

‘KAZAKHSTAN – CLOSER TO ARMENIA’

Back in 2010 “Armedia” Informational, Analytical Agency published the handbook “Kazakhstan: Far and Close”. It was the first book published in Armenian that gave comprehensive information about the history, culture, government structure, social relations of the country. The interest and positive reaction of the readers served as an impetus for “Armedia” IAA to publish, jointly with its partner “European Integration” NGO and with the support of the Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the Republic of Armenia, the handbook “Kazakhstan – Closer to Armenia”. The present book introduces even vaster information about the modern political, economic, social and cultural life of the country, about Armenian-Kazakh relations. As compared to the previous edition, the geography of the project has also become wider: the handbook comprises interviews, interesting information that the author group of “Armedia” IAA has gathered visiting not only Astana, but also Almaty and Karaganda. The project was fulfilled with the support of the Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the Republic of Armenia.

Taking into consideration also the interest of the Kazakh public towards the project, the handbook “Kazakhstan Closer to Armenia” is published in both Armenian and English languages.

The handbook is intended for broad circles of readers.

“ՂԱՋԱԽՍՏԱՆ՝ ԱՎԵԼԻ ՄՈՏ ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆԻՆ”

Դեռեւս 2010թ. “Արմեդիա” տեղեկատվական, վերլուծական գործակալությունը հրապարակել էր “Հեռու և մոտ Ղազախստան” ձեռնարկը: Վերջինս Ղազախստանի մասին հայերեն լեզվով տպագրված առաջին գիրքն էր, որը համապարփակ տեղեկատվություն էր տրամադրում այդ երկրի պատմության, մշակույթի, պետական համակարգի, սոցիալական հարաբերությունների մասին: Ընթերցողների մոտ առաջացրած հետաքրքրությունն ու դրական արձագանքն առիթ հանդիսացան, որպեսզի “Արմեդիա” ՏՎԳ-ն՝ գործընկեր “Եվրոպական ինտեգրացիա” ՀԿ հետ համատեղ՝ եւ Հայաստանի Հանրապետությունում Ղազախստանի Հանրապետության դեսպանության օժանդակությամբ, հանդես գա “Ղազախստան՝ ավելի մոտ Հայաստանին” ձեռնարկի հրատարակմամբ: Վերջինս, համալրելով Ղազախստանի մասին առաջին գրքում ներկայացված նյութերն, առավել ընդգրկուն տեղեկատվություն է տրամադրում այդ երկրի ժամանակակից քաղաքական, տնտեսական, սոցիալական եւ մշակութային կյանքի, հայ-ղազախական հարաբերությունների մասին: Նախորդ ծրագրի համեմատությամբ ընդլայնվել է նաեւ նախագծի աշխարհագրությունը. ձեռնարկում ներկայացված են հարցազրույցներ, հետաքրքիր տեղեկատվություն, որոնք ձեռք են բերվել “Արմեդիա” ՏՎԳ հեղինակային խմբի՝ ինչպես Աստանա, այնպես էլ Ալմա Աթի եւ Կարագանդա քաղաքներ կատարած այցերի արդյունքում: Ծրագիրն իրականացվել է Հայաստանի Հանրապետությունում Ղազախստանի Հանրապետության դեսպանության աջակցությամբ:

Հաշվի առնելով նախագծի նկատմամբ նաեւ Ղազախստանի հանրության մեծ հետաքրքրությունը՝ “Ղազախստան՝ ավելի մոտ Հայաստանին” ձեռնարկը տպագրվում է հայերեն եւ անգլերեն լեզուներով:

Ձեռնարկը նախատեսված է ընթերցող լայն շրջանակների համար:

“Казахстан – все ближе для Армении”

Еще в 2010 году информационно-аналитическое агентство “Армедиа” опубликовало книгу “Далекий и близкий Казахстан”. Эта книга была первым подобным изданием о Казахстане на армянском языке, вобравшим в себя сведения об истории этой страны, ее культуре, государственной структуре, общественных отношениях.

Выказанный читателями интерес и положительные отклики о книге стали причиной того, чтобы НПО “Европейская интеграция” совместно со своим партнером ИАА “Армедиа” и при содействии Посольства Республики Казахстан в Республике Армения опубликовали книгу “Казахстан – все ближе для Армении”. Эта книга, дополнив информацию, собранную в нашем первом издании о Казахстане, предоставляет читателям более полные сведения о современной политике и экономике этой страны, об общественной и культурной жизни, об армяно-казахстанских взаимоотношениях.

В данном издании по сравнению с прошлым сборником расширилась также география представленных материалов: в книге представлены интервью и интересные материалы, которые были собраны авторской группой ИАА “Армедиа” как в Астане, так и в Алматы и Караганде. Визит журналистов в Казахстан осуществился при содействии Посольства Казахстана в РА.

Учитывая интерес к проекту и казахстанской общественности, книга “Казахстан – все ближе для Армении” публикуется на армянском и английском языках.

Книга предназначена для широкого круга читателей.

Bozzhigitov A.E.

**Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the Republic of Armenia**

Dear readers!

I am glad to greet you on the pages of the book “Kazakhstan – closer to Armenia” prepared and published by “European Integration” NGO.

The book you are holding could virtuously be called a “table book” about Kazakhstan, about its history and establishment as a modern, independent and prospering country. With this book you will make a short excursion into the history of Kazakhstan of ancient, Middle and modern times; the political structure and economy of the country, the culture and traditions of the Kazakh people will be introduced to you. The book also comprises materials on the relations between Kazakhstan and Armenia. The book is abundant in interviews, responses and comments of Armenian and Kazakh representatives of official, public and cultural circles concerning Kazakhstan and Armenia, about friendship between the two peoples.

I can't help mentioning that the book was published in the year of the twentieth anniversary of Kazakhstan's independence. Twenty years ago Kazakhstan entered a new phase of its history opening the way to establishment as an independent and sovereign state. However, the road the people of Kazakhstan had to overcome during those years wasn't an easy one for the country.

At the dawn of its independence the people of Kazakhstan, just like many countries of the post-Soviet territory, witnessed how the system of political, economic and other ties with neighboring countries, that had formed during decades, was destructed; how factories and plants were closed down, how the industrial-productive complex was stagnated. Meanwhile, under the first President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev a process was launched to create our own model of development, to overcome the first hurdles of transition to market economy, to adopt measures rather unpopular at the moment but vital and concerning reformation of certain branches of economy, our own financial system.

And it was at this very crucial moment in the history of the country that, thanks to the President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev, who assumed the whole responsibility for maintenance and strengthening of the independence of the state, the Kazakh people took the strategically correct way of its development, which gave an opportunity to get the country out of stagnation; to modernize the economy; to provide high level of life for the population; to develop and implement policy of inter-ethnic solidarity and religious tolerance; to

preserve and enhance stability and security within the country; to have a standing in the international arena as an authoritative, reliable and responsible partner. I am certainly grateful to the author group of the book for including in it materials telling about these pages of history of Kazakhstan and without which it would be impossible to get to know Kazakhstan fully.

I believe this book will be useful to a wide circle of readers interested in the history of Kazakhstan and also in the friendly relations between Kazakhstan Armenia.

Aram Safaryan

Deputy of the National Assembly of the RA,
Head of “Armenia-Kazakhstan” Friendship Group

Our friend Kazakhstan is one of the major countries that, after the collapse of the former USSR, attracted the world’s attention with its not ultimately revealed history, unique culture and rich natural resources. During the twenty years of its post-Soviet development Kazakhstan has become a powerful, well-organized and democratic country, which, as many experts believe, tends to turn into an influential regional power. The secular and democratic Kazakh state model stands out to the world as a successful example of collaboration and cooperation of the nations living here, of freedom of conscience and faith, of liberal economy and social protection of the public.

Through reasonable and elaborate exploitation of gas and oil resources Kazakhstan continually develops its culture, education and science, thus trying to improve the quality of life based on world experience, to make its citizen competitive in the world according to the strictest criteria.

The leader of Kazakhstan, His Excellency Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev, who was recently reelected to his office by the absolute majority of his voters, is persistent in his efforts to pursue the authority of his country throughout the world, to develop cooperation with friendly countries based on equality and respect of mutual interests. He is, specifically a great friend of Armenia and the Armenian nation, and has proved this on several occasions. The Heads of our two countries maintain relations founded on reciprocal respect, sympathy and trust, which contributes to bilateral cooperation and coordinated steps in the international arena.

Both Kazakhstan and Armenia are members of such organizations as the UN, CIS, OCST, the OSCE and our collaboration is quite obvious in all these formats.

A large Armenian community lives in Kazakhstan and this is a fast bridge for the friendship of our two countries. Armenians constitute an equitable and unique part of the multinational Kazakh society and live active economic, cultural and community life.

The leaders of the Parliaments of Armenia and Kazakhstan have always been and are still collaborating and cooperating. Undoubtedly, inter-parliamentary contacts should and must be strengthened. However, one could definitely say that many of our parliamentarians personally know each other, cooperate and even have established friendly relations.

The development of our economic ties has great perspectives as the existing examples of mutually beneficial cooperation are optimistic.

By inviting you to read this, in all respects, useful book I honestly hope that you will acknowledge Kazakhstan as it is and this might become an impetus for you to think of making your own contribution in the gratifying work of developing the Armenian-Kazakh contacts.

Introduction

Kazakhstan, situated in the center of Europe, has rich historical and cultural past. Being at the intersection of the oldest civilizations, it has always played the role of a bridge in social and economic, cultural and ideological relations of Europe and Asia. The famous Silk Road crossed this country.

After the collapse of the USSR and gaining independence, the Republic of Kazakhstan has been conducting its own policy thus becoming a leading country and an engine power for regional integration. It has its unique place in the CIS, in regional structures and in international organizations. The growth of economy of Kazakhstan, its stability, peaceful coexistence of about 130 nationalities on its territory, all this witness about the elaborate and far-reaching policy.

The fact that Kazakhstan was selected the OSCE Chair in 2010; that it chaired the Shanghai Organization in 2010-2011, and for 2011-2012 it was selected to chair the Islamic Conference, comes to prove the growth of authority of the country.

In June 2009 partner of “European Integration” NGO “Armedia” IAA fulfilled the project “View at the world: Far and Close Kazakhstan” under the auspices of the Embassy of Kazakhstan in the RA. The aim of the project was to introduce the recent developments in this former Soviet republic to the Armenian nation because, after the collapse of the USSR, we have faced a situation when there is lack of information about each other. The visit resulted in the first book in Armenian “Kazakhstan: Far and Close” comprising some general information about the economic, social, cultural spheres of the countries.

After the above mentioned book and a series of TV programs about Kazakhstan, the second shooting group visited Kazakhstan with an even broader program. We were curious to find out what the Kazakhs know about Armenia. The elder and middle generations could still remember Armenia; specifically Armenian cognac, however, the younger generation lacked the knowledge. But virtually everybody noted the leader of the Soviet Kazakhstan of the 1930s, the First Secretary of the Central Committee Levon Mirzoyan, who had a vast contribution in the development of Kazakhstan. He was revered “Mirzajan” meaning “a bright man with a rich soul”.

We hope, that the second book about Kazakhstan will also be admitted with interest by the reader.

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL INFORMATION

Geography

The Republic of Kazakhstan is a country in Central Asia. With its area of about 2.724.900 square kilometers Kazakhstan is the ninth largest country in the world.

Administratively Kazakhstan comprises 14 regions and 2 cities of republican significance.

Kazakh “Yellow steppe” is in the central parts of the country. In the north, the upper course of the River Ishim passes through Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan, and in its western part Turgai Plateau and Ulytau holy mountains are situated. The Altai, Saur-Tarbagatai Mountains are in the east, and Lake Zaysan is in a hollow between them. From the south to the east of Kazakhstan the Tian Shan Mountains lie, which have 7000 meters height on the border of Kyrgyzstan and China (the highest peak is Khan Tengri – 6995 meters). In the south-east the Dzungarian Alatau and Zaili Alatau Mountains are situated, and the former capital of the country Almaty lies at the foot of the latter mountain range. Pricaspian Lowland lies in the west of the country. The Lowland of Karaki (Batir) is located in Mangyshlak Peninsula; it is 132 meters below the sea level. The Ustyurt Plateau lies in the eastern part of the Peninsula. The West Siberian Plain is in the north of the country.

The largest rivers are the Ural and the Emba flowing into the Caspian Sea, the Syr Darya flowing into the Aral Sea, the Ili River flowing into Lake Balkhash, the Irtysh flowing into the Ob. The largest lakes are the Aral, the Balkhash, and the Zaysan. The coast of the Caspian Sea in Kazakhstan stretches for 2340 kilometers. 26% of the country’s territory is occupied by steppes, 44% by deserts, 14% by semi deserts, and 3% by forests.

Typical representatives of the animal world are wild pigs (boars), squirrels, wolverines, lynx, panthers, grey bears, wolves, deer, marmots, gophers, rabbits.

Minerals

The country is rich in minerals. 99 of 105 elements of Mendeleev’s table can be found in Kazakhstan, Supplies of 70 of them have been studied, and more than 60 elements are being extracted. According to geological-economic assessment of the existing supplies of minerals

black coal, petroleum, copper, iron, sulfur, zinc, chromites, gold, and manganese are the most valuable ones in the economic sense.

In the world Kazakhstan is the first in the volume of studied supplies of zinc, wolfram, barite; it's the second with silver, lead, chromite; the third with copper, fluorite; the fourth with molybdenum; the sixth with gold.

Among the CIS countries Kazakhstan has the first largest reserve of minerals such as chrome and plumbum, the second largest reserve of petroleum, silver, copper, manganese, zinc, nickel, and phosphor raw, the third reserve of gas, black coal, gold and stanum.

Kazakhstan has considerable supplies of petroleum and gas centralized in the western area of the country, which places Kazakhstan among the largest oil producing countries. The new oil fields discovered in the area of South Turgay lowland expand the future perspectives of development of petroleum production of the Republic. Kashagan oil field is the 5th largest oil field in the world, which has 7-9 billion barrels reserves, the total estimated geological supplies of oil-bearing structure are about 40 billion barrels.

The investigated supplies of gas are 2.7 billion tons, which make 1.5% of world supplies, and of uranium is 1.69 million tons, which is 21%.

With its petroleum supplies Kazakhstan is the 7th country in the world, with gas supplies the 6th country, with uranium supplies the 2nd country in the world. By 2017 the country will become one of the ten largest gas and oil producing and exporting countries.

