for the development of multi-cultural and inter-ethnic societies, and that open debate which aims at promoting mutual understanding requires free media and independent journalists.

The two-day event was preceded by a preparatory meeting of non-governmental organizations on June 28, which addressed the ways to combat intolerance and discrimination against Muslims, Christians and representatives of other religions. More than 600 participants discussed the role of legislation, law enforcement, education systems and the media, including online media, in addressing public manifestations of intolerance and promoting understanding through open dialogue.

Within the High-level Conference an award ceremony for winners of the OSCE Photo Contest 2010 “Tolerance, trust, tradition, transparency” also took place on June 29. More than hundred photographers from 35 OSCE participating States and partners for cooperation submitted around 300 pictures for the contest, initiated and financed by the Kazakhstan’s OSCE Chairmanship.

The winners, Eric Gourlan, a photographer residing in the Netherlands with many years of experience in Central Asian region (“Tolerance alive”), Rudi Dawia Kaufman, a graduate student of photography school in Wuerzburg, Germany (“Black and white relationship”), Andrey Liankevich, a photographer from Belarus (“He has a female name”), Vitaliy Ovsvyannikov from Kharkiv, Ukraine

(“Sincere emotions”) and Ilya Rozenbaum from Belgium (“Hallelujah”) - received a trip to Astana, where they attended the award ceremony.



The winners of the OSCE tolerance photo contest in Astana, 29 June 2010.

Photo by OSCE/Velimir Alic

The full list of the contest winners and finalists, and a gallery of their photos, can be found at the contest page at <http://www.osce.org/item/43109.html>

OSCE Chairperson Welcomes Successful Conduct of Kyrgyz Referendum



Kanat Saudabayev expressed confidence the successful conduct of constitutional referendum in Kyrgyzstan on 27 June 2010 would help establish a legitimate government, currently led by Roza Otunbayeva.

Photo by the Foreign Ministry

The OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Kazakhstan's Secretary of State and Minister of Foreign Affairs Kanat Saudabayev, welcomed the successful conduct of referendum in Kyrgyzstan on June 27, and called on OSCE participating States and international bodies to develop a plan of large-scale assistance to the country.

“The referendum is a decisive step towards political stability and the restoration of constitutional order and political legitimacy,” he said.

“The OSCE Chairmanship supports the preliminary assessment of the referendum by the mission of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. But holding the referendum is only the beginning of a hard path towards restoring the rule of law and furthering

the democratic, social and economic development of Kyrgyzstan.”

Saudabayev added: “The OSCE is keenly interested in seeing the situation in Kyrgyzstan return to a constructive framework, and calls on all the participating States and international bodies to develop a plan of large-scale assistance for the country. We believe timely, effective and co-ordinated actions by the international community will become an important factor in stabilizing the political situation, maintaining regional security and co-operation, ensuring sustainable economic development and fully protecting democratic foundations in Kyrgyzstan.”

Saudabayev spoke on the telephone with Roza Otunbayeva, Kyrgyzstan's President for the interim period, discussing the next steps to be taken to solidify the progress towards political stability and economic development of the country.

Kazakhstan's OSCE Chairmanship was represented in Bishkek during the referendum by Ambassador and Chairperson of the OSCE Permanent Council Kairat Abdrakhmanov. During his visit he met Otunbayeva, Acting Foreign Minister Ruslan Kazakbayev and the Deputy Head of the Provisional Government, Omurbek Tekebayev, as well as representatives of civil society, the diplomatic community and international organizations.

New “Nazarbayev University” in Astana Sets High Goals

An opening ceremony of the “Nazarbayev University” took place on June 28 in the capital of Kazakhstan with the participation of Nursultan Nazarbayev, the President himself. With the launch of the University, young Kazakhs obtain an opportunity to get an education equal to the highest standards in the world without leaving the country.

The “Nazarbayev University”, named so after the President reluctantly agreed to lend his name to the university to underscore its intended status as a top-level education institution in Kazakhstan, has been established at the initiative of the President to ensure the rapid development education and science and its connections with the international partners in order to build up engineering, science and technology elite.

The new institution aims to address the lack of a highly-skilled labour force during the implementation of the Strategic Plan for the Development of Kazakhstan till 2020. It will be part of the efforts to make Astana into the scientific, educational and cultural centre of Eurasia with a competitive human capital.

