



## [Kazakhstan Calls for Stabilisation in Afghanistan through Diplomacy and Development](#)

Foreign Minister Kazykhanov participates in the Istanbul Conference on Afghanistan

### [Aid Programme Helps Afghan Students Study in Kazakhstan](#)

Over 1,000 Afghan students will receive Kazakh university degrees in medicine and teaching

### [Kazakh Test Site Closure Reminds of Need to Ratify CTBT, US Official Says](#)

US assistant secretary of state also visited the former test site in October

### [Kazakhstan Shows High Human Development, Moves Up One Point in UN Ranking](#)

The country ranks 68<sup>th</sup> in the UNDP global development rating for 2011

### [Also in the News](#) [Things to Watch](#)

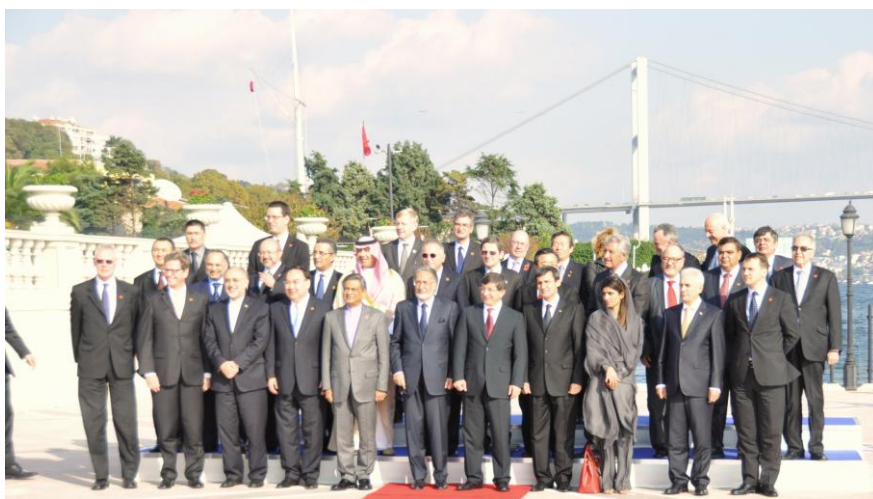
## **Kazakhstan Calls for Stabilisation in Afghanistan through Diplomacy and Development**

The social and economic rehabilitation of Afghanistan is an essential guarantee of regional and international security and stability, Kazakhstan's Foreign Minister Yerzhan Kazykhanov told participants of the Istanbul conference on Afghanistan in Istanbul as he pledged Astana's continued support for more robust international efforts to assist that country return to the peaceful life.

The conference on November 2 brought together presidents of Afghanistan, Pakistan, Turkey, as well as

foreign ministers of 24 countries, nine regional and international organizations. The conference participants discussed the efforts to promote stability in Afghanistan and involve Afghanistan in regional, economic and political cooperation.

In an interview with Tengrinews English ahead of the conference, Yerzhan Kazykhanov said: "Here in Kazakhstan we clearly understand that period between now and 2014 is crucial for the countries of the region because the coalition forces will be leaving Afghanistan. But I think it should in no way mean that the international community is leaving Afghanistan,"



The conference participants pose for a family photo in Istanbul on November 2.  
Photo by Viktor Glebov

At the conference, Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu pointed out that by assisting Afghanistan the countries mean a joint effort in restoring healthcare in Afghanistan and fighting against drug trafficking, Islamic radicalism and terrorism. “The failure of the international community in Afghanistan will have significant consequences for the entire world”, the Turkish foreign minister said.

In his remarks, Yerzhan Kazykhanov noted that during its Chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Kazakhstan has been pushing for the Organization to play a greater role in addressing the Afghan problem.

“We continue to do so as the Chair of the OSCE Contact Group of Asian Partners for Cooperation. Afghanistan is also a top priority of our Chairmanship in the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) since June this year”, the Kazakh Minister said.

Underlining the importance of this forum in stabilizing the situation in Afghanistan, Kazykhanov defined the promotion of internal reconciliation and the creation of conditions for the country’s peaceful and effective development in the context of regional cooperation as the next mid-term tasks in Afghanistan.