Being situated in the central part of Eurasian continent Kazakhstan has great opportunities of transport and communication in the field of transit transportations and is of great interest to many of the world countries. Only the length of the railroad is 14.5 thousand kilometers. The main ports are Aktau and Bautino giving direct access to Iran and Azerbaijan.

Kazakhs are mixture of Turkic and Mongolian nomad tribes, who came and settled in the present territories of Kazakhstan in the 13th century. It became a Soviet Republic in 1936.

Its population is **16.4** million (as of November 2011), 53.4% of which are Kazakhs, 30% Russians, 3.7% Ukrainians, 2.5% Uzbeks, 2.4% Germans, 1.7% Tatars, 1.7% Uyghurs, etc.

The state language is Kazakh, in state institutions Russian is officially and equally used with Kazakh.

Currency is tenge: \$1=**148.55** tenge (as of November 2011)

Religion: Muslims 47%; Russian Orthodoxies 44%; Protestants 2%; other 7%.

State Symbols

State Emblem of the Republic of Kazakhstan

The State Emblem of the Republic of Kazakhstan was adopted on 4th of June, 1992. The authors are well-known architects Zhandarbek Melibekov and Shota Ualikhanov.

The Emblem of Kazakhstan has the form of a circle, the central element of which is shanyrak – a round aperture crowning the dome of yurta. Shanirak is the symbol of family well-being, peace, calmness. The zenith aperture of yurta reminds the bright sun on the background of the peaceful sky. Dome poles - uyks, spreading from the center at regular intervals, remind sun rays. In a general sense, the Emblem reflects the peaceful nature of Kazakhs.

On the two sides of the State Emblem tulpars are depicted, which are fantastic racers with horns in the form of half moons and with gold wings, which characterize fearlessness of a lion, physical force of a hawk, speed and plasticity of a deer, cunning and resoluteness of a fox in the struggle against enemies. Gold wings of horses remind also heaves of grain spikes – the symbol of work, abundance and material welfare.

The five-pointed star crowning the Kazakhstan Emblem has the following meaning: our heart and arms are open for the representatives of all the five continents.

The gold color of the Emblem corresponds to the bright future of the people of Kazakhstan, and the blue color of it speaks about the aspiration of the country towards peace, agreement, friendship and unity to live in full harmony with all the nations of the planet.

National Flag of the Republic of Kazakhstan

The flag of Kazakhstan was adopted on 24 January 1996. The author is Shaken Niyazbekov.

It constitutes a blue rectangular material with the image of a national ornamental pattern "koshkar-muiz" (the horns of the ram) in gold in the left side, and a gold sun and a soaring golden steppe eagle in the centre. At the same time, the sun rays have the shape of grains.

The blue color of the flag shows the cultural-ethnic unity of the nation and simultaneously, symbolizes the concept of inseparability of the country.

The golden eagle or steppe eagle plays an important role in the world outlook of nomadic tribes. For steppe inhabitants it is the symbol of freedom, independence, strive for height,

flight to the future. Besides, it is able with all its strong will to give a worthy counterblow to anybody, who will try to disturb its flight to future.

National anthem of the Republic of Kazakhstan

In the sky is the gold sun,
In steppe is gold grain.
The legend of courage is my country.
In a gray-haired antiquity
Our glory was born,
Kazakh people are proud and strong.

Refrain:

O, my people! O, my country!
I am a flower grown by you!
I am a song ringing on your lips,
My Native land is my Kazakhstan!
Your open space is vast
Also road is opened to the future.
My people are independent,
Rallied and uniform
As the immemorial friend
Meets new time
Our happy country, our people!

Refrain:

O, my people! O, my country!
I am a flower grown by you!
I am a song ringing on your lips,
My Native land is my Kazakhstan!

Historical review

One of the ancient forms of world civilization – stock-raising nomad economy was formed in the Northern steppe area of Central Asia. Here horses were curbed; camels, wild shepherds and mountain sheep were domesticated.

According to archaeological findings of 2-1 millennium BC different nomad tribes inhabited the territory of Kazakhstan: Chuds (Ugres) in the east, and Asian Scythians – Sacs – in the south. Later, different nations passed through these territories: Uysuns and Huns at the beginning of our era; Turkic people in the 6-8 centuries; Oguz in the 10-11 centuries; Mongol-Tatars in the 13-14 centuries. Each of the mentioned nations left their trace on the gene pool of Kazakh tribes, language, culture, activities and organizational structure.

Most legends assume that Alasha Khan (Alshin Khan) was the founder of the Kazakh nation. The word “Kazakh” means “free and independent” in the old Turkic language.

The Greeks called the nations living in the territories from the Mongol mountains to the Dniepr and the Danube the Scythians, and Persians called them Sacs. Written information on the tribes living in the present territory of Kazakhstan can be found in the “The Histories” of Herodotus, where he describes the Sacs (from 7-3 centuries BC) and mentions about their neighborhood with Achaemenid Persia. Neither Persian Emperor Cyrus, nor Emperor Darius were able to win the rider detachments of bellicose Scythians. Alexander the Great, who was called Iskander the Bicorn (because of the form of his helmet), stopped his victorious headway to the East near the River Syr Darya (also called Yaxartes) in 327 BC, founded the city of Alexandria Eschate (later Khujand) and, deciding not to enter the unbounded steppes, headed for the South – India.

Famous monuments of Scythian culture are the necropolis of Bes-Shatir (Five Tents) in the head waters of the Ili River and the barrow of the Issyk near Almaty, where bones of a noble Scythian were discovered with armor made from golden tins (6-5 centuries B.C.), who was called “Golden Man” by researchers. One can come across the monuments of “Golden Man” in Almaty, in other cities of the country, as well as in museums.

Various ancient countries existed in the territories of Kazakhstan, for example, Oguz, Karakhan, Karluk. Dozens of cities were located in the direction of the River Syr-Darya and on the coast of the Aral Sea; they stood on the Silk Road. One of them, Chirik-Rabat was the capital of old Sac, later of Oghuz country. The city of Taraz, which was an important city on the Silk Road, connecting the East to the West is also worth mentioning.

Until the Mongol invasion, during 6-13 centuries Western-Turkic, Turgesh, Karluk kaganates, Oguz, Karakhan, Kimek, Kipchak states existed on the territory of Kazakhstan. After the Mongol invasion, the Chagatai Ulus and Juchi Ulus of the Mongol Empire were

formed, which later gave birth to Ak Orda, Mongolia, later to Kazakh Khanate. In the 13th century, the territory of Kazakhstan entered into the Golden Horde, and after its destruction by Lenk Timur in the 15th century, Nogai Horde (present lands of western Kazakhstan) was established in the west in 1440 and Uzbek khanate in the east in 1428 (after famous khan Uzbek, who brought Islam into Golden Horde).

After the attacks of armies of Genghis Khan, in the second half of the 15th century the first Kazakh khanates appeared, and already in the first half of the 16th century the Kazakh nation was completely formed.

Kazakh Khan Qasim (1445-1521) managed to unite the steppe tribes. His work of strengthening the Kazakh Khanate was continued by his son Khak-Nazar Khan (reigning 1538-1580), later by Tauke Khan (1680-1718). Due to the latter, the nomadic state became united with its capital Turkestan, laws were adopted in the Kazakh khanate, according to which new famous Kazakh **districts** Tole-bi (Senior Juz), Kazbek-bi (Middle Juz) and Aiteke-bi (Junior Juz) were created.

Kazakh Khanate was destroyed in 1718 by the attacks of Dzungar people, but it continued to preserve the division into three Juzes inherited from the Mongols.

During 1723-1727 a formidable and bloody attack occurred, which has remained in the history of the nation as "the years of the Great disaster", when considerable part of the Kazakh people living in hostile lands were annihilated by the Dzungars. Turkestan and Tashkent cities were conquered, numerous people remaining unsheltered headed for Uzbek lands: Samarkand and Bukhara.

After these events, the Kazakh people were obliged to ask assistance from Russia. In 1717, for the first time, Tauke Khan applied to Peter I asking to take Kazakhs under the subordination of Russia, but without paying Yasak (tribute), without accomplishing responsibilities and preserving the power of the Khanate. Peter I immediately appreciated the significance of the Kazakh Khanate for the foreign policy of Russia, which was moving to the East – to the Pacific Ocean. But, for some reasons, Kazakhs didn't get any help from Russia, as Kazakh-Dzungar wars were advantageous for it. Siberian governor, Knyaz Matvey Gagarin, with whom the negotiations for unification were carried out personally, understood that it would cause trouble in the relations of Russia and Dzungaria and would break the economic projects of appropriating the lands rich in gold and silver along the River Irtysh.

Already in 1730, Abul Khair Khan of Junior Juz again asked for assistance, this time from Empress Anna and proposed a military alliance against the Dzungars. But Russia, having far-reaching plans, agreed only to Protectorate. Then, Khan Abul Mambet of Middle Juz and his cousin sultan Ablai maneuvering between the two powerful empires ("between lion and dragon") adopted double subjugation: both to Russia and to China (1740). Senior Juz was at

that time under the influence of the Khanate of Kokand, which was suppressing it from the south.

It should be mentioned that Dzungaria was conducting a war also against the Chinese and Kazakh Ablai Khan was trying to assist it in preserving a united state. This is what he thought: “It is better to have Dzungaria on the boundaries, which has lost its power than Qin Empire”. But Chinese abolished Dzungaria and established the province of Sintsyan (New Boundary) in 1761.

Kazakhstan within the Russian Empire

Kazakhstan joined the Russian Empire on voluntary bases in the second half of the 19th century. In 1906-1912, as a result of Stolypin agrarian reforms, 500 000 family farms moved to Kazakhstan from the central parts of Russia, and 17 million tithes of best lands were allocated to them.

In 1907 the “Law on the Elections of State Duma” was adopted, which deprived native inhabitants of Siberia, Middle Asia and Kazakhstan of the universal suffrage. It was forbidden to call up these people for military service, but when World War I began, they were sent to work in the rear by the order of Nicolai II, which resulted in the uprisings by the people of Turkestan and Kazakh steppes. At that time, escaping from the forced labor and persecutions, some part of Kazakh dynasties left for China.

After the February Revolution and formation of the provisional government in 1917, the pro-Cadet part of the Kazakh intelligentsia held the First Nationwide Congress in Orenburg in June. The main topics of the agenda were: a democratic federal parliamentary republic should be established in Russia; Kazakh regions must get independence there; the issue of land must be settled. Delegates from Kazakh districts were selected for the Pan-Russian founding congress, including famous Russian scientist-ethnographer Grigory Potanin from Semipalatinsk district, as well as delegates for the “Shura-I-Islam” Congress of the Russian Muslims involving Alkey Satapayev – Kanish Satapayev’s elder brother who later became the first president of the Academy of Sciences of the Kazakh SSR.

Actually, the first pan-Kazakh Congress turned into the political party “Alash” led by Alikhan Bukeykhanov and Akhmet Baytursinov.

Absolute majority of the party didn’t admit the socialist program of the Bolsheviks and united under the motto “Freedom of the Kazakh nation from the colonial yoke”.

In December 1917 the Second Pan-Kirghiz Congress was held in Orenburg. It proclaimed the autonomy of Kazakh-Kirgiz areas under the name of “Alash” within the future Russian

Federation and established People's Council (Government): Horde of Alash, where 10 out of 25 seats were allocated to Russians and other nations. But the Horde of Alash supported the Mensheviks and tried to cooperate with the Provisional Government of Siberia, but the latter rejected them.

In early 1920 the Horde of Alash was liquidated by the Bolsheviks, later its leaders were shot. Turkestan autonomy, including the lands of the Syr-Darya and the Yotagetq (Seven Rivers) inhabited by the Kazakh people, that had not accepted the Soviet rule, was destroyed by the Bolsheviks, which brought to the national-liberation partisan Basmachi movement in Middle Asia.

Soviet period

On August 26, 1920 the “Decree on the Formation of the Autonomous Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic” as part of the RSFSR was adopted with its capital in Orenburg. In 1925 the Kirghiz ASSR was renamed into the Kazak ASSR. The capital was moved from Orenburg to Perovsk (now Kzyl-Orda: Red capital). In 1927 the capital was again moved, but this time to Alma-Ata.

In 1936 the Kazak ASSR was changed into the Kazakh SSR. In 1956, during exploitation of virgin soils by the Khrushchev projects, some parts of its lands were passed to the RSFSR (they were joined to Omsk oblast and the area of Altai) and to Uzbek SSR (present regions Navoi and Djizak).

Construction of factories at high rates in the Republic turned Kazakhstan into an industrial area. During the years of the Great Patriotic War more than 400 factories and fabrics were evacuated from the center of Russia to Kazakhstan, and that's why, the industry became even more powerful. New cities and villages, factories and mines, roads and bridges were built.

In the Soviet years Kazakhstan was mainly used as a supplier of raw materials. Thus, according to the data of 1991, 70 % of the Union's production of sulfur, zinc, titan, magnum, tin, 90% of phosphor and chromium, 60% of silver and molybdenum were produced by Kazakhstan.

Also the Semipalatinsk Atomic Test Site was established in Kazakhstan, where in 1949 the first atomic, and in 1953 the first thermonuclear bombs were tested.

Baikonur Cosmodrome was also built here; the first man-made satellite of the planet was launched from here; the first cosmonaut flew to the cosmos from here. Hundreds of inter-continental rockets and military satellites of “Cosmos” series were launched again from here.

USSR Defense Ministry set many military bases and experimental testing centers (Sary Shagan, Terra-3, Emba 5, etc.), dozens of military airports, missile bases (Derzhavinsk, Tyuratam, Zhangiz-Tobe) in the territory of Kazakhstan.

CHAPTER 2

STATE STRUCTURE

Kazakhstan is a unitary state with presidential form of governance. The President is the head of the State and the commander-in-chief. The president of Kazakhstan is elected by the adult citizens of the Republic by secret ballot based on the right for universal, equal and direct voting.

Nursultan Abishevich Nazarbayev has been the president of Kazakhstan since 1991. At the snap presidential elections, held on 3 April 2011, N. Nazarbayev was re-elected as the head of State, receiving 95.55% of votes.