In his welcoming address the Kazakh President said the University is designed as a national brand that combines the strengths of the already strong national system of education with the best scientific and educational practices in the world. The University graduates will receive diplomas which will be valid both in Kazakhstan and abroad.

The Nazarbayev University campus is located on the left bank of Astana spanning the area of 80 hectares. It will include a large main building of the university, residence halls for students, a residential house for faculty members, and other buildings.

The university will provide a qualitative breakthrough in the development of the country by preparing a future generation of engineers and experts.

“From now on there is less need to send the Kazakh students to foreign universities for studying engineering, medical science and energy since the study at this University will be the same as at the top institutions,” President Nazarbayev proudly noted.

Apart from engineering and medical faculties, the University has Arts and Science (undergraduate), Public Policy and Business Management Departments (graduate and post-graduate). Research centres of life sciences and alternative energy sources will also operate here.

The University’s academic and scientific policy provides that each of its departments has an international academic partner that is among the top 30 universities in the area in which they are cooperating. The international partners will assist the Nazarbayev University in developing degree programs and a quality assessment system of teaching. Using their strength, this model of integration will create an effective academic environment.

The University has already concluded eleven agreements on cooperation with the best 30 universities in the world, each in a certain field. Among them are universities such as Harvard University, Wisconsin-Madison University, UCL (University College London), and a few others. Every department at the new university will be established with the participation of strategic partners who are ready to develop training programs to provide teachers and monitor the quality of education.

The university is gaining popularity as around 3,000 students have already submitted their applications. Only 500 will get government-funded scholarships. At present, in all regions of Kazakhstan admission exams to the new university are taking place.

As for the University’s sponsors, Senior Vice-President for Central Asia, Far East and the Pacific Region of Eni S.p.A. Massimo Mondazzi has earlier announced the Italian oil corporation’s intention to back the university financially during Kazakhstan’s Foreign Investors’ Council on June 4.

“Young people should aspire to get here. I agreed that the University bear my name, so do not let me down,” President Nazarbayev said while addressing the future students.



"Young people should aspire to study here. I gave my consent for this university to be named after me, so don't let me down in this matter," the Kazakh President said addressing the students at Nazarbayev University in Astana.

Photo by Sergey Bondarenko/Bolatbek Otarbayev

Reminding the audience of his special attention to providing the best education for the nation's new generations, the Kazakh President noted: "Having realized that sustainable development of the country is impossible without intellectual potential, during the most difficult time Kazakhstan sent young people to study at the best foreign universities under the "Bolashak" international programme".

In 1993, President Nazarbayev initiated the "Bolashak" international programme which gives an opportunity for the Kazakh students to study at the top world universities. Currently, 25,000-30,000 young Kazakhs are enrolled at the best universities in the world, including approximately 3,000 under the Bolashak programme.

President Nazarbayev Says Response to Crisis Must Be Global

(This article by Robert Corzine was first published in the IHT section on Kazakhstan on June 2)

Over the past two years, the established and conventional wisdom on the nature of economic crises has been shaken, and their causes, complexity and consequences have vexed some of the brightest and best-qualified experts in the world, whether in government, multilateral institutions, the international business community or academia.

Individual governments around the world, and especially those responsible for emerging economies such as Kazakhstan's, have reacted differently to the crisis, given their vast diversity and different socioeconomic and political systems.

President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan has said there is no "one size fits all" solution when it comes to dealing with sudden economic shocks and notes that there are understandable national differences in the nature of the reforms individual countries must implement to plug the sometimes yawning gaps in their own financial regulatory systems.

Over the past several years, President Nazarbayev has concentrated on mitigating the global financial fallout and impact of the ever-evolving economic crisis on Kazakhstan. It was one of the first countries to feel the full force of the downturn, when the now almost forgotten "credit crisis" of 2007 suddenly severed the country's international credit lines and sent its booming banking and overheated real estate sectors into free fall.

The demanding task of addressing both the international and domestic aspects of the economic crisis appears to have influenced President Nazarbayev's thinking on broader global issues, especially on the nature of supranational solutions. Some may see national and global economic problems as separate and discrete issues, but President Nazarbayev suggests they are symptoms of a deeper and more fundamental flaw in the world's financial architecture.

In his recent writings and speeches, President Nazarbayev has repeatedly stated that what he believes the world has faced since 1998 is not a series of unconnected economic shocks. Rather, he sees recent events as the result of an existential and fundamentally unfair conflict between globalized financial markets that can transmit systemic risks across the world within seconds and a slow, backward-looking regulatory framework that is also largely national in origin and outlook.