Among the main challenges of regional development the Kazakh foreign minister highlighted combating illicit drug production and drug trafficking. Supporting the activities of the Almaty-based Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Centre for combating illicit trafficking of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors, Kazakhstan attaches great importance to effective joint efforts in combating transnational drug trafficking, Kazykhanov said.

Kazykhanov also noted Kazakhstan’s role in international efforts to rebuild Afghanistan, in particular, the technical and humanitarian assistance, training of personnel and provision of negotiation platforms.

“Afghanistan’s socio-economic rehabilitation is an essential guarantee of regional and international security and stability,” the Kazakh Foreign Minister emphasized.

Since 2010, every year up to 200 Afghan students come to study in Kazakhstan. A total of 1,000 Afghan students will get education as doctors and teachers at Kazakh universities under a special 50 million dollar programme that runs from 2010 to 2018.

Kazakhstan has been and will continue providing humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan, supplying grain, flour, rice and other goods. In 2008, Kazakhstan sent Afghanistan 2,000 tons of wheat, in 2009 – 1,300 tonnes of dry milk, in 2010 – 6,000 tonnes of rice and in April 2011 - 5,000 tonnes of rice flour.

Kazakhstan supports the New Silk Road initiative on creating infrastructure such as roads and rail lines to link Afghanistan with its neighbours also by building Kazakhstan’s portion of an international highway corridor that will connect Western China with Western Europe through Russia.

Speaking of a strong commitment of the international community to building a stable and prosperous Afghanistan, Kazykhanov announced that on the eve of the Bonn Conference Kazakhstan is to hold a regular meeting of the International Contact Group on Afghanistan on November 15.

“Trust and unity among all nations are the basis of a new just world order”, Kazykhanov quoted President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev as saying.

**Kazykhanov: “Afghanistan’s socio-economic rehabilitation is an essential guarantee of regional and international security and stability”.**

Upon the closure of the conference the participants, including Kazakhstan, signed an Istanbul strategic protocol on ensuring the security of Afghanistan in the upcoming years. The document particularly stipulates the necessity to preserve the sovereignty of the Afghan state and its territorial integrity, and promote its economic development and peaceful settlement.

On the sidelines of the Istanbul conference the Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan held bilateral meetings with his counterparts from Afghanistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Germany as well as with U.S Deputy Secretary of State, Secretary Generals of the OIC and the OSCE. At the meetings prospects of bilateral cooperation and current international issues of Kazakhstan’s chairing the OIC and the OSCE Forum for Security Cooperation, and measures taken by the international community to advance the peace process in Afghanistan were discussed.

[Back to Contents](#)

## Aid Programme Helps Afghan Students Study in Kazakhstan



Afghan students pose for a group photo at the Abai Kazakh State Opera and Ballet Theatre in Almaty

Photo from *Hazara united.com*

ALMATY – In five years, 1,000 Afghan students will receive higher degrees in Kazakhstan under Kazakhstan’s new programme of socio-economic and humanitarian aid to their country. The first group is studying at Al-Farabi Kazakh National University and Sanzhar Asfendiyarov Kazakh National Medical University (KazNMU).

According to the KazNMU rector, Professor Aikan Akanov, the university now has international students from 12 countries who have been drawn by the university’s high quality medical training and solid fundamental base, as well as by the country’s

stability. Kazakhstan’s education is introducing European standards, which, in the rector’s opinion, will attract even more foreign students in the future.

The medical and teaching professions offered to foreign students are civilian and peaceful. Seventy-six Afghan students, including two women, have chosen to study medicine in order to help their own people.

The Medical University has opened a course of fundamentals specifically for the Afghan students. After finishing that course, they could enroll in medical universities and colleges. In early February, the students took the exam in the Russian language and then went home to Afghanistan for a two-week vacation. They returned to Almaty aboard the Kazakh Emergency Ministry’s plane with renewed vigour to studying the core subjects included in the entrance examinations: the Kazakh language, biology, chemistry, and the history of Kazakhstan.

Kuanyshbek Karabayev, Dean of the Foundation Department, says the students are living in a nice new building. Karabayev spends most of his time with them. Together they visit theatres, museums, exhibitions and concerts. The Afghan students are enthusiastic and actively involved in university life. So far, they’ve organized football and volleyball clubs, as well as other amateur clubs which reflect their various talents. Most of them have laptops and communicate with relatives back home over the Internet.