Executive power

The executive power is exercised by the Government of Kazakhstan. The system of bodies of executive power is composed of ministries, services and agencies. Kazakhstan prime minister is the head of the government. **Since 2007 this post is held by Karim Massimov.**

Legislative power

The legislative branch in Kazakhstan is exercised by the Parliament composed of two Chambers: the Mazhilis and the Senate, which act on permanent bases. The authorities of the Parliament begin since the moment of opening of its first session and end with the beginning of the work of the first session of the Parliament of new convocation. The prior cessation of the Parliament authorities can be only realized in case and in due order provided by the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The Upper Chamber - the Senate has 47 deputies. 15 deputies are appointed by the Head of state, taking into account the need to provide the presence of national-cultural and other interests of the society. For the remaining 32 seats, two persons are elected from each region, cities of republican significance and capital of the Republic of Kazakhstan at a joint meeting of the deputies of all corresponding representative bodies. The term of office of the Senate deputies is six years and half of elected Senators are re-elected every three years.

The Senate is headed by the Speaker/Chair person, elected by the Senate by secret ballot and simple majority. The candidate must master the national language and is nominated for the post by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The Lower Chamber – the Mazhilis consists of 107 deputies. 98 deputies are elected by proportional system overcoming the 7% threshold, and 9 deputies are elected by the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan. The term of office of the Mazhilis deputies is five years.

The Chair person leading the Chamber is elected by secret ballot and majority of votes of the Mazhilis. And again the candidate must master the state language fluently. The candidature to the post of the Chair person of the Mazhilis is nominated by the chamber deputies (President of the Republic of Kazakhstan).

No parliamentarian can be a member of two Chambers simultaneously.

The Public Chamber functions adjacent to the Mazhilis.

Until 1995 the Parliament of Kazakhstan was unicameral. On March 11, 1995 President Nazarbayev signed an order on “Measures stemming from the Constitutional decision”, according to which the Parliament was dissolved. A republican referendum on the new Constitution was held on August 30, 1995, and 89.14% of participants voted in favor of it. According to the new Constitution the Parliament became bicameral.

In August 2007 parliamentary election took place in Kazakhstan, and the President's party, Nur-Otan, received 88.05% of the vote. None of the other parties contesting the election reached the 7% threshold to win seats.

The next parliamentary election will take place in 2012.

Judicial power

Judicial power is exercised through the Supreme Court; district, military, city and specialized courts.

Armed forces

On May 7, 1992 the President of Kazakhstan signed a decree on the establishment of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Kazakhstan, which comprise land forces, Air Defence Forces and Naval Forces and are formed on the following principle: 50% draftees, 50% contractual servicemen.

Besides, there are troops and formations, which are anticipated for carrying out tasks by military methods. They are the Republican Guard, Internal Forces of the Ministry of Internal affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Frontier Service of National Security.

Nursultan Nazarbayev

Political portrait

Nursultan Nazarbayev was born on 6 July 1940 in Chemolgan village, Almaty region. Being 27 years old, he graduated from higher education institution under Karaganda Iron Combine and from 1967 started party activities. N. Nazarbaev was the Chairman of the Council of Ministers (1984-89), first Secretary of the Kazakh Communist Party (1984-89), Deputy of the Supreme Soviet of SSSR.

He has been the president of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Supreme Commander in Chief of Military Forces of Kazakhstan since 1991.

Doctor of economics Nursultan Nazarbayev has been honored various titles and awards in his country, as well as abroad. He is an academician of different academies of the world, an honorary professor of famous universities. He is the chairman of the World Association of Kazakhs, the Chairman of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan, has been included in the list of Knight Grand Cross of East, has been given an award for "Input in the development of relations of people of Turkic world", as well as for "Serving the Turkic world".

Nazarbayev has been awarded "Peace Dove" Prize of UNESCO Club of Greece for stable peace development of the country, has been honored a golden medal for "Input in the development of the CIS". President Nursultan Nazarbayev was the first person to be awarded the International Prize after Maimonid for the outstanding contribution into the dialogue of civilizations by the International committee, which unites the representatives of the world's leading Jewish organizations and communities.

The Kazakh president is an author of various scientific articles and books, including "The Steel Profile of Kazakhstan", "Kazakhstan: Without Right or Wrong", "Market, Social and Economic Development", "Strategy of Resource Saving and Market Transition", "On the Threshold of the XXI Century", etc.

The economic growth of Kazakhstan, stability of the country, peaceful coexistence of about 130 nations speak about the policy of Nursultan Nazarbayev which is well-conceived, perspective, protecting the interests of the country. Peace, peaceful coexistence between nations and states are put in the basis of his policy. In this connection, it will be right to mention, that Kazakhstan is the only country, which has voluntarily declined having nuclear weapon by closing its testing venue Semipalatinsk in August 1991.

Thanks to president Nazarbayev, Kazakhstan, where the boundary between Europe and Asia is, has its unique and important place not only in the CIS structures, but also among other international organizations.

“We can’t spend the money of our future generation”

Kamal Burkhanov

Member of the Committee on International Affairs, Defense and Safety of Mazhilis of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan

(the interview was made on 22.06.2009)

“Please, tell about the structure of Kazakhstan parliament.”

“As you know now we have a bicameral system. Our Constitution was adopted in 1995 and we live under that Constitution. In 1993 we adopted a Constitution, but the Parliament was unicameral then. In those times ties with the Soviet past were great. The country was in a hard situation, inflation was about 2500%. There was no money, the economy was not working. The parliament was dissolved, but the president was authorized to proclaim orders having the force of law, and our president Nursultan Nazarbayev, assuming the responsibility towards the nation, future generations, the history, adopted 147 laws concerning all the spheres of public life during six months.

In the same 1995 the mentioned Constitution was adopted, the parliament became bicameral.

We understood that we needed a strong parliament of European, western type and a strong presidential power of eastern type. So a Eurasian state was formed, we have a “symbiosis”. In 1996 we curbed the hyper inflation. Since 1999 Kazakhstan has taken the path of stable economic growth, which is about 9-10% a year.

A crisis is a crisis. It hasn't spared anyone. We, as a constituent part of the world economy, also have difficulties, but in contrast to many other countries, we managed to overcome the situation somehow. This was also our president's plan. When great amounts of money began to be received from the petroleum, he said: “This is the money of our future generations, we can't spend it”. And the petrodollars received under the economic growth were put in the National fund. Our budget was formed without those petrodollars. That is, we were developing ourselves and had enough money saved up. When the crisis burst out, the president came to an agreement with the government, and we made a decision. For the economic development our own money was allocated from there, about 15%. Now the state itself finances small and big businesses, agriculture, construction.

Now we have investment projects, production, and many projects for which means are allocated. Even in such conditions, we receive billions of foreign investments. The petrodollars won't accumulate in the National Fund. They will finance the reconstruction of infrastructures of our cities and villages. Our houses were built in the Soviet times: during the times of Khrushchev and Leonid Brezhnev. There are houses in Almaty and here, that were built in Stalin times. The sewerage and drainage systems, etc. are things that cannot be seen, but they get older and now have become rusty. Thus, it was decided to allocate the petrodollars to this field during the next few years.

A great amount of money is allotted for the roads, now we are putting the roads in order. We have decided to improve everything throughout our country, so that as soon as the crisis is over (the crisis is not everlasting, it will come to an end) we will have good roads, clearly operating sewerage, perfected communal economy of cities, investments in the production.

Let us consider the project Western Kazakhstan-Western Europe stretching from Western China to Western Europe, which costs 7.5 billion dollars. It is a motorway, 3000 km of which passes through Kazakhtan. It will create 50-60 thousands of working places (this is only the people working on the road), but, definitely, there will be people who will open canteens along the road, others gas stations. There will be a great flow of cars here and of loads from Europe to China. This is in fact a golden bridge. It was signed by the presidents of Russia, Kazakhstan and China. Works are already in process this year.

From the National Fund we also finance the reimbursement of mortgage loans, help people to cover the loans in order to "stand on their feet". The state hasn't left its citizens "to the mercy of fate", didn't tell them: "sorry, it is none of our business"; the state took the burden on its shoulders."

"To what extent is the role and meaning of the parliament realized by the Kazakh society?"

"Everything depends on traditions. We have all come from the Soviet past, when the parliament was as follows: 5 milkmaids, 3 pig-tenders, etc. Actually, the parliament simply used to legalize the decisions of the Central Committee. That is why the attitude towards the Supreme Council was not very serious. But we have deep traditions. Kazakh khanate had its own parliament. It was the khanate council and the most authoritative people of the Great Steppe used to come together for a "kurultai" once a year to make the main strategically significant decisions. Moreover, the khan - our emperor, was elected and did not inherit the title. Kazakh khanate bearing a genuinely Kazakh name existed from 1456 until the second half of the 19th century. It is quite a long time. In the general sense, Kazakh khanate ethnically existed from the 13th century. Why is our president's residency called "Ak Orda", because it is the first name of Kazakh khanate. The Golden Horde was on the river Volga, but the capital was in the territory of Kazakhstan. It was a mixed khanate.

I have even told Condoleezza Rice. “When did you begin to elect president, and when did we begin to elect our khans? That’s why let us not teach history to each other.” She agreed, she is a very pleasant woman. We have deep, steppe, democratic traditions.

As to the parliament, it has really proved to be good nowadays. Its role is that we are overcoming the crisis in one way or other, even though with hardships. However, the situation is pretty serious. The role of the parliament is really great. We adopted a whole package of anti-crisis laws, which required fast resolution. We assisted our government. The president allocated money: tens of billions. The parliament quickly adopted the laws. Naturally, now we have the full right to ask a report from the government. They present reports every six months. We can tell them that the president has defined the strategy, that they have received the money and the necessary laws, so the time has come to give answers.”

“Please, tell about the foreign, inter-parliamentary relations?”

“Our foreign policy is defined by the president. It is a multivector policy. In the first place of this is, of course, Russia: our major economic, military, political partner, and we have come out of the same country.

China holds the second place; the third place belongs to the West – the USA, then Middle Asian states, with whom we again have close relations. Then the Islamic world and the others follow. So, this is the strategy.

This strategy was born in the times of Ablai Khan. He was the most powerful and the wisest khan. In the hardest times he had similarly good relations with Russian and Chinese emperors. Due to that he was able to preserve the territorial integrity of Kazakhstan. The Russian emperor couldn’t, because he was among the friends of the Chinese emperor. That’s why our great and wise Ablai Khan is depicted on our banknotes and there is an avenue named after him.

China is our second economic partner. Yearly commodity circulation with it is about 15 billion dollars. This is very serious. We have 2000 km long state border with them. The USA is one of our main investors. We work with the EU in close terms also.

Today the leadership of the parliament comprises the fraction of “Nur Otan” party; its president is our president. It is natural that this strategy lies in the basis of all the foreign political activities, it is the concept.

As to inter-parliamentary relations, then, they are quite expanded. First of all, our priority is of course the CIS. We have Inter-parliamentary Assembly of the CIS in Petersburg. There is a parliamentary component also in the framework of CSTO. We also cooperate in the framework of EurAsEC.

We have close relations with Europe, EU, OSCE, and PACE. OSCE Parliamentary Assembly was held in Astana in 2008. 500 deputies from 56 countries, including your delegation came to our country. We want to express you our gratitude for supporting our candidacy for OSCE presidency. Of course, the initiative was fine, but we passed such a purgatory... In Vienna I had a speech in the OSCE in front of their experts. I said that it would perhaps be easier to elect the Pope than to elect Kazakhstan as the president of the OSCE. First of all the Pope of Rome is elected lifelong, second he has power, third he has money. But here there is no power, you are elected for one year, and the budget is 160 million dollars. I said “we are more holy than the Pope, what else do you want from us?”

“How is Mazhilis cooperating with non-governmental organizations? Have traditions of such cooperation been formed?”

“Our Mazhilis has always been working with non-governmental organizations. Moreover, representatives of some NGOs are deputies of the parliament. In essence, NGO representatives can participate in 99 % of Commissions' sessions. They protect their rights, meet with the deputies, and have discussions with them; they often express initiatives, of course through the deputies.”

“Kamal Burkhanov, please tell us about the Public Chamber. How does the population treat the structure? What kind of questions does it solve? As a member of that Chamber, what impression do You have concerning the effectiveness of its work?”

“Now (in the previous parliament also) it is called the Public Council. Before that there was a platform for dialogue and it was called National Commission for Democratization. The platform for dialogue has always existed. For example, some NGOs or political parties haven't got into the parliament. First of all the leaders of all political parties are invited to the Public Chamber. People expressing the wish can be there. 5-6 political parties with their leaders sit there and carry out their work. It is another matter that some opposition parties have declined to participate, it is their right. We have discussed 25 laws in the Public Chamber. The latter has the right to submit proposals to the commissions, the chief commissions of the parliament dealing with laws. All the proposals of the Public Chamber are taken into account having a direct impact on the laws.”

“Development of Armenian-Kazakh ties will promote the improvement of relations of the two regions”

Bolat Baikadamov

Director of Nur Otan National-Democratic Institute of Parliamentarianism

“The National democratic Party “Nur Otan” is of the largest party of Kazakhstan. Please, tell how it was formed.”

“Like other leading and major parties in the post-Soviet territory, “Nur Otan” also has its tortuous and long history. Initially, there were varied political parties equally represented in the political sphere. In 1998 the public headquarters of President Nursultan Nazarbayev proposed to unite parties and to form a large political union in order to protect the interests of the political elite and to lead the reforms. In 1999 the following parties united: the Party of People and Unity of Kazakhstan, the Democratic Party, the Liberal Movement of Kazakhstan, "For Kazakhstan - 2030" Movement. A new party called “Otan” was formed on 1 March 1999. That party successfully participated in parliamentary elections and 30% of the electors voted for it, for those times it was an achievement. Participating in the elections for the second time, the party received 60% of votes, during that period it was necessary to be in tune with the new legislation and to present the party in the state parliament. After the second merging, the party “Nur Otan” was formed: Civic, Agrarian, “Asan” parties and Otan merged. In the latest parliamentary elections the results were even more impressive, as the party won 88% of the vote. “Nur Otan” is really a dominating party, representing the interests of the majority of population, it is not by chance, that it is called National Democratic Party; in this party the interests of almost all layers of the population are represented. As a party constituting a parliamentary faction, it is responsible for the reforms taking place in our country, the political atmosphere and the social-political course headed by the president. The President of the party is the president of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev.”

“What are the political landmark and slogan of the party?”

“If we speak in the language of politics, “Nur Otan” is of course a centripetal party, but historically in the 90s, when it was still “Otan” and was struggling for political superiority, liberal principles prevailed in it. It was a party expressing the interests of its time, economic changes were in process, and there was a need to build a free market, to make changes in the economic legislation.