According to President Nazarbayev, it is the smaller yet potentially most dynamic emerging countries that most often pay the price for growing global economic imbalances. The fundamental "unfairness" of the present system is a theme he has developed in his annual Astana Economic Forums, the current edition of which is being held in the country's capital on July 1-2.

Last year, he spoke extensively about the need to develop a new global reserve currency that has the full support of most of the world's countries.

He says that the present system, in which the U.S. dollar is the de facto, although not de jure, reserve currency, is untenable over the long run. It leads, he adds, to the persistence of fundamental economic inequalities, as the economic policies of a single country, acting only in the interests of its own domestic economy and political priorities, effectively sets the financial agenda for the rest of the world.

President Nazarbayev has argued that since the main dangers to the world's financial stability are supranational, so too must be the response. He has also argued that the present U.S. dollar-based system, which he says can be all too easily manipulated by global markets, does not meet the basic criteria of a rapidly changing global economic and political landscape.

At last year's Astana Economic Forum, he advanced the idea that the creation of a new supranational reserve currency should not be done by edict, but through a totally transparent and democratic process that would require the agreement of the leaders of the majority of the world's countries and the assent of the majority of parliaments. It would be firmly grounded in a new

international law, with fully accountable and democratic institutions controlling the issuance of such a currency unit. He says the establishment of a globally accepted reserve currency would also be the logical starting point for a broader and radical rethinking of the world's economic system.

Although economics and finance have been the dominant international themes in recent years, President Nazarbayev has contributed to the global debate on other pressing issues, such as nuclear proliferation. In private bilateral talks in April with President Barack Obama on the sidelines of the U.S.-sponsored Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, D.C., President Nazarbayev reaffirmed his support for Obama's nuclear-nonproliferation initiatives.

Kazakhstan is one of only a few countries that have voluntarily dismantled their nuclear weapons. At the time of independence in 1991, Kazakhstan inherited from the Soviet Union the world's fourth-largest nuclear arsenal, including proven missile-delivery systems, but cooperated with the United States, Russia and the rest of the international community in dismantling its nuclear weapons capability. Tens of thousands of Kazakhs still suffer from the effects of nuclear-weapon testing on its territory during the Soviet era, which President Nazarbayev has labeled a "crime" against the people of Kazakhstan.

But in spite of Kazakhstan's divestment of nuclear weapons, President Nazarbayev advocates peaceful nuclear power. In 2009, Kazakhstan became the world's biggest uranium producer and has offered to be the site of a nuclear fuel bank that countries could use to secure supplies of nuclear fuel for peaceful purposes.

Kazakhstan's current chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe has also been a recent priority for President Nazarbayev, especially as Kazakhstan is the first former Soviet republic, as well as the first mainly Asian state, to assume the OSCE chairmanship. Interethnic and inter-religious tolerance and mutual respect is a theme that President Nazarbayev has promoted for a number of years, especially given Kazakhstan's extensive diversity, and it has formed a key part of the country's OSCE strategy.

So, too, has the political and economic stability of Central Asia, a topic that has become all the more urgent because of recent political unrest in neighboring Kyrgyzstan and the continuing threat of instability spreading from Afghanistan to other parts of the region. In the case of Kyrgyzstan, President Nazarbayev worked closely with his counterparts in the United States and Russia, as well as international organizations such as the United Nations, to defuse tensions in the country.

Kazakhstan officials have recently expressed optimism that another Nazarbayev-inspired initiative - the first summit meeting of OSCE leaders in 11 years - will take place in Astana later this year. The summit is designed to help reinvigorate the organization, which was established during the Cold War, and to shape its future strategies and programs to present day realities.

Astana Economic Forum to Discuss Ways to Sustainable Post-Crisis Growth

(This article by Robert Corzine was first published in the IHT section on Kazakhstan on June 2)



The Annual Economic Forum this year will gather more than 2000 representatives of political and business spheres from more than 50 countries, as well as leading scientists, representatives of the public and the media to discuss key issues for the global economy.

Photo by Astana Economic Forum

The creation of stronger trading and economic links in the Eurasian region and greater integration among countries will form a key part of Kazakhstan's Third Astana Economic Forum, planned for July 1-2 in the country's capital.