According to the dean, the Afghan youth have an intense thirst for knowledge. Their Russian is quite fluent, they have a good command of English, and they are literate and competent in many fields of knowledge. The main thing, however, is that their choice of profession was not accidental, but conscientious.

The most active among them are well advanced in Russian and get top grades. These scholars include Abdulla Saadat, Mohammad Zakir, Roman Seddeki, and Shoybulla Rahimi.

Mahbub-ula Habibi, the group’s head student, monitors academic progress and helps out his fellow students with any difficulties. Arif Ahmad is another activist, a football player with excellent management skills. When his needy fellow countrymen were tight on money, he and his friend went to the dean’s office and suggested helping them out of his own pocket. Ahmad Arif is not only a good friend and student, but also an enthusiastic dancer.

“I like living and studying here. People are friendly, the atmosphere is relaxed. We all have a common home and common interests. We are friends with Kazakh students, go to the mosque that teaches discipline, and perform Salah. God loves purity both in the body and soul,” Arif said.

Arif wants to become a first-class surgeon in the future. He is well on his way toward his dream: this year, he became a first-year student of the university’s general medicine department. (He also joined the dance club, but admits that he has little time for dancing, since a medical student’s daily schedule is packed.)

Ninety-nine percent of the students that took the foundation course last year went on to become freshmen at the university. All of them receive scholarships, live in the dorm, attend hobby groups at

**Over 1,000 Afghan students will receive Kazakh university degrees in medicine and teaching.**

leisure and continue to learn more about the culture and traditions of Kazakhstan. They are part of 1,200 first-year students living a normal student life.

The university's rector says that earlier this fall, the second group of 80 Afghan students, including ten women, enrolled in the foundation course under the agreement. Like the first group, they are learning the Kazakh and Russian languages, and the history of Kazakhstan. After the New Year, they will begin to study the majors they'll have to pass in the entrance exams. According to Aikan Akanov, the new students are adapting smoothly.

Under the agreement, the third group arrives next year. In all, the university plans to train about 200 healthcare professionals to working in, and for the good of, Afghanistan.

[Back to Contents](#)

## Kazakh Test Site Closure Reminds of Need to Ratify CTBT, US Official Says



Rose Gottemoeller  
Photo from the web site of the US  
Department of State

The 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the closure of the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site in Kazakhstan reminds “that the way to finally preclude nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions is through universal signature and ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and its entry into force”, Rose Gottemoeller, U.S. assistant secretary of state for arms control, verification and compliance said.

In a November 2 interview with the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, Rose Gottemoeller, one of the most experienced experts in nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, noted “Kazakhstan has been a strong voice on behalf of nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament, while engaging in efforts to mitigate the effects of past Soviet testing practices for their people and territory” after it declared itself a non-nuclear weapons state under the Non-Proliferation Treaty and closed the Semipalatinsk Test Site.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the country gave up the world's fourth largest nuclear arsenal and completely dismantled the infrastructure of the old Soviet nuclear test site in Semipalatinsk.

Since that time, Kazakhstan has supported international efforts to strengthen the security of the nuclear fuel cycle and eliminate the risks of proliferation of fissile materials and has been involved in numerous initiatives. Kazakhstan was one of the founders of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism jointly launched by Russia and the United States. The Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, signed in Semipalatinsk, created the first nuclear-weapons-free zone entirely located in the northern hemisphere, and the first such zone bordering two nuclear powers.

In 2009, in recognition of Kazakhstan's contribution to strengthening the non-proliferation regime, the United Nations General Assembly declared 29 August – the day when President Nazarbayev issued a decree shutting down the Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test Site – as the International Day of Actions against Nuclear Tests.

Today, Kazakhstan stands for the development of ‘atoms for peace’ under the auspices of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and President Nazarbayev has declared the country's readiness to host an IAEA low-enriched uranium bank.

**Rose Gottemoeller: “Kazakhstan has been a strong voice on behalf of nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament”.**

On October 12-13 this year, the Government of Kazakhstan convened the “International Forum for a Nuclear Weapons-Free World” which brought together 400 scientists, experts politicians and representatives from different countries and international organizations, including IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano and, Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission of the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty Organization Tibor Toth.