In the beginning of the 21st century, when “Nur Otan” appeared in the political area and became a leading party, the economic situation was very hard, there was a need for significant progress and first of all for struggle against poverty. At that time, principles and rules were established for the party, which were directed to preserve the attainment, that is, some conservative element appeared. At present, it continues to be centripetal, but has two wings: liberal and conservative. Today “Nur Otan” has put some major issues before itself. First – technological, industrial, innovational development. These are the strategic issues put forward until 2020, the same technological and social questions involved in the concept “modernization”. After the 13th congress of the party held in February, the further necessity of political modernization, the importance of “synchronization” of economic, social and political technological modernization was brought forward.”

“Please develop upon other influential parties of Kazakhstan. How does cooperation between the parties take place?”

“There are nine parties in Kazakhstan. If we take into account another non registered one, which also has some influence, there will be ten parties. Besides “Nur Otan”, there are parties of constructive opposition; parties, which according to the tradition, oppose the authorities, for example the Communist Party; also Neo-Communist People’s Party, which has been formed comparatively recently and has a constructive character. Some of the parties, representing the constructive opposition, cooperate with “Nur Otan” within the framework of Inter-party council. All those parties draft a united political position and try to achieve its realization through “Nur Otan”. But there are also opposition parties, which have always had an oppositional position towards “Nur Otan”. As the leading and incumbent party, we respect those parties; they are the bearers of interests and viewpoints of some part of the population and exercise the right to express their political views. That’s why there is no hostile attitude; there is only an oppositional position on the level of opposition ideas, projects and proposals, different approaches and positions.

“Nur Otan” today constitutes majority in the parliament, while opposition parties are not represented there as they were not able to overcome the minimum threshold. Of course it would be possible to have 2-3 co-operative parties using administrative resources, but the situation in Kazakhstan is different, the political platform is taken objectively here. Maybe the situation is not so commendable, but besides “Nur Otan”, there is also another union of parties. As a party it is not represented, but is part of Kazakh Mazhilis: those are the parliamentarians presenting the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan. There is also a representative of the party of Patriots in the Senate, i.e. the president of the party. So, we can say there are 2 parties in the Senate. Some amendments have been made in the Constitutional statute, according to which representation of at least two parties in the

parliament is obligatory. Elections will be held in 2012, and there will be two parties, of course, more parties would be welcomed. We are looking forward to exciting elections and probably merging of the two parties will take place.”

“Does “Nur Otan” cooperate with political parties of foreign countries? And is there any cooperation with Armenian parties?”

“More than 30 parties of different countries have bilateral relations with “Nur Otan”. Our party closely cooperates with “United Russia” party, some Ukrainian, Indian, South Korean, European parties. “Nur Otan” also collaborates with the union of Asian parties involving more than 160 parties. “Nur Otan” is an observer in the union of Latin-American political parties. I can’t recollect any cooperation of “Nur Otan” with Armenian parties, which can be considered a failure. Of course we would like to have constructive relations with Armenian political parties. As far as I know, Armenia is a dynamic country, it used to demonstrate intellectual flexibility while being within the USSR, there were many scientists, political figures that are still remembered. Years of independence have created an opportunity to confirm broad relations; it would be rather interesting to cooperate with Armenian partners in the economic, political, cultural spheres, and first of all with political parties.”

“How do You estimate the present level of Armenian-Kazakh relations and what ways of development can You see?”

“I will estimate those relations as having promising potential. We haven’t wasted the potential and we still have many opportunities. For example, we have already talked about the absence of relations between parties, which can be considered an accidental misdeed and should be regulated immediately. Economic cooperation hasn’t achieved its full range, the economic dialogue between countries like Kazakhstan and Armenia must be on a higher level. And that without mentioning the cultural life, the deepness of which proves the importance of our cooperation. We would like to cooperate with your country in the cultural field, to broaden the cooperation in political, scientific spheres, in the technological area. As I have already mentioned, Armenian scientists of the Soviet times dictated their ideas in the scientific field of the USSR, and now it would be desirable to use that potential to raise the effectiveness of cooperation. I not only welcome the idea of deepening Armenian-Kazakh relations, but can feel the demand for that. Our two regions are on the two points of the planet, which need amicable relations, examples of building peace and stability. Construction of civilized and high-level cooperation would be a stimulus for the improvement of regional relations.”

CHAPTER 3

ECONOMY OF KAZAKHSTAN

Kazakhstan is an agrarian-industrial country. The main source of economic growth is extraction of mineral resources. 99 elements of Mendeleev's table are met in Kazakhstan. Economically more significant are coal, petroleum, steel, iron, sulphur, zinc, chromites, gold, and manganese. With petroleum supplies Kazakhstan is on the seventh place in the world, with gas supplies 6th place, and 2nd place with uranium supplies. By 2017 the country will enter the top ten of largest mining and exporting countries of petroleum and gas.

Kazakhstan is a great producer of gold. There are more than 170 gold mines in the country.

Agriculture is another vital segment of the economy, the main products of which are grain and cotton. After Russia and Ukraine, Kazakhstan is on the third place of corn production among the CIS countries.

Kazakhstan comprises five major economic areas. Corn economy, mining of steel and coal, mechanical engineering, production of oil and steelcasting are developed in the north. In eastern Kazakhstan non-ferrous metallurgy, energetics, mechanical engineering, forestry prevail. Western Kazakhstan is the largest area of oil-gas extraction not only in Kazakhstan, but in the CIS. The western part of the country is famous also for maize, vegetables, and sunflower.

The main fields of the economy of Central Kazakhstan are ferrous and non-ferrous metallurgy, mechanical engineering, cattle breeding. In the south cotton, rice, wood, corn, fruits, vegetables, sugar beet, cigarettes are produced; non-ferrous metallurgy, instrument making industry, light and food industry, fish and forest economy are developed.

Natural conditions of Kazakhstan, their diversity provide great chances for traditional cattle breeding.

“Armenian-Kazakh foreign economic ties don’t correspond to our potential”

Azat Peruashev

Chairman of National Economic Chamber "Atameken" Union

(the interview was made on 23.06.2009)

“Please tell us about the "Atameken" Union. How does it differ from other economic unions of the post Soviet region? For example, in other places it is called economic-commercial chamber. What is the difference?”

“First of all, let me say, that “Atameken” means “fatherland”. "Atameken" Union is a union of Kazakhstan’s business community. That means, in contrast to usual communities, not just enterprises are included in our union. All the sectoral and regional associations are involved in "Atameken". So, this is its peculiarity.

We also have an Economic-commercial chamber, which is one of our unions. The only function of the chamber is to assist the foreign economic activities of the enterprises. There are 26 such divisions in the Economic chamber. This is the difference.

All the business-communities are included in "Atameken". This is European experience. Turkey has also followed this way. "Atameken" has its representatives in the government, parliament. We participate in the working groups, discussions of drafting the laws; we operatively raise questions before the government, questions that need urgent solution.

We are always occupied with questions of protecting consumers' rights and deal with state, customs, and tax bodies. 20-30 sections work in our Union. Our lawyers take part in proceedings. For example, during last year we gave expertise conclusions concerning 1500 law drafts and standard acts. Today, no law of economic content is adopted in the parliament without our chamber's conclusion.

In a general sense, this is the president's initiative. I wouldn’t like to create an impression, that everything is the merit of mine, of the Union's or of our workers'. There is a person in the country that looks farther, deeper and demonstrates such innovative initiatives, that even sometimes contemporary people don't realize. Today we see there is a successful, effective lever to protect the interests of private enterprise.”

“As You mentioned you participate in proceedings. In this respect, doesn’t any conflict arise inside "Atameken", I mean among the competing enterprises?”

“We only participate in judicial procedures between business and state bodies. We don't take part in the legal proceedings between economic entities. We have some principal rules: let the businesses solve the problems among themselves. This is the first one.

And the second is that we actively move the format of intermediary discussions forward, when the issue is not taken to the court, because it may arise legal problems as well as problems of “image”, this is very important for business, especially, for the business connected with consumers.

"Atameken" is a member of World Trade Chamber and also of its five commissions, including the ones dealing with the matters of legislative and arbitral disputes. Member of "Atameken" is “arbiter”. The international “arbiter” of Kazakhstan is our official partner for the disputes between the economic entities.”

“What is the balance of Kazakhstan's trade-economic relations in the sense of numbers? In what places are Russia, China, and the USA?”

“Actually, as you mentioned our main trade and economic partners are Russia, China, the EU, the USA not only in the sense of commodity circulation, but also the level of investments. Russia was a bit falling behind, but now it has also become active. And it is the right decision. We see that no one abroad wants to see us as a strong country and I sincerely welcome the recently made decision on creating a Customs union.

Today we can say that Kazakhstan was able to come out of the financial crisis. Yesterday we had meetings with the representatives of German banks, who were indignantly shouting because Kazakh banks were using technical default. And I had to debate, explaining that the crisis began not in Kazakhstan and in contrast to Germany, no bank in Germany was bankrupted. The country offered assistance to the banks to realize their responsibilities towards the population and the creditors.”

“Metallurgical plant of Temirtau is being modernized”

Viktor Adyakin

Senior production director for ArcelorMittal Temirtau metallurgical enterprise.

Temirtau is the city of our president, where he started his working activity as a turner. Until 1995 this was Karmet plant and people used to call it “Kazakh magnet”. Taking into account the power of production and the number of workers it was the fourth largest in the territory of the USSR after Magnitogorsk, Lipetsk and Cherepovets plants. In 1995 it was privatized by the organization “Metala” and until now we are a private organization called ArcelorMittal. Our company has three divisions – steel, coal and ore. At present there are 40 000 workers.

Our organization provides the whole cycle of steel production, that is, we have our own coal. The company has eight coal mines in Karaganda coal basin, four iron mines of cast iron production, and all of them are in the territory of Kazakhstan. Steel subdivision is situated in Temirtau. We produce 3 types of rolled metal. We also have an aluminum-zincifying department, which is presently an expensive production and has a great demand. We have an aggregate of polymeric coating, as well as a small subdivision of pipe (drain) production, where pipes of medium diameter – 10-89 mm used for communal needs are produced.

Our producing capacity is 3 million tons of steel. A great project is being launched from this year, which is included in the project of making the industrial modernization of the Republic of Kazakhstan powerful. It presupposes increase of volume of liquid steel production until 4-6 million tons.

Besides, the company pays a great attention to ecology. It is planned to spend about 11 billion tenge for improving the ecological situation in the territory of the organization and the region during 2011-2012. All those projects are coordinated with the Ministry of Environment Protection. The leadership of the factory pays great attention to the protection of labour, health issues of the staff and security.

As our enterprise is a promoting factor for the city formation, we are also engaged in matters of social nature. Large amounts of money are invested in this field, almost all people living in Temirtau, Karaganda and in the neighborhood of our mines are connected with our organization. Now signing of memorandums between our directorate and akimate of the region is carried out. According to the memorandum signed in 2009, 1 milliard tenge was spent on social issues, more than 1.5 milliard was spent in 2010 and the memorandum of 2011 makes 1.77 milliard tenge.

We also finance many projects, we have our camps, our rest homes, and we spend money on social issues anticipated by the project with the trade union. We are financing the football team of Temirtau, our hockey team and children clubs.

Of course, there are some problems. The most important is the ecological one. Our enterprise with its equipment is quite old. For example, recently we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the first cast iron, that is, our organization has been functioning for 50 years. We are far from European ecological norms and have suggested many times to return some part of money that is invested in the protection of environment in the realization of ecological projects. But those means are still directed to the Republican budget.

CHAPTER 4

FOREIGN POLICY OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

The foreign policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan is traditionally defined by activeness, balance, pragmatism, constructive dialogue and multilateral cooperation. Historical, geopolitical and economic factors have greatly conditioned the fact that Kazakhstan conducts multi-linear foreign policy based on the principals of international collaboration, neighbourhood and respect for territorial integrity of other states.

The number of states, with whom Kazakhstan has established diplomatic relations, comes to prove the fact that this country is open to the outer world and is determined to develop equitable and mutually beneficial partnership with other countries of the world. Gaining independence in 1991, Kazakhstan has already established diplomatic relations with 138 states all over the world. Active collaboration with other states in various spheres has resulted in more than 3 000 international agreements of international, inter-governmental and inter-departmental levels.

Kazakhstan has passed a long way since it became independent. Its multi-linear foreign policy has contributed to the strengthening of its sovereignty and statehood, to its entrance into the system of international relations and world economic relations. During the past years the Republic has become a full member of the world community, whose initiatives have actually always been supported and implemented practically; it has established stable and foreseeable relations with all the neighbors. The international image of the Republic is that of a serious and reliable partner.

In the sphere of foreign policy Kazakhstan has developed closed contacts with Russia, China, the USA, the European Union, countries of Central Asia and the Muslim world. Today there is no state in either Central Asia or the world community that would threaten the security and national interests of Kazakhstan. Despite the complicated regional and global processes, Kazakhstan has close

partnership relations with its neighbors and leading world powers. Kazakhstan has joined the key international treaties; has demonstrated its support for counterterrorism fight on various occasions; it has a balanced and responsible position on the issue of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

An unequivocal achievement of the foreign policy direction of Kazakhstan is the development of allied relation with the **Russian Federation**. The most significant success of relations with the RF is in regional integration and also in expansion of trade-economic partnership. The tandem of these two states has become a firm factor of stability and development on the vast Eurasian territory.

The strengthening of comprehensive strategic cooperation with its great eastern neighbor – **the People’s Republic of China** – witnesses about the constructive foreign policy of Kazakhstan. The RK applies the global increase of China’s influence in its interests, thus enhancing and deepening commercial-economic collaboration with this country.

Strategic partnership ties connect Kazakhstan with the **United States of America**. This fact has been reinforced in the joint statements of the presidents of both countries in 2006 and 2010. The current level of cooperation is based on mutually beneficial and equitable collaboration in issues of providing global and regional stability; enforcement of the regime of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons; counteractions to international terrorism and extremism; maintenance of energy balance.

During the years of Independence active political dialogue with the **European Union** has been in progress. Thanks to the government program “Road to Europe”, Kazakhstan has managed to bring cooperation with the key powers of the Old World to a higher level of large-scale partnership. EU countries are currently Kazakhstan’s major trade and investment partners throughout the world. A major achievement of the RK has been introduction of advanced technologies from the EU countries to fulfill the Strategy of the country’s industrial-innovational development. Kazakhstan is still a reliable and responsible energy partner of the EU. The RK is the third among non-members of the OPEC countries, after Russia and Norway, largest supplier of energy carriers to Europe. The European partners have been offered to work out jointly and to adopt multilaterally or bilaterally the Energy Charter “Kazakhstan-EU: 2020”. The multifaceted cooperation between Kazakhstan and the EU must be reflected in the new basic agreement between the RK and the EU.