Bakhyt Sultanov, assistant to President Nursultan Nazarbayev and the senior official overseeing the event, says the conference will include a forum of about 300 industrialists and entrepreneurs from around the region who will discuss the possibility of creating a Eurasian Business Congress that would promote the expansion of trade, economic ties and investment among the countries of the region.

Sultanov says the conference, which is expected to attract as many as 2,000 participants, is unique insofar as it focuses on both the abstract and concrete aspects of contemporary economic thinking.

“The Astana Economic Forum has proved to be both a theoretical and practical platform for dialogue,” says Sultanov, “which, along with discussion of the latest developments in the field of sustainable growth of the global economy, deals with its implementation.”

He says the forum, the theme of which is “sustainable economic growth in the post-crisis period,” has special relevance this year, given the widely varying economic conditions of countries around the world and the new developments that are rapidly changing the world’s economic architecture. He notes that as the center of gravity of the world’s economy shifts eastward, the Astana forum becomes all the more relevant for it, given that Kazakhstan is the strongest economy in Central Asia.

“The world is witnessing the emergence of new technological changes in both its financial architecture and its socio-political aspects, which are primarily focused on sustainable economic growth,” he says. “In many respects, the financial crisis has accelerated the processes transforming the world economic order, identifying the inconsistency of the current inefficient and unfair system.”

The theme of radical revision of the world’s financial system has been a key message of President Nazarbayev, who has been the driving force behind the annual forum. Topics at this year’s forum include Central Asia’s role as an energy supplier; Kazakhstan as an emerging economy on the road to industrialization, industrial innovation and greater value-added production; the future of public- and private-sector cooperation and partnerships in corporate governance and development; and innovation in management expertise.

The need for new economic thinking in the post-crisis period is another theme to be explored at the forum, which will include the participation of three Nobel laureates in economics. They are Robert Mundell of Canada; Finn Erling Kydland, a native of Norway; and Robert Aumann, an Israeli-American mathematician.

Other participants will include Marc Perrin de Brichambaut, secretary general of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (Kazakhstan is the current chair of the group); Mohammad Yahya Maroofi, secretary general of the Economic Cooperation Organization; Philippe Maystadt, president of the European Investment Bank; and Xiaoyu Zhao, vice president of the Asian Development Bank.

Senior executives from some of the world’s leading financial institutions and agencies will also be present.

Sultanov says the culmination of the forum will be the adoption of an open letter to the leaders of the G-20 group of major industrialized countries. The letter will contain recommendations for improvements to the global economy based on the discussions at the forum.

The forum is supported by the World Bank; the UN Economic Commission for Europe; the Islamic Development Bank; Samruk-Kazyna, Kazakhstan’s sovereign wealth fund and state holding company; KazMunaiGas, the state oil and natural gas company; the National Innovation Fund; and Kazakhstan’s Center for Public-Private Partnerships.

Kazakh Senate Chief Speaks in Favour of Common Visions for Central Asia

(This article by Robert Corzine was first published in the IHT section on Kazakhstan on June 2)

Kazakhstan will do its utmost to assist in the political and economic stabilization of neighboring Kyrgyzstan, according to Kasym-Zhomart Tokayev, the current chairman of Kazakhstan’s upper house of Parliament and a driving force behind the country’s chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Tokayev, a former prime minister and long-serving foreign minister, says: “We will also support Kyrgyzstan by giving economic support in the form of supplies of fuel, fertilizers and seeds for the upcoming harvest.”

He adds: “The present crisis in Kyrgyzstan is the second one in five years. It is already turning into a disturbing trend and illustrates governments’ failure to meet national requirements such as economic strength and security. No one is interested in one more source of instability in the Central Asian region, and it is the task of international organizations, including the OSCE, to help restore law and order.” Tokayev warns that unless stability returns to Kyrgyzstan, “the current crisis could turn it into a hot spot in Central Asia and further destabilize the region. The OSCE is faced with the task of preventing that.”

He says that for Kazakhstan, which has the most dynamic economy in Central Asia, regional leadership is not an end in itself. “What we aspire to is to create conditions for closer political and economic cooperation in Central Asia,” he says. “First, we set the example of how to become politically and economically stable. Second, Kazakhstan’s gross domestic product has grown by 6.6 percent since the beginning of the year. For investors, our country has become a reliable bridgehead into the Caspian region and Central Asia. Third, we will mobilize involvement of the international community to address problems in our region in our position as OSCE chair.”