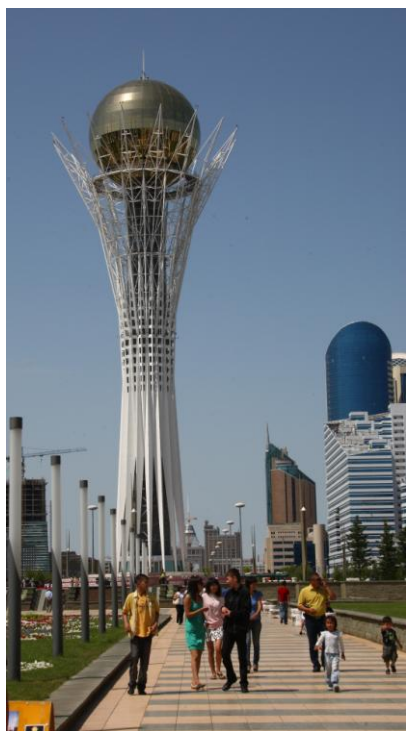
“Together we can engage audiences at the government and non-governmental level – we can reach mothers, fathers, students, retirees, government workers, factory workers and farmers. Since explosive nuclear testing affects us all, the goal should be to have people talking about the CTBT in their legislatures and around their kitchen tables. Leading by example, Kazakhstan and the United States can build the momentum needed to bring the CTBT into force”, Gottemoeller said at the Forum who among others also visited ‘the ground zero’ of the former Semipalatinsk test site as part of the Forum’s second day programme in Kurchatov.

Today the site serves as a realtime training ground for inspectors. “Indeed, Kazakhstan has offered on several occasions the use of sections of the former Semipalatinsk Test Site for the purpose of conducting training for on-site inspection surrogate inspectors and for testing of equipment that might be used during the conduct of an on-site inspection once the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty enters into force. The most recent major exercise of this type was the 2008 integrated field exercise. Such training and testing exercises are carried out by the Provisional Technical Secretariat (PTS) of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organization in coordination with the host country,” Gottemoeller also said in the interview.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) bans all nuclear explosions in all environments, for military or civilian purposes. It was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 September 1996 but it has not entered into force. It opened for signature in New York on 24 September 1996, when it was signed by 71 States, including five of the eight then nuclear-capable states. As of September 2011, 155 states have ratified the CTBT and another 27 states have signed but not ratified it.

[Back to Contents](#)

## Kazakhstan Shows High Human Development, Moves Up One Point in UN Ranking



The Astana residents  
Photo by the Foreign Ministry  
of Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan has achieved significant results on indicators of Human Development Index (HDI) this year, ranking 68<sup>th</sup> among 187 countries, according to the United Nations 2011 Human Development Report presented on November 2.

The country’s HDI value for 2011 equaled 0.745, which improves Kazakhstan’s rank by one point compared to last year. In 2010, the national HDI stood at 0.740, placing the country to the 66<sup>th</sup> place, yet among 169 countries. As in the previous year, the country was again included in the list of 46 countries with high human development. In the period of 2005-2011, Kazakhstan’s HDI ranking moved two points upward, the HDI value increasing from 0.714 to 0.745.

As the report notes, the HDI is a composite index measuring average achievement in three basic dimensions of human development – a long and healthy life, knowledge, and a decent standard of living. The indicator of the first dimension – the quality of life – is life expectancy at birth. In 2011, this indicator equaled 67.0 years in Kazakhstan, whereas in 2010, it was reported as 65.4 years. The second dimension – the quality of education – is measured with mean years of schooling and expected years of schooling. On these indicators, Kazakhstan demonstrates 10.4 and 15.1 years respectively. As for the standard of living, this dimension is measured by the value of gross national income (GNI) per capita. In 2011, Kazakhstan’s GNI

per capita equaled US \$ 10,585.

In addition, the 2011 report includes values of Gender Inequality Index, which represents a composite measure that reflects inequality in achievements between women and men. In 2011, Kazakhstan has ranked 56<sup>th</sup> on this index, demonstrating a significant improvement

**66**  
**For the index of Multidimensional Poverty Kazakhstan shows a very small value of 0.002.**

compared to 2008 when it occupied the 67<sup>th</sup> position.

As for the index of Multidimensional Poverty, that is the percentage of the population that is multidimensionally poor, Kazakhstan shows a very small value of 0.002. Moreover, the report indicates zero for the percentage of the population in severe poverty. As in previous years, Kazakhstan has demonstrated a high adult literacy rate, which is equal to 99.7 percent.