During the years of independence Kazakhstan has confirmed its position in **Central Asia**. The country is active in making investments in the regional economy, conducts policy of unifying the efforts of Central Asian countries aimed at joint confrontation of modern challenges and threats. Kazakhstan constantly focuses on problems of security, of rational exploitation of water-energy resources, of employment migration and other urgent issues of the life within the region.

The RK is interested in the stable and firm development of Afghanistan as there are the threats of international terrorism, drug-trafficking, religious extremism on its territory. The world community welcomed the decision of Kazakhstan to provide humanitarian assistance to the IRA, including allocation of \$50 million for education of the Afghan youth in Kazakhstan.

Due to the constructive dialogue and definite arrangements at the highest level, cooperation with the **South Caucasian states** has increased significantly.

These countries have a major place within the system of economic interests of Kazakhstan.

Kazakhstan, with its close political, economic, social and cultural ties with the South Caucasian countries, considers preservation of peace, stability and cooperation in the region rather significant.

Historical contacts, the existence of great diasporas of the title South Caucasian nationalities in Kazakhstan suppose wide perspectives for enhancement and strengthening of cultural-humanitarian ties.

Kazakhstan is actively involved in multilateral structures, whose aims and principles are in harmony with the UN Charter, at both international and regional levels.

As a member of the **United Nations Organization**, during the last years Kazakhstan has managed to take a notable place in this authoritative multilateral structure. A whole range of Kazakhstan's initiatives have found the support of the world community, which has contributed to the creation of a favorable international image of the RK. Some of these initiatives are still in progress. Thus, the Republic has offered to create a Foundation of the UN Peacekeeping Efforts; to adopt a Global energy-environmental strategy; has put forward the large-scale ecological initiative "Green Bridge", and a number of other initiatives. Kazakhstan has also been promoting its candidature for non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for 2017-2018.

A major success of Kazakh diplomacy is the practical fulfillment of the idea of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev concerning conduct of **Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA)**. Kazakhstan is consistent in its efforts to make the CICA an authoritative forum. The RK's initiative is viewed by the world community as a unique inter-state forum to hold dialogues and consultations, to adopt decisions and to take measures referring security issues in Asia and based on consensus.

The most major achievement of Kazakh diplomacy was the **Chairmanship of the OSCE and conduct of the Organization's Summit in Astana in December 2010**. The decision on chairmanship is the recognition of Kazakhstan's achievements in reforming the political system and in developing liberal market economy. The consensus decision of the OSCE member-states is based on the recognition of success in internal and foreign policy, which is aimed at political stability within the country and the region. The fact that the Republic was selected to chair the OSCE noted an increase in the authority of Kazakhstan in the international arena. The year of chairmanship in the OSCE has become a bright part of Kazakhstan's history, and the summit in Astana became one of the most significant international events of the first decade of the XXI century.

Kazakhstan's engagement in the **Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)** became one of the key directions in the country's foreign policy, and the Republic of Kazakhstan stood at the roots during its formation in 2001. The dialogue on the SCO platform gives Kazakhstan an opportunity for constructive discussion and arrangement of positions of the member-states on a wide range of issues. In this context Kazakhstan's chairmanship of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in 2010-2011

was very successful. Its peak was the anniversary meeting of the Council of Heads of States of the SCO held on 15 June 2011 in Astana. The outcomes of the summit provided further increase in the role and place of the RK in the settlement of global and regional issues of foreign policy.

A major event, which attracted the attention of Islamic countries and the mass media, was the **38th session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers** held again in Astana on 28-30 June 2011. This meeting in Astana was the most notable political event of the Muslim community. During its chairmanship in the OIC Kazakhstan came up with a number of ideas, including one concerning the enhancement of dialogue between the Islamic world and the West.

During its Independence Kazakhstan has always signified development of relations with the **CIS** countries paying special attention to multilateral cooperation in integration. Back in 1991 President Nuarsultan Nazarbayev emphasized that “the future relation between the independent states will be based on the spiritual unity of nations, which was fostered by several generations of our ancestors”. At the initiative of the Kazakh side the Concept of further development of the CIS and the plan of fundamental measures of its implementation were approved. These documents define the priority directions of long-term collaboration and intend to “liven up” the Commonwealth.

One of the priorities of the RK in foreign policy on the post-Soviet territory is cooperation within the **Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO)**. Kazakhstan is doing its utmost to foster collaboration under the auspices of the CSTO, to increase its potential to secure peace and stability in the region.

Kazakhstan’s cooperation within the **Eurasian Economic Community (EAEC or EurAsEC)** is characterized with major achievements. Main efforts are concentrated on the final stage of forming the Customs Union of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Republic of Belarus and the Russian Federation.

In 2010, when the RK chaired the EurAsEc, the unified customs tariff was introduced, the Customs Code of the Customs Union entered into force. Currently all the necessary measures are taken to launch the next stage of integration – Single Economic Space.

During the years of Independence Kazakhstan has become a major partner of the **North Treaty Organization** in Central Asia. At present the Republic is actively implementing the mechanisms of cooperation with the Alliance to promote security. Cooperation with the NATO is rather fruitful in the field of emergency citizen planning, science and public diplomacy.

A major place in the foreign policy of Kazakhstan is allocated to the issue of unifying and reviving the spiritual legacy of the Turkic world. The Republic is one of the initiators of Agreement on the Establishment of a Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States (CCTSS), signed in October 2009 in Nakhchivan, Azerbaijan. For the same aim the Turkic Academy was formed, which was officially opened last May in Astana. This October the first CCTSS Summit was held. The participants signed the Almaty declaration on the outcomes of the Summit aimed at deepening cooperation between the Turkic speaking states.

Kazakhstan is an active participant of the world community striving to use the spiritual and moral potential of world religions to settle international conflicts and to encounter modern threats. President Nursultan Nazarbayev's initiative to call **Congress of World and Traditional Religions** became a definite input in this direction. Actually three such congresses have been held in Kazakhstan. The fourth forum of spiritual leader is scheduled to be held in Astana in May 2012.

During the twenty years of independence the foreign policy course of Kazakhstan, conducted under President Nursultan Nazarbayev, has been absolutely fruitful and successful. Foreign policy course of Kazakhstan is time-tested and is currently intended to bear a universal impetus, which will in future guarantee an honorable place for the people of Kazakhstan among the world community.

Kazakhstan Chairmanship of the OSCE

In 2007 members of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe unanimously chose Kazakhstan the Chairman for 2010. Kazakhstan was represented as a CIS collective candidate. According to the opinion of experts, in this position Kazakhstan will not only promote the authority of the organization in the post-Soviet territory, but it's also able to assist to the regulation of many conflicts in Eurasia as a mediator between the Islamic and European societies. OSCE chairmanship became the major national project of 2010 foreign policy.

According to President Nursultan Nazarbayev the motto of the OSCE Kazakh Chairmanship is "Four Ts": the first T is our "trust" in one another; the second is "tradition" and refers to our commitment to the fundamental principles and values of the OSCE; third comes "transparency", which stands for maximum openness in international relations, is free of "double standards" and "dividing lines"; and finally comes "tolerance", which means Kazakh experience of dialogue between cultures and civilizations.

As some top Kazakh officials presume, the chairmanship of their country "will increase the OSCE authority in the countries lying east of Vienna, as well as in the post-Soviet space. During the chairmanship of Kazakhstan the OSCE will concentrate more attention on issues of Central Asia, including those of Afghanistan".

As the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the KR, OSCE Chairman-in-Office Kanat Saudabayev has noted: "Our major objective is to strengthen the OSCE in any way, to promote its increasing effectiveness and its capabilities to respond to modern challenges and threats."

At Kazakhstan's initiative the OSCE summit was held in Astana on December 1-2, 2010. This was the first summit organized by the chairman of OSCE during the last 11 years. And it does matter to Kazakhstan that they managed to organize the event.

Closing the OSCE summit, Nursultan Nazarbayev noted: “Under new historical conditions the Helsinki spirit has revived... The Eurasian vector is able to give a great impetus to the OSCE development, to bring closer the East and the West, the North and the South, to make the main questions of world structure comprehensive”.

KAZAKHSTAN AS THE CHAIRMAN OF SHANGHAI

COOPERATION ORGANIZATION

From June 2010 to June 2011 Kazakhstan was the chairman country of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). On June 15 of 2011 the summit of the SCO took place in the capital of Kazakhstan Astana and the 10th Anniversary of the organization was celebrated.

Without any exaggeration, the SCO can be considered a powerful cross-country unit having a great potential and influencing global economic and geopolitical arrangements. It has six members – Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The first two ones are permanent members of the UN Security Council. Iran, India, Pakistan and Mongolia are observers. Afghanistan is a special guest. Belarus and Sri Lanka have the status of dialogue partners.

During the presidency of Kazakhstan, number one question was regional security of Central Asia, which was especially urgent in the light of the events occurring in Kyrgyzstan in the summer of 2010. Among the main priorities of Kazakh presidency were maintenance of peace and stability in the region, struggle against terrorism. Cooperation within the SCO, activation of international contacts received much attention. Significant success was registered in the direction of coordinating efforts to provide regional security. Military cooperation is constant; multilateral anti-terrorist military maneuvers are held; special services exchange information and jointly struggle against drug trafficking. Counter-drug-trafficking SCO strategy for 2011-2016 has been signed.

Besides the security sphere, Kazakhstan considers cooperation in the economic and cultural-humanitarian areas very important. According to it the SCO should not be turned into a military treaty like NATO. It should rather be directed at developing the economic sphere. Many documents have been adopted within the SCO in this field.

Kazakhstan has initiated to open a Center of the SCO on emergency prevention and response, to sign an Agreement on Cooperation in Fighting Illegal Migration. Various events

in different spheres took place during the Kazakh presidency, including joint SCO anti-terrorism military drills "Peace Mission-2010" in Matibulak military base of Zhambyl area of Kazakhstan in autumn 2010.

SCO member-states pay a great attention to the role and place of the SCO both in the region and in the world as a whole, to the major challenges and threats of today's world. The world is changing too fast; it is full of old and new threats, but the Shanghai Cooperation Organization whose members share perception of threats, are determined to strengthen security in the region and in the world.

KAZAKHSTAN AS A MEMBER OF THE ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC CONFERENCE

During the 38th meeting of foreign ministers of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), held in Astana, Kazakhstan became the chairman of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of Islamic Conference for 2011-2012. OIC includes a broad spectrum of international cooperation issues, such as political, socio-economic, cultural and scientific-technological cooperation.

Chairmanship of Kazakhstan has occurred in the most difficult period for the Islamic society. First: the Middle East long-lasting problems – the Arab-Israeli conflict, the inner-Palestinian and inter-Arabic contradictions, as well as the confrontation between other member states. On the other hand, the consequences of the "Arab spring"; the changes of political regimes in Tunisia and Egypt; the acute civil conflict in Libya, Syria, Yemen; the question of Afghanistan; the tension around the nuclear project of Iran; instability in Iraq and Sudan; increase of international terrorism which first of all shakes the Islamic world. And these are in the agenda of the Islamic world.

Having the experience of OSCE chairmanship, Kazakhstan has published the priorities of its work connected with the development of international stability and security, activation of economic relations and inter-cultural and inter-regional dialogue. However, it is evident that during the presidency of Kazakhstan in the Organization of Islamic Conference greater attention will be paid to Central Asia and territories close to it. It is anticipated to make trade-economic cooperation more active; to expand the potential for transit transport of the member-states; to restore social-economic spheres of Afghanistan. Given the instability of world finance markets and monetary wars, the interest towards the Islamic banking system has grown and not only among Islamic countries.

Taking into consideration Kazakhstan's attitude towards non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, it is quite likely that it will voice from the OIC tribune its viewpoint on the solution of this question. Let us remember that Kazakhstan (along with Ukraine and Belarus) is one of the first countries that voluntarily declined possession of nuclear weapons. On August 28 1991, according to the decision of Kazakh government, the Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test Site, which was the fourth biggest one in the world, closed down.

Kazakhstan will also put forward the concept of dialogue between confessions and between civilizations. As it is known, Kazakhstan has already held congresses of world and traditional religions, therefore, calls for tolerance between religions will be voiced.

It should be mentioned that in previously adopted resolutions of the OIC, a number of Kazakh initiatives have been approved, specifically, the process of Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICBMA); the assistance to the residents around Aral and Semipalatinsk areas who suffered from the nuclear experiments.

Struggle against economic backwardness and poverty is one of the most important issues of the organization in the coming decade. Social-economic and political contradictions of the OIC countries, their disproportionate development are quite noticeable. Today, the Islamic world with its population of about 1.5 billion is not a unitary monolith. Islam, as a religion, has common roots, but the world of Islam comprises several regions that in some cases have quite opposite models of development.

Influential members of the OIC are Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Egypt, Iran, Syria, Pakistan, Indonesia, which affect financially and politically on OIC activities. In this context the role of the president of the organization can't be overestimated. The principle of consensus is fixed by the statute, if it is not obtained, the decision is made by 2/3 voices of the attendees and participants in the vote.

KAZAKHSTAN AS A MEMBER OF INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Chairmanship of Kazakhstan in such big international organizations, as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), and Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) comes to prove its increasingly influential power in international arena. Kazakhstan was the OSCE chairman in 2010, the SCO chairman from June 2010 to June 2011 and is OIC chairman from 2011 to 2012.

Kazakhstan became an OIC member in 1995 wishing to be actively engaged in political, economic, cultural and humanitarian processes of the Islamic world. The motto of Kazakhstan's OIC chairmanship is "Peace, cooperation and development".

According to President N. Nazarbayev, Kazakhstan, being a secular country, at the same time constitutes an indissoluble part of Islamic Ummah and development of multilateral cooperation with the Islamic world entirely corresponds to the strategic interests of Kazakhstan. After the USSR collapse this country has been trying to revive the views and beliefs of its ancestors. At the same time it has preserved stable and peaceful inter-ethnic and inter-religious relations serving an example for other countries and a bridge between the West and the Islamic world.

OSCE chairmanship of Kazakhstan successfully finished at the summit held in Astana in December 2010. But Kazakhstan will continue its activities for yet another year within the so called “trio”, including past, present and future chairmen. This will afford broad opportunities for OSCE-OIC inter-institutional cooperation.