Kazakhstan was recently host of an OSCE Trans-Asian Parliamentary Forum in Almaty, during which a number of issues affecting the future of the OSCE were discussed. “Within the 35 years of its existence,” says Tokayev, “the OSCE has entered its middle-age period, meaning that it rests on its past without a clear vision concerning its future. Therefore, Kazakhstan has presented the idea of looking into new realities and exploring new trends—the OSCE Eurasian dimension. This makes it necessary for all OSCE members to realize what we have in common in Eurasia in terms of challenges regarding issues such as energy, ecology and disarmament, as well as opportunities for the OSCE to develop new dimensions.”

Afghanistan is another priority in Kazakhstan’s OSCE chairmanship. “At the forum,” Tokayev says, “there were differences in views, but these merely underlined the forum’s democratic character. Thus, not everybody could agree with the Afghan delegation that drug traffic and terrorism have been imposed on Afghanistan by outside forces. Instead, the delegations focused on the role the OSCE could play in addressing these.”

Tokayev says Kazakhstan doesn’t see any conflict between its membership in the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), grouping a number of former Soviet republics, and the country’s cooperation with NATO, especially in regard to NATO’s operations in Afghanistan. “There is no conflict of interest between NATO and the CSTO,” he says. “Members of both organizations work closely together where the coalition’s logistics, rehabilitation works for the country and the fight against drug traffic are concerned. Kazakhstan aims for a multilevel regional security architecture in which both NATO and the CSTO have a role to play.”

As for relations between Kazakhstan and the European Union, Tokayev says: “The European Union has become the most important strategic partner of Kazakhstan. It is our biggest trade partner, accounting for 40 percent of our external trade volume. It also accounts for about half of the \$103 billion worth of foreign investments in our country.”

He says the EU will also figure prominently as the country embarks on a new industrialization drive to offset its present reliance on commodity exports. “Our strategy within this context is driven by Kazakhstan’s need to develop its industry and infrastructure through the introduction of new technology and the increase of labor productivity,” he says. “By 2020, this should result in a 45 percent share of manufactured goods in our exports, up from 27 percent today.”

Tokayev says the multibillion-dollar industrialization drive will take place within the context of building a greener economy. “For the Kazakh people,” he says, “the consequences of Soviet-era nuclear tests at Semipalatinsk and the natural disaster of the Aral Sea are very real indeed. Therefore, it is only natural that Kazakhstan strongly support all efforts that lead to a green economy.”

He notes that in March last year, President Nursultan Nazarbayev signed a decree ratifying the Kyoto Protocol. “At the Copenhagen summit, Kazakhstan vowed to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 15 percent as of 2020 and by another 25 percent as of 2050,” he says. “We have full legislation on environmental protection in place. We also support the transition from finite toward renewable energy resources for the simple reason that we know that the world has no choice in this respect.”



“No one is interested in one more source of instability in the Central Asian region, and it is the task of international organizations, including the OSCE, to help restore law and order”, Speaker of the Kazakh Senate Kasym-Zhomart Tokayev says.

Photo by the Foreign Ministry

Also in the News:

- Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbayev signed the law ratifying the agreement on Customs Code of the Customs Union and protocol amending the previous agreement from November 27, 2009. The Customs Union's Code will enter into force on July 1, implying the territories of Kazakhstan and Russia will be henceforward united in a single customs area. Belarus took a time-out in the process of establishing the Union. The ratified document regulates the flow of goods across the customs border and their transportation under the customs control, including temporary storage, declaring and capacity output. In addition, the Code foresees the establishment of institute of special economic operators, having the right to use the simplified system of customs documentation and control.
- Nursultan Nazarbayev also signed the Law "On mineral resources and subsoil use" aimed at further improvement and systematization of the country's legal base regulating relations in the sphere of subsurface resource management. The Law foresees an efficient use of the associated gas through processing it with a view of obtaining strategically important energy carriers and raw material resources for oil and gas industry. In addition, the newly introduced law includes provisions stipulating reservation of lands for subsoil use, and suggesting the mechanism for settlement of dispute in compliance with the legislation and international treaties ratified by the Republic of Kazakhstan.
- On the eve of the OSCE High-level Conference on Tolerance and Non-discrimination, held in Astana on June 28-30, Kazakhstan's Ombudsman Askar Shakirov met Polish Secretary of State Elzbeta Radzishewskaja and Permanent Representative of Denmark to OSCE John Bernhard in Astana. The Ombudsman discussed with the guests the priority tasks of his activity related to protection and securing of human rights, including the problems of improving the legislative base and law enforcement practices in Kazakhstan, as well as measures taken by the government in these areas.
- The World Bank announced it will finance the construction of a plant for the destruction of persistent organic pollutants (POPs) in Kazakhstan. "As the administrator of a project, the World Bank has confirmed the allocation of funds to finance the construction of the plant," Minister for Environment Nurgali Ashimov said during the "government hour" in the Mazhilis of Parliament on Monday. "At the moment the Global Environment Facility confirmed a grant of \$ 300,000 for the preparation of project's feasibility study." In Minister's words, the estimated cost of the plant accounts for 120-180 million Euros. In this case, the World Bank may finance up to 50% of the cost, provided the remaining funds will be allocated by the government of Kazakhstan.
- JSC "Aktobe Centre", a new transport and logistic facility, opened in Aktobe last Friday. The largest centre in West Kazakhstan was constructed within the frameworks of Kazakhstan's Strategy of Industrial and Innovational Development, Minister of Transport and Communications Abulgazy Kussainov said at the official opening ceremony. The project is a part of the general service plan of the international transit corridor "West Europe – West China" and includes three terminals covering a total area of 12.781 square kilometres. The centre's territory designates special area for commercial vehicles, access roads, and functional zones for manufacturing operations.
- Kazakhstan has launched 72 new industrial projects, the largest being the construction of the Balkhash thermal electric power station in Almaty region and a new small-craft repair plant worth a total of 2.25 billion KZT in Bautino settlement, Mangystau region. President Nazarbayev congratulated the participants in the official launching ceremony through teleconference on Monday. According to the plan, the construction works over the first project will be divided in two phases, one of which is to be finished by 2014, and the second by 2017. The power station's annual output will amount to 17 billion kilowatt hour. The cost of a station accounts for \$4.5 billion, and it is the first public-private energy project in Kazakhstan 75% of which is financed through the efforts of South Korean companies and "Kazakhmys", and the rest 25% through Kazakhstan's JSC "Samruk Energo" (an affiliate undertaking of "Samruk-Kazyna" National Welfare Fund).
- The Astana Cycling Team has decided on its final squad for the 2010 Tour de France. General Manager of the team, Yvon Sanquer said: "The Team Astana that will guide Alberto Contador on the road of the Tour de France is the result of a long collective team work. It's a united group full of qualities that will attend Rotterdam on July 3. Along with Alexander Vinokourov, seven other

cyclists have been called in to support Contador and they are ready to help him on the arrival in Paris on July 25”. Apart from Contador and Vinokourov, the list of riders engaged for this year’s Tour de France includes David De la Fuente, Andriy Grivko, Jesus Hernandez, Maxim Iglinskiy, Daniel Navarro, Benjamin Noval, and Paolo Tiralongo.

Things to Watch:

- On July 2-3, the 9th session of the Kazakh-French intergovernmental commission on economic cooperation will take place in Astana. Deputy Prime Minister-Minister of Industry and New Technologies Asset Issekeshov will co-chair the meeting from the Kazakh part, while the French side will be headed by Secretary of State of the Ministry of Overseas Trade Ann-Mari Idrak. The French delegation will also partake in the III Astana Economic Forum, and will hold a number of meetings with the leadership of Kazakhstan.
- The 1st Kazakh International Mineral Resources and Metallurgy Congress “Astana Minerals & Metallurgy” will take place in Astana, on June 30 - July 1 under the auspices of the Kazakh Government and the Akimat of Astana. President Nursultan Nazarbaev will open the congress. The event is a part of Astana birthday celebrations. Prime Minister Karim Massimov, representatives of the country’s state agencies, and top managers of industrial holdings will partake in the event. Representatives of the Russian Government are also invited.
- On July 1-2, President of the European Investment Bank Philippe Maystadt will visit Kazakhstan to take part in the III Astana Economic Forum and hold a range of meetings with Kazakh officials in order to discuss the perspective directions for realizing investment projects in Kazakhstan.
- On July 1-2, the 6th session of the Kazakh-Lithuanian intergovernmental commission on trade and economic cooperation will take part in Druskininkai. Executive Secretary of the Kazakh Foreign Ministry Rapol Zhoshybayev will head the Kazakh delegation, whereas the Lithuanian side will be chaired by Minister of Economy Dainius Kreivis.

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