The 2011 report shows Kazakhstan trailing Russia by two points and outpacing Turkmenistan, ranking 102<sup>nd</sup>, Uzbekistan (115), Kyrgyzstan (126), and Tajikistan (127).

Among former Soviet Union countries, Belarus ranks highest with the 65<sup>th</sup> position followed by Russia, while Tajikistan ranks lowest.

The HDI leaders are Norway, Australia, and The Netherlands, while Burundi, Niger, and the Democratic Republic of Congo have the lowest scores.

The Human Development Report is an independent yearly publication of the United Nations Development Programme. The first report was published in 1990. It introduced the human development index as a new indicator. The main idea behind HDI is that a country's health and education situation must be considered together with its economic growth when evaluating its development level.

[Back to Contents](#)

### Also in the News:

- President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan met with Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces as a part of his working visit to the United Arab Emirates on November 3. The parties discussed bilateral cooperation, highlighting successful activity of the Al Hilal Bank in Kazakhstan.
- President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan congratulated Kyrgyzstan's newly elected president Almazbek Atambayev on November 2. In his message Nazarbayev expressed his hope for further strengthening stability in Kyrgyzstan, political, economic and social modernization of the country.
- Prime Minister Karim Massimov of Kazakhstan met with Xiaoyu Zhao, Vice President of Asian Development Bank to discuss the progress of implementation of the Western Europe – Western China project on November 4. The sides also discussed preparation of the ADB's cooperation strategy with Kazakhstan for 2012-2016.
- Prime Minister Karim Massimov of Kazakhstan held a meeting with France's Minister of Industry, Energy and the Digital Economy Eric Besson in Astana on November 4, the Premier's [official site](#) reports. The sides discussed topical issues of joint projects implementation in the oil and gas and transport spheres as well as in the field of nuclear energy.
- Samruk-Kazyna National Welfare Fund (NWF) will launch 20 scholarships for young researchers in Kazakhstan, NWF Chairman Timur Kulibayev announced on November 1.
- The role of USAID in Kazakhstan has shifted from one of assistance to partnership, US Ambassador Kenneth Fairfax said in his statement on November 4 on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). "This transition from assistance to partnership is yet another reflection of the fact that, ultimately, USAID strives to "work itself out of a job" by helping Kazakhstan to become one of the world's economic and political leaders," Fairfax said.
- Eleven students from Mangystau regional Kazakh-Turkish High School won prize-winning places at the 26<sup>th</sup> "Mostratek" International Olympiad on science projects and technologies held in Brazil, [kazinform](#) reported on November 2. More than 1,000 students from 20 countries presented 350 projects at the competition.
- On November 3, International exhibition "Kazakhstan Health and Prosperity 2011" opened in Astana, [kazinform](#) reports. The exhibition is aimed to promote modern techniques and equipments to maintain and enhance health of Kazakhstan's citizens. More than 60 health service companies took part in the event.

- Kazakhstan singer Svetlana Kasyan, a youth opera programme artist of the Bolshoi Theatre, won the first laureate prize at the Fifth International Vocalist Contest in China on November 3, [tengrinews](#) reports. The International Vocalist Contest is one of the biggest musical contests in China held once in three years in the city of Ningbo,
- The Fifth International Forum “Informatisation of the System of Education” took place in Astana on November 3. According to Askar Zhumagaliyev, Minister of Communication and Information, the number of Internet users in Kazakhstan reached 41%, or 6.7 million people.

### **Things to watch:**

- Prime Minister Karim Massimov of Kazakhstan will participate in the session of the Council of Heads of Government of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) to be held in St. Petersburg on November 7. The Council is expected to adopt a joint statement on economic situation in the world and in the SCO space, a joint communiqué, and other documents.
- Minister of Foreign Affairs Zalmai Rasul of Afghanistan is to pay an official visit to Astana on November 14-16.
- Kazakhstan’s Minister of Foreign Affairs Yerzhan Kazykhanov will participate in the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in Vilnius, Lithuania on December 6-7.

---

ASTANA CALLING is a bi-weekly online publication of  
the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan  
Please send your requests and questions to [pressa@mfa.kz](mailto:pressa@mfa.kz)