Kazakhstan is quite active also in such regional organizations as the CIS, the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the newly established Customs Union, to which besides Kazakhstan, Belarus and Russia have acceded.

Kazakhstan has been actively involved in the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States since the very beginning. On December 21 1991 Almaty declaration was signed at the summit organized in Almaty. Today, the CIS plays a great role in the foreign policy of Kazakhstan, taking into account the deep mutual integration of member states in all the spheres of international relations.

Kazakhstan was among the six other countries that signed the Treaty on Collective Security, which became an organization in 2002. Collective Rapid Reaction Forces were organized in February 2009 and its first common military drills were held in Matibulak military base in Kazakhstan.

CHAPTER 5

INTERNAL LIFE OF KAZAKHSTAN

The main directions of Kazakhstan's internal policy are the improvement of citizens' welfare, strengthening of statehood, modernization of the society, unity and consensus between the nations living in the country.

Kazakhstan can be classified among developing countries, where the preliminary demands of the population have been satisfied. Although various regions of the country have not equally developed, the population is provided with the necessary set of services, including educational, medical, communicational, cultural-entertainment.

During the last 5 years monthly average income of the population has grown twice; the difference between very poor and very rich is decreasing year by year. The average index of provision of population with apartments in Kazakhstan makes 17.5 sq m for one person. At present 42.9% of the population live in villages and 57.1% in cities and the natural growth of village population is more rapid than that of city dwellers, correspondingly 9.02 and 7.31 per 1000 persons.

With life expectancy Kazakhstan is in the 127th place in the world with the following indexes – 67 years average, men – 61.6 years, women – 72.4.

According to global index of peacefulness, Kazakhstan is in the 72nd place; according to the international index of happiness it holds the 91st place. And it is in 10th place by the level of literacy.

In the global rating of human development, Kazakhstan is in the 66th place (2010). This index is accounted based on some criteria – life expectancy; level of health care; access to education, knowledge and information. And according to the data of the “Newsweek” magazine, Kazakhstan is in the 61st place in the list of “World's best countries”.

Astana: New Capital of Kazakhstan

On July 6, 1994 the Supreme Council of Kazakhstan made a decision to move the capital from Almaty to Akmola. The stated reasons for moving the capital were the city's risk of seismic activity, insufficient territory for expansion, as well as proximity to international borders. On May 6, 1998 Akmola was renamed Astana by the president's order. The word

Astana in Kazakh literally means “capital”, but the word itself originates from Persian Istadan (آستان), which means a “sacred place”.

Until 2006, the capital’s day was celebrated on 10 June, but beginning from 2006, the capital’s day was moved to July 6.

The former names of Astana were Akmolinsk (1830-1961), Tselinograd (1961-1992), Akmola (1992-1998).

The city is located on the Ishim River. Akmola (which has 2 meanings: “White sacred place” and “White abundance”) was built on the old caravan road going from Middle Asia to Western Siberia. The road had a great trade significance, particularly in the field of cattle trade.

After receiving the status of capital and formation of special economic zone “Astana: New City”, various architectural-town-planning projects are carried out. The number of population has increased from 270 000 (1996) to 711 000 (2011). It is foreseen that until 2030 it will achieve 1 million.

Development of Astana is oriented for far-reaching strategic objectives. In this connection, the strategic project of the City's stable development until 2030 has been confirmed by the 67th order of the president of the Kazakhstan; it defines the main courses directed to the capital's evolution and stable development. It is anticipated by the project to make Astana not only the center of Kazakhstan, but of the whole Central Asia.

The newly built part of Astana, where the president's residence, governmental buildings, main part of the ministries, embassies, business-centers, luxury hotels can be found, is on the left riverside of the Ishim river. The project of new Astana has been drafted by Kisho Kurokawa, Vladimir Laptev and Norman Foster.

The author of the concept and of the sketch of Astana's new emblem is the president of the country Nursultan Nazarbayev.

Twin towns of Astana are Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Kiev, Kazan, Tashkent, Tbilisi, Riga, Warsaw, Gdansk, Dubai, Seoul, Amman, and Pittsburgh.

Bayterek: the Symbol of the Capital

Bayterek is the major symbol of Astana and the word means “high poplar”.

According to an ancient legend, “on the crossing road of worlds World River flows, on the banks of which Baiterek holds the earth with its roots and stands propping up the sky with its crown. A bird of happiness, named Samruk, builds itself a nest on the tree”.

On the left riverside of the Ishim – in the center of the newly built part of Astana, stands Bayterek - the tree of life. It is a unique architectural monument made of metal, concrete and chameleon glass. Its height is 97 meters, weight over 1,000 tons. For the first time in the world a glass ball with a diameter of 22 meters and weighing 300 tons is raised on a 97 meters height and here a perfect view is opened of the whole town. The height of 97 meters symbolizes 1997, the year when the capital was moved from Almaty to Astana.

Besides the observation deck in the ball, there is an interesting composition “Alakan”. It is the right hand imprint belonging to the first President of independent Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev. For this composition 2 kilos of gold and 6 kilos of silver were used. The malachite plate-looking pedestal engirds the golden belt bearing Scythian symbols and a panther’s head symbolizing the independence of the Kazakhstan people.

Each person can put his own hand on the imprint as if greeting the president. It is said that by putting your hand on the hand of the president you can keep a wish in your mind and it will definitely come true. Music will start to play and you will hear a patriotic song, the words of which were written by Mr. Nazarbayev himself.

This monument is rendered certain significance by the fact that, it was here that the first Congress of Leaders (17 of them participated) of World and Traditional Religions was held, and after it a new composition appeared near Alakan. Here leaders of 17 religions left their “bata” - blessings on the Kazakh soil.

Astana-Bayterek is the symbol of the state's past, present and future. It is a young, firm, growing tree, which symbolizes the state preserving its historical roots and heading toward the future welfare.

Astana-Bayterek monument is the symbol of Kazakhstan's independence.

Bayterek is also illustrated on Kazakh tenge.

“The Most Important in the City-Building of the 21st is the harmony of City and Nature”

Amanzhol Chikanayev

Chief architect of Astana city

“Astana is the new capital of Kazakhstan. How did the idea of moving the capital occur and what was the reason for it?”

“After the collapse of the Soviet Union, at that difficult moment the President offered to move the capital from flourished, developed and warm place. And why? Because during the Soviet times it didn't matter where the capital was situated, everything was governed from the center – Moscow. And our capital had appeared in the province – in a deadlock of railways. Kazakhstan is a vast country and in order to control all the complicated economic processes and to provide development, there was a need to move the capital, to take it to an economic, industrial center.

Emergent steps were to be taken to control the situation in such a difficult period. Nobody understood the president. Everybody thought it was incredible. You know all genius ideas are not accepted at first: “How is it possible?”, “This is impossible, it means to go to vast expenses for moving the capital in such a hard situation”. But the president was far-seeing; he acknowledged that if we lost the moment we would lose the republic.

In 1997 the move of state structures to Astana began and in 1998 it was officially proclaimed the capital of Kazakhstan. The President collected all the construction organizations, centralized their work and the process was in full swing. When the capital was being erected out of the dust the nation became enthusiastic. Everybody saw it was possible to establish a capital with their own hands, thus to get the country out of a difficult situation. The powerful impulse of development and progress spread throughout the country, regional centers were being reconstructed, widened, economically strengthened; everybody followed the example of Astana. Many people became employed.

International organizations saw the beginning of such a huge process. If in 1998 the desire to make investments was low, after a few years, when I was the assistant of the chief architect, there was a huge queue of people in my reception-room wishing to invest. To be honest, many people intended to stay in warm Almaty and if it had happened, now we would have a terrible picture. In that case movement from all the regions would begin to overcrowd Almaty, which already doesn't have any place to extend.

While moving the capital, the president said it should be built in not traditional manners but corresponding to international standards and the demands of the 21st century. He ordered to announce a competition, to invite famous architects and not to save money for that. Decision was made to lay a firm basis that would match our aims and objectives of making it a city of future.

The chief architect is of course our President. If it weren't for him, there would not be the capital or the idea of moving the capital. But from the professional view, the ideas belonged to Kisho Kurokawa, the Japanese architect with international recognition. He put two absolutely new town-planning conceptions - symbiosis and metabolism – at the basis of our city. Those terms were taken from biology and used by Kisho Kurokawa in architecture. According to the theory of symbiosis harmony of the city and nature will be the most important in the 21st century. Cities are expanding; they are like cancerous tumors, because they are exerting pressure on nature while expanding, pollute it, its rivers and reservoirs, the soil, and the atmosphere. We will face serious problems if we continue to live and to build in this way.

And metabolism is the chance of territorial development in Kurokawa's mind. Previously, in the 18-19th centuries we used to paint ideal cities, where nothing could be changed after it was erected. However, in real life cities are expanding and that expansion should be anticipated. And these are the very ideas we see in the grand plan of the city.

You can see the river dividing our city from east to west. A zone of grove is created along the river – from 200-300 until 500 meters large. It is done in order to have clear water, to have fish there and so that our children have the opportunity to swim there. From any part of the city you can easily appear in a grassy water zone. Near the river it is forbidden to carry out any construction or to open industrial centers to avoid pollution of the water. Our President understood Kurokawa's idea and developed it; he decided to establish a protective woody area round the city. And this was done in the steppe where it's a problem to grow even a single tree. For ten years trees have been planted in the city and around it on 45 thousand hectare land; leave alone the fact that we are transforming any convenient corner into groves.

There were single-floor houses in the place of the city from the times of tsarist Russia and the territory was called “Soldatskaya Sloboda”. This used to be a Russian city-castle inhabited by soldiers. They served 25 years and during this time either their relatives died or forgot about all them; thus, they stayed to live in those places of service. In order to form families, prisoner women were transmitted here from Siberia. So, they built small houses in the swamps and lived there. Now in the same place there are multistory complexes with all their conveniences.

The left bank of the river was completely covered in fields and there was just one bridge to get to the airport. At present new blocks, complexes, centers are built there. The new image of the city is being formed. International competitions are announced for all the important structures, so Armenian architects can also take participation.

In the Soviet times we used to cooperate closely with Armenian architects. I studied with many of them in Moscow University of Architecture, but the relations with them splitted after the USSR collapse and everybody is busy with his own problems. Unfortunately I don't come across names of Armenians in the lists of international competitions. However, there are such great architects as Khachikyan, Tarkhanyan, Poghosyan who have built wonderful structures in Yerevan. I used to take my students and show and tell them about great achievements of Armenian architects, both modern and historical. For example the ancient temple of Garni has astonished the students who asked how it's possible to create such a treasure.”

Culture

The **yurt**, felt mats (tekemets), musical instruments – double stringed dombra and arc instrument kobyz make part of Kazakh culture.

The yurt is a movable house, which is easily taken apart and carried by horses and camels. It is a comfortable and practical home, ideally suited to conditions and ways of life and nature. The yurt is covered inside and outside with thick felts, there are carpets inside it and it is decorated with embroideries.

Handicrafts - harnesses, felt mats (tekemets), and articles made of wood, bone and metal - are lavishly decorated. From wood they make large bowls and ladles used to serve kumis (fermented mare's milk). The horns of mountain rams are used to decorate beds and caskets. Steppe zergers - jewelers favor white silver and prepare unique jewelleries. For example, traditional bracelet linked with fine chains to three rings.

Kazakh national dress varies according to the place of inhabitation. Men wear chapans, a kind of dressing gown with a belt, made of velvet and richly embroidered. They cover their heads with a soft skullcap, a tall felt cap or a fox-fur hat with earflaps (malakai).

The women's national costume consists of a white cotton or colored silk dress, a velvet waistcoat with embroidery and a cap or a silk scarf. Elderly married women wear a hood made of white cloth with a hole for the face (the kimeshek). Brides wear a tall pointed, richly decorated hat, topped with feathers (saukele).

The Kazakhs love the art of wordplay and their akyns (poets), who improvise at public competitions accompanied by Kazakh stringed musical instruments: the dombra or the kobyz.

National games are the indivisible part of holidays Kazaksha kures (Kazakh wrestling), baiga (horse racing over 25, 50 or 100 km), kokpar (a sort of polo game played with a dead goat), kyz-kuu (catch the girl), etc.

Kazakh proverbs

- Motherland is the mother to people; people are the mother to a dzhigit (skilful horseman).
- Love to the Motherland starts in the family.
- There is a lot of gold in some places, but still Motherland is dearer than gold.
- An onion can be as sweet as honey if it grows in your Motherland.
- Each country has different laws, even different dogs.
- That dzhigit is happy if he knows his price.
- People are happy who rule themselves.
- Even if I cannot be a khan in my Motherland, I would be happy to be just a stone in a ravine.
- The people's wrath can destroy even fortresses.
- There is no nation without the eldest.
- River doesn't flow without a riverbed.
- People's gratitude is a real grace.
- The people without thieves are like the land without wolves.
- A man can be more intelligent than his friends but cannot be wiser than the whole people.
- If the people are united, there is no place for hostility.
- It is better to cook porridge for a hundred people than to be a boss for ten.
- A nation without a khan is like a land without mountains.
- The one who does not know his people cannot judge other people.
- A man is a guest in this life.
- A wolf cannot get enough of sheep and a man cannot get enough of thinking.

Education and science

Secondary education in Kazakhstan is compulsory and has three stages – primary (1-4 forms), lower secondary school (5-9 forms), high secondary school. Preliminary professional education is acquired in specialized schools and lyceums during 2-3 years based on secondary

education. Secondary professional education is received in colleges and gymnasiums during 3-4 years based on secondary education and on competitive grounds.

In order to enter higher educational institutions, school-graduates pass final and entrance exams on the basis of Unified National Testing Exam or Complex Testing Exam (for the graduates of past years). Citizens of Kazakhstan have the right to receive “Bolashak” international scholarship on competitive grounds to study abroad. After leaving higher educational institutions graduates receive Bachelor’s degree (4 years), Specialist’s degree (5 years) and Master’s degree (6 years). Second higher education is only payable and is carried out in a shorter period (2-3 years).

Foreigners and non-citizens permanently residing in Kazakhstan have the right of education equally with the citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan as it is stated in the legislation of the country, international agreements, as well as in the agreements signed with Kazakhstan educational institutions.

In 1990 there were 279 scientific institutions in Kazakhstan, including scientific-research institutes under the government supervision, branches of higher educational institutions and laboratories. The number of people accomplishing scientific-technological activities is 50.6 thousands.

In 1932 the Kazakh base of the USSR Academy of Sciences was established and had 2 sectors – zoological and botanical. In 1938 it was reorganized into the Kazakhstan branch of the USSR Academy of Sciences. During the years of the Second World War, 13 scientific institutes were founded on the base of the branch. In 1946 the Academy of Sciences of the Kazakh SSR was established.

Until the 1980s, the economy in Kazakhstan was developing more rapidly than in other republics of the Union. This process was accompanied with scientific-technological progress. There were 140 scientific institutions, and in the 1990s – already 279, the number of people in this field was 50 600.

After the independence, formation of new approaches directed at the development of science began. In January 1992, law on “Science and Scientific-Technological State Policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan” was adopted, and the Ministry of Science and New Technologies was organized in February. Later, it was changed into the Ministry of Education and Science. At present there are 55 scientific organizations under its supervision, where more than 5000 people are working, 2300 of them are scientific workers, including 450 doctors of sciences and about 1000 candidates of sciences.

During the last years, Kazakhstan has assumed to work out and master new information technologies aimed to produce competitive goods, to provide the interests of national economic security and to develop agricultural and industrial potential.

There are 180 higher educational institutions with 86 branches in the Republic of Kazakhstan. 9 leading universities have special status. The staff comprises 41 thousand professors-lecturers, 2520 of whom have doctor's degree, 11610 have the degree of a candidate of sciences.

The top universities of Astana are Eurasian National University after Gumilyev (it was founded in 1997 and is included in the list of the best universities of the world) and Nazarbayev University (it was founded in 2010).

“The Level of Students is Very High in Our University”

Bakytzhan Zh. Abdraiym

Eurasian National University, Rector, Professor

(the interview was held on April, 2011)

According to the data of research of British World Industry Ratings International Organization, Eurasian National University has entered the list of the world's best 500 universities.

During the last years the president and the government pay special attention to the development of education. In 2010 a project of development of education and science was adopted. There are 4 state projects in Kazakhstan – innovational development of industry, education and science, development of languages and health, which receive great attention and finance. A special law on education has been adopted. Development of science gets particular attitude.

Speaking about higher education, we should note that we have passed to educational system of 3 levels. Kazakhstan is the first country in Central Asia signing the Bologna protocol. We have all the three levels – bachelor's degree, master's degree and PhD in 30 directions, 50 BA specializations, more than 60 MA specializations. We have 150 professors from Europe, America, South-Western Asia, and also from Armenia who periodically visit our university, deliver lectures, and conduct master classes. Besides, our students have the chance to visit

their scientific centers for retraining and raising their qualification, to realize scientific researches.

Another advantage of our higher educational institutions is that the level of students is very high. Each fifth student of Eurasian National University is a medal winner of international or republican Olympiads, for example 610 medal winners entered our university last year and this number is increasing every year. Our university is the leader in receiving scholarships of the international Bolashak project. Last year 42 of our lecturers – candidates of sciences or doctors were awarded retraining in world's leading scientific centers at government expense.

And third, for two times in Kazakhstan an award has been granted in the sphere of science and the winners were the scientists of Eurasian University. They are both talented mathematicians, and one of them is also a winner of American famous Moore Awards.

The chance of retaining of Armenian students in Kazakhstan is also not excluded. According to the agreement of cooperation between Yerevan State University and Eurasian National University, we are ready to host the students of the faculty of Oriental Studies learning the Kazakh language. About 500 foreign students from the USA, South Korea, Japan, Finland, Norway, as well as from our neighbor countries study in our institution.

Talking about the achievements of our Eurasian National University, I should note that it is young, this year it is becoming 15 years old, but as a higher educational institution it will become 50 years old next year. Our University was formed on the basis of Tselinograd Construction Engineering Institute and Tselinograd Pedagogical Institute (founded in 1962).

Our graduates now work in different spheres. For instance, one of our graduates Grichenko is currently the Rector of Moscow State Construction University, another one is the deputy akim of Astana, many of our graduates have achieved great successes in different areas; some of them are deputies. Active young graduates work in state structures, in business sphere.

We pay great attention to relations with other higher educational institutions, with whom we have had historical close ties, or there are general historical, cultural roots and it's important for us to raise those relations to new levels. One of our significant partners is Yerevan State University. In 2010 the YSU delegation headed by the rector, famous scientist, academician Aram Simonyan visited our university. We had days dedicated to Yerevan State University, different conferences and lectures were held and what's the most important thing that, we found the points of intersection and directions of cooperation in future. In 2010 with the assistance of Ambassador of Kazakhstan to the RA A.Bozzigitov in YSU we opened a Center of Kazakh culture and language, where Kazakh is studied as a second Turkic language. Lecturers of Eurasian National University teach there. We have allocated not only recordings, video materials, literature but also corresponding historical samples and facts,

photos and have established a unique Kazakh corner. There are many students interested in this center. Many events are held there.

This is connected also with the fact, that the interrelations between Kazakhs and Armenians have deep roots in the history. The Matenadaran is the store of Armenian-Kazakh sources which are still to be researched to show the world rich cultural resources not unveiled yet. I consider that the task of Armenian and Kazakh scientists is to work jointly in the same direction and to show how the penetration of cultures took place, how the two grand nations confirmed relations and cooperated. Today there are still many medieval monuments in Armenia, such names and place names have preserved which give evidence about those relations. For example, the River Kazakh, Kipchak village, many gravestones show directly their belonging to Kipchak period. We have seen all this and have even shot a film.

A few days ago a conference took place in Yerevan State University entitled “Ideologies of Eurasianism and Armenian-Kazakh relations from the ancient times till present days”. Ideologies of Eurasianism that were sounded in 1994 with new perception and new content by the president of Kazakhstan in Moscow University have received real outlines. Eurasianism, according to Nazarbayev, is a multilateral world, equal cultural cooperation that is being carried out in Kazakhstan today.

“Kazakhstan Invests Great Means in the Educational system”

Anne Lonsdale

Provost of Nazarbayev University

Now I am directing the academic department of Nazarbayev University and working to open bachelor and master schools. I will do my best to put the university on the rails. We already have 483 students, who have been selected from the whole territory of Kazakhstan through a program elaborated by London university college and have finished the first study year. This year the number of applicants has doubled compared to last year.

Three factors simultaneously influenced my decision to move to Kazakhstan. First, the project of Nazarbayev University is interesting and ambitious; on the other hand my interest towards the country itself and post-Soviet territory is high. Kazakhstan is a very interesting country and has a rather interesting geographical position; it also has rather complicated partners, such as China, India, and Russia. Students are bright and clever; it's pleasant to work with people. Unfortunately, I don't have enough time to go sightseeing, but I plan to visit Tian-Shan mountain system. As my profession is Chinese literature and Tian-Shan is

frequently mentioned in the literature as a legendary place, I would like to see it with my own eyes.

Kazakhstan is really very lucky to have gas and oil and, thus, an opportunity to develop. It is very important that education has been chosen as an important direction of development. Initially Kazakhstan was using the means received from gas and oil to afford the opportunity for young Kazakh people to receive western education abroad and to return as well educated specialists. Now the second stage has begun, when the university is opened and it invites specialists from abroad to work in Nazarbayev University. Kazakhstan invests large amounts in this university, in school system; it's crucial to put a stress on education.

I have been to Armenia many times, even before the appointment of my son Charles Lonsdale to Armenia as Ambassador of Great Britain. I like Armenia, its nature very much, I have met many interesting people there and I am impressed with its ancient churches, especially with Noravank. I can't help mentioning its mountains as well.

If we compare Kazakhstan and Armenia, Armenia is situated in a small territory, while Kazakhstan is spacious. Armenia has much older history, and evidence to that can be the churches and the places of interest, which existed before building those churches.

“Formation of the Faculty of Political Sciences and Journalism was the Demand of Time”

Gadilbek Shalakhmetov

Chairman of the Department “TV, Radio and Public Relations” of Eurasian National University, Professor

“Formation of the faculty of political science and journalism and our department was just dictated by time. In the near future we will have a new profession – PR and press secretaries, which are the most modern positions. There are positions, but there are no specialists. We have a large flow of students and we seek not to have just lectures read by the lecturers, but to have classes in educational radio and TV studios in order to identify the profession better and to work more easily. With the introduction of cable television the number of TV channels will increase four times and there will be certain demand for some specialists.”

“How would you estimate the current level of journalism?”

“I find it very low, money has spoiled journalists. In their work people run after earning and money, while forgetting about the essence of journalism, and the essence of journalism is to create the truth and heroes. People don't have time; they “create” money instead of heroes. That's what modern journalism is.”

“You were the first press secretary of the president. Is it a difficult profession?”

“Before that I was the Minister of State Radio and Television and led five thousands employees. The president called me and said: “Do you know that I have decided to promote your post? I am appointing you my press secretary”. I had only eight people under me. “And what does it mean to be a press secretary?” He made an ironical smile and said: “First of all tell me what it means to be a president?” And we began to acknowledge that together. Twenty years have passed since that and we are happy with our successes.”

“You are the founder of “Mir” TV-radio center. How was that center created and how the idea of establishing it was born?”

“The first document on establishing the company “Mir” was signed in Yerevan in 1992. After the collapse of the Soviet Union we all thought that a war might begin between the post-Soviet Republics and it was confirmed by the events of Nagorny Karabakh. There was a need to encounter the most difficult problems in peace and cooperation and such psychology was put in the basis of “Mir” Company. All the representatives of post-Soviet countries were present in our company. Serob Ohanyan was from Armenia, Alibay was from Azerbaijan. When they were conducting live programs sitting next to each other, accusations simply poured on them from both sides: “You have a war, people are being killed and you are sitting side by side so calmly as if nothing has happened”.

Initially the company “Mir” was called Eurasian, which was quite unusual at that time. Perception of the concept “Eurasia” is the key to our peaceful future. Without accepting and understanding that word, wars will be inescapable.

In 1968, when I was still a young journalist at Kazakh TV, I was trusted to shoot a film in Armenia devoted to the anniversary of Kazakhstan. And I shot my first film “Sound, dombra, in the land of Nairi”. There are exclusive frames in that film for which Armenian cinema and television are struggling - those are the last shootings with Martiros Saryan, after it the master died. He was welcoming Kazakh painters, and I was making interviews as a journalist. Master Martiros Saryan had painted pumpkins and looking at my head he said: “What a good pumpkin!”

I was fortunate to be acquainted with Martiros Saryan. I would like to mention my Armenian friends: my deputy in the company “Mir” and a wonderful master Ashot

Dzhazayan, present chief-conductor of symphonic orchestra of Kazakhstan, outstanding Barsegh Papayan, ex-ambassador of Armenia to Kazakhstan Eduard Khurshudyan.”

“We have Broad Relations with Yerevan State University”

Nurila Shaymerdinova

Eurasian National University named after L.Gumilev,

Head of Department of Turkic Studies, Professor

The Department of Turkic Studies was opened in Eurasian University by the rector's order in September 2010. At the moment we have 88 students, 12 masters, 10 lecturers. We have three specializations – Turkic Studies, which has started to function this year; foreign linguistics, including the Turkish language with good knowledge of English and third – Oriental Studies, including again the Turkish language.

That means, the Department of Turkic Studies includes Turkic studies as a synthesis of history, archeology, literature, linguistics and on the other hand Turkish is taught as part of Turkic studies. Intensive relations are kept with Turkey through the center Chika. Our students and masters are qualified in Turkey. In 2011 an institution of doctoral candidacy will be opened. Our foreign partners are scientists from Turkey, thus for instance Ahmed Ishagul, Indiz Najien, etc. We have broad ties with other scientists of the Turkic language throughout the world. For example, we cooperate with Khakassian University of Language and Literature in the field of science. We have contacts with Yerevan State University, particularly with Aleksandr Safaryan and the Department of Turkish Studies headed by him. Last year he came here with an official visit and delivered interesting lectures, carried out seminars on Armenian-Kipchak monuments, advised the main literature. The major points of cooperation were discussed, as well as the historical, linguistic and other aspects of those monuments. Now in Kazakhstan there are two specialists dealing with the questions of those monuments. According to the policy of our Rector, our masters shall be the first fresh power starting to study entirely Armenian-Kipchak monuments. Our masters have got acknowledged with graphics of Armenian writings, they are able to read the written monuments, to use the dictionaries.

KAZAKHSTAN AS A MULTINATIONAL STATE

The Republic of Kazakhstan is a multinational and multi-religion state, where 130 nations and people belonging to 45 religions live side by side in harmony, including Kazakh, Russian, Korean, German, Tatar, Jew, Ukrainian, Chechen, Uyghur, Greek, Belarusian, Azerbaijani, Ingush, Uzbek, Polish, Armenian, Dungan, Turkish, Bulgarians Bashkir, Balkar, Kurdish, Chuvash, Kirgiz, Hungarian, Daghestani, Udmurt, Gypsy, Assyrian, Tajik people.

The largest national communities are Kazakhs (63.1% of the population) and Russians (23.7%). According to official data, the population of Kazakhstan makes 16 441 959 people as of January 1, 2011.

The results of 2009 population census showed that 70.2% of Kazakh population is Islamic, 26.2% is Christian, 2.8% doesn't profess any religion and 0.5% refused to answer the question.

After the independence, in the 1990s national-cultural centers were established in the territory of Kazakhstan, and on March 1 the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan was created. It is a non-political, non-state organization and is the guarantor of harmony and peace. All the 320 members are equal; the activities of the Assembly are transparent and democratic. The Assembly has promoted the revival of peoples' culture living in Kazakhstan, has strengthened the work of national centers. National schools have been opened, magazines, books have been published in national languages.

Formation of multinational composition of the population began in the 18th century. Until the beginning of the 20th century Kazakhs formed the majority. As a result of Stolypin's policy of resettlement, the number of Russians and Ukrainians grew and the Kazakhs made only 67.2 % of the population in 1911.

In the 1930s the number of people of different nationalities began to grow in Kazakhstan because of the forcible resettlement of people from other USSR Republics. In 1935-40 Polish people were deported from Western Ukraine, Belarus and Lithuania. During the years of Second World War Germans were forcibly sent to Kazakhstan from Povoljje, Chechens, Ingush from Caucasus, and in 1950-60 more than one million people came here from Russia, Ukraine and Belarus connected with cultivation of virgin lands.

Assembly of People of Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan Peoples' Assembly was established according to the Decree of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev of 1 March 1995 as an advisory-consultative body. A few years later it was renamed into the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan.

The activities of the Assembly are directed at overcoming the following issues:

- promotion of stability of interethnic and inter-confessional consent, stability in the society;
- drafting proposals on state policy to promote development of friendly relations among representatives of nations living on the territory of Kazakhstan, to support their spiritual-cultural revival and development on the basis of maintaining equal rights;
- formation of political culture of citizens based on civilized and democratic norms;
- maintenance of respect towards different interests of nations in the national politics carried out by the state;
- quest for compromise to solve social contradictions.

The first President of the Republic of Kazakhstan is the life-long Chairman of the Assembly. He determines and approves main directions of the Assembly activity. The Chairman of the Assembly has two deputies, who are appointed by the guarantee of the Assembly Council according to the corresponding acts.

Assembly sessions are invited by its president and take place no less than once a year. Date, place and agenda are announced one month prior to its work. A special session of the Assembly can be held at its president's initiative or at the request of minimum 1/3 of the Assembly members' total number and can take place within one month from the day of the decision.

The staff of the Assembly is formed from the representatives of state bodies, national-cultural and other social associations, as well as persons having an authority in the society and also publicly-politically active people.

At present the Assembly comprises 382 members. The working body of the Assembly is Secretariat, forming part of the Administration of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The Assembly closely cooperates with small assemblies, which function in the centers of all the districts and in the cities Astana and Almaty. The small assembly carries out the functions of representation of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan in a particular district.

Candidates for membership to the Assembly are nominated by the decisions of small assemblies at proposals of national-cultural centers.

During the years of its functioning, the Assembly has discussed important questions of sociopolitical life connected with future economic and political reforms of the Kazakh society.

During the last ten years the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan has become an authoritative institutional setting of interethnic harmonization. Financial assistance has been increased by the state. 22 republican and regional national-cultural centers have been established, which unite 470 regional, city and district organizations.

Today the following nations live in Kazakhstan: Kazakhs, Germans, Koreans, Tatars, Slavs, Chechens, Ingushes, Azerbaijanis, Uigurs, Russians, Ukrainians, Jews, Polish, Turkish, Armenians, Belarusians, Dungans, Kurds, Uzbeks, Kazaks, Turkmen, Bulgarians, Dagestanis, Kirghiz, Tajiks, Karachais, Balkars, Chinese, Chuvashes, Kara-Kalpaks, Assyrians, Czechs, Baltic nations, Georgians, Ossetians, Lezghins, Iranians, Buryats, Hungarians, Romanians.

More than 100 national and 170 weekend schools work in the country where 23 native languages are taught. The Government of the country allocates KZT 12 million to finance support of these schools.

Four republican and fifteen regional national newspapers are published and six national theatres work (Kazakh, Russian, German, Korean, Uzbek, Uigur) in Kazakhstan. A few new books in the languages of groups are published annually.

“Today the Topic of Consensus between Nations and Religions is among the Most Urgent Issues”

Yeraly Tugzhanov

Vice Chairman of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan,

Head of the Secretariat

(interview was held on 23.06.2009)

“What conditioned the decision to establish such an institution?”

“Today the topic of agreement between nations and religions is one of the most urgent questions. That agreement is a guarantee for the stability of each state. There were, there are and there will always be multi-religion countries; and such issues are urgent in the Middle and Near East, as well as in individual European countries. Wherever there is stability, there will be economic development; and social development will be provided. And the most important is that due to that stability it is possible to come to political stability.

130 ethnic groups is a serious number, there are also more than 45 religions, which underlines once again the peculiarity of Kazakhstan. For that reason, Kazakhstan took under its supervision that issue from the very beginning. In January 1992, a law on Freedom of Religions was adopted. Different international experts (for example Bzhezinski) used to see Kazakhstan as one of the most problematic territories, as a zone of conflicts between nations and religions. Today, we are proud and happy, that multi-national and multi-religious Kazakhstan has become not a problem, but an advantage.

Kazakhstan became a multi-religion country not overnight. As you know about 1.5 million people from 62 nationalities were exiled to Kazakhstan in the late thirties. Neither of the ethnic groups living in the Kazakh territory, nor anybody else is guilty.

In 1995, the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan was established and all the ethnic groups currently living in Kazakhstan are involved in it.”

“To what extent has this institute been worked out?”

“First of all it was necessary to create conditions for the inner calm for each ethnic group inhabiting in Kazakhstan, so that they had a possibility to access their origin, their culture. And the most important is language. If there is no language of the nation, one may presume, there is no nation as well.

Those ethnic groups wishing to create national-cultural unions received an opportunity to do so. 600 national-cultural unions exist in the territory of Kazakhstan now.

The second direction was to give a chance to all the ethnic groups to establish relations with their historical native land...

The Assembly of People of Kazakhstan is headed by the Kazakh President and thus its status is defined. This is how not only our institute's viability is decided, but also its activity. This structure gives an opportunity to make fast decisions concerning each question that may arise ever in life. If we don't solve such questions, then why should the structure function?

Decisions made during the sessions of the Assembly are implemented by all the state bodies. The Assembly has 382 members. 56 members of the republican Assembly enter the Assembly's Council.”

“There is some misunderstanding among people. After all, which is right: Assembly of People of Kazakhstan or Peoples' Assembly?”

“The major component of state ideology and national policy is that any citizen living in the territory of the country is first of all a citizen of Kazakhstan. That's why the former name changed from Peoples' to Assembly of People. We don't divide the citizens of Kazakhstan into communities. Kazakh people living in the territory of Kazakhstan are a community, but the citizens of Kazakhstan are the people of Kazakhstan, its unitary and indivisible people. Only in this way, that's through forming and creating a single nation, I think, it would be possible to provide the maximum consolidation of the society. The important question for us is the agreement among the society.”

“Are all the nations represented? What is the mechanism for the representative of a nation to become a member of the Assembly and how is he authorized to present the interests of the nation?”

“There are territorial structures which are non-governmental organizations. We don't intervene in the questions, such as who will be the leader in districts, regions. Regional Assembly Council is headed by the akim of the region. And they send an envoy to the republican Assembly.

Besides, leaders of republican national-cultural unions also become members of the Assembly.

If they are represented in more than 9 regions, then they gain the right to receive republican status. Leaders of these organizations also have the right to become members of the Assembly. Heads of NGOs, that is structures and leaders whose activities are directed to social agreement, can also become members of the Assembly. We consider all the candidates, and then send to the president, as only he can confirm the staff of the Assembly.

No political issue is touched upon within the framework of the questions of nations and religions. It is fixed in our Constitution that no political party can be established according to national and religious belonging. That's why the Constitution says: “Equal rights to all citizens regardless of nationality and religious belonging”. 9 members from the Assembly are elected as Mazhilis deputies, who represent the interests of those 130 ethnic groups.

So far 365 messages from these deputies have been sent to discussions, we have participated in 56 legislative activities. Wherever there is a national issue the expertise is held by these parliamentarians representing the People Assembly. This is the peculiarity of the Assembly.”

“Some time has passed since the creation of the Assembly. Can it be presumed, that some countries would like to duplicate that model?”

“I would like to show this brochure: “The Kazakh Model of Reconciliation Between Nations and Religions”, Institute of Sociology of NAS RA. My Armenian friends introduced it while having a speech during the CIS conference in Moscow. They said, “Look, the approach has been worked out in Kazakhstan; there is no need to puzzle over it. Let's just try to find ways to use it taking into consideration the peculiarities of each region.” 9 professors, all of them from Armenia, worked on the book: Mr. Poghosyan, Grigoryan, Hakobyan, Hovhannisyan.

They are all doctors of that Institute. I would like to mention only one sentence: “One of the main components of Kazakhstan’s national policy is the aimed development of culture of Kazakh nucleus, at the same time creating all the conditions for the other nations”. One sentence has answered so many questions.

Since the foundation of the Assembly, our representatives have been in 28 countries. I don’t want to say that the Assembly’s model is a universal cure for the solution of all problems. However, we propose it as a main component for the solution of the problem of social agreement. But let everyone decide to what extent it will be applicable for other countries taking into account their specificity.”

“Does the Assembly have foreign relations?”

“Once a meeting took place with the former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who appreciated the Assembly highly. Last year I met with the deputy UN Secretary-General Makasaki. Today we closely cooperate with the OSCE, participate in CIS conference. Besides, we have established a foundation of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan collaborating with the CIS foundation. At present we have close ties with the German foundation. So, international cooperation is quite serious. Last year Chinese representatives were here. And of course we have relations with Turkey, particularly with their Strategic Institute of Ethnic Affairs. Turkey is also interested in its turn.”

“How are the Armenians of Kazakhstan represented in the Assembly? Can they be considered active participants?”

“Yes, maybe they are the most active participants. Currently, an ethnic group of 25.000 Armenians lives in Kazakhstan. In 2006 a church was opened in Almaty. Mr. Karapetyan was the chief person in all those activities. He is the person, who has been building the Assembly with the president of Kazakhstan from the very first day of its creation; he has actually built the main part of the Assembly. He has not just built, but has brought ideas, which lie at the basis of the Assembly’s foundation. I can say that the Armenian group is represented in the largest 9 regions: Aktubinsk, Karaganda, Northern-Kazakhstan, etc. Armenians of Kazakhstan used to and still have a good reputation. I think everybody knows and remembers about the greatest leader of Kazakhstan Mr. Mirzoyan. We treat with great solicitude all the leaders, who have had a great input in the stable development of Kazakhstan.”

“Do nations have their magazines, newspapers?”

“We have republican newspapers, such as Armenian “Nairi”, and also German, Uigur, Ukrainian ones. There are 18 republican newspapers, but the number of newspapers of national-cultural unions is 37.”

“In their own languages?”

“Undoubtedly, it’s their right. There is also an Uigur newspaper in the Kazakh language. The issue of teaching the state language in Kazakhstan has been defined by the Kazakh president as a fact of unification of the people of Kazakhstan. Secondly, it provides each citizen of Kazakhstan with information. How is it possible to be a citizen of Kazakhstan, to participate in social-political life without knowing the language? Another thing is also practiced: Russian is used in order to carry the information to everybody.”

“Lithuanian Community Tries to Preserve its Relations with Motherland”

Vitaly Tvarionas

The Honorary Consul of the Republic of Lithuania in Kazakhstan, Chairman of public association “Lituanica”

The Lithuanian community was formed through the efforts of the initiative group in 2003. The Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan has promoted that, as it rouses the interests of the communities which are not officially registered yet.

An interest was expressed not only by the initiative group, but also by all the Kazakh citizens of Lithuanian origin. Our aim has been to preserve Lithuanian culture, traditions, to increase the communication among them as well as with our historical native land.

Karaganda is a multi-nation area. Thousands of people were moved here forcibly from the former USSR territory, including the captives from other countries. According to the statistics, Lithuanians moved here since 1939 under the Stalin repressions. People were banished with their families and settled in this territory. Descendants of those people now live in Kazakhstan.

At present 2500 Lithuanians live in Karaganda, 7000 in entire Kazakhstan. They mainly deal with business; there are also miners, scientific workers, teachers and painters among them.

We try to preserve ties with Lithuania, also through state projects provided by it. Representatives of our youth go to Lithuania, receive education, learn their native language, get the chance to communicate in it and then return to Kazakhstan to their parents.

Kazakhstan is a multi-nation family, where the People Assembly unites us. There are more holidays here than in any country of the world. While celebrating our holidays, we make efforts that other nations and centers also participate. For example we take part in the events of Korean and Armenian communities; we celebrate New Year in all the seasons of the year. Such unification gives us colouring and makes us richer.

Our center and Consulate function on public bases. We deal with formulation of documents as well as with searching for the Lithuanians, who live here and can't find their relatives in Lithuania and vice versa. We also conduct business to finance our ethnic-cultural center and cooperate with numerous businessmen for that purpose.

“German Community has Appeared in Karaganda Since the Old Times”

Victor Kist

Leader of German community in Karaganda

German community has existed here for many centuries; but personally my family came here in 1941. There used to be German villages here. Now there are also mixed families who have forgotten their language and don't see themselves in Germany, forming 25% of the German population here.

In the 1990s a considerable flow to Germany could be observed because of the hard economic situation and failure of trade exchange. Before that there were 134 thousand Germans in the area of Karaganda, now there are only 48 thousand. In those times the number of Germans exceeded 900 thousand throughout Kazakhstan, now 250 thousand have remained. There are families, whose younger representatives have left for Germany and the older people have stayed here.

We have our own school, law service, medical center with special care service for the old; sport clubs recording international successes, we already have two champions in Germany.

Children of 17 nationalities learn in our school, they study 4 languages – Kazakh, Russian, English and German; the courses of language studies are free. People of any nationality can be a member of our community. We have more than 16 000 members of the community, there is a youth division and a theatre is functioning.

I want to greet all the Germans living in Armenia, wishing them health and success. I think for most of you Armenia is your native land as Kazakhstan is for us. I wish that children are brought up with best German and Armenian traditions. Spiritually we are with you as always.

“In Kazakhstan We Present the Armenian Culture”

Narine Mikaelyan

Deputy-President on Youth Affairs of the Association of Armenian Cultural Centers “Nairi”.

The Armenian cultural center has been functioning since 1991. Our main direction is culture. We have two Sunday schools, where Armenian and Kazakh are taught. We also have a dance group, musicians. We often organize events devoted both to state and Armenian national holidays. We have both stage and dance performances.

The number of young people attending the center is growing year by year. If at the beginning the senior generation, who came here driven by their memories of their roots, native land and many of them were from Armenia, prevailed among the attendants now the number of young people, even those who were born in Kazakhstan, has overcome. They want to study their native language, to get acquainted with their culture, traditions and we try to help them in that question.

We have performances outside the center, when we are invited to participate in Kazakh holidays. We introduce our culture, traditions. Recently our children have participated in an Armenian wedding staged by us.

We actively cooperate with other centers, carry out festivals, and invite them to all of our holidays. For example, we were celebrating one of Christian holidays and invited representatives of various nations and religions. They all entered the church, participated in the mass, everybody jumped over the fire and took part in the party.

Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions

130 nations live in Kazakhstan and there are 46 religions (convictions). In the restless 90s of the previous century many experts considered this country number one candidate for possible mass unrests on ethnic basis. But life has shown that Kazakhstan overcame that issue with honor.

Unification of Kazakh society on the base of inter-ethnic and inter-religious agreement has become one of the strategic questions and it is fixed in the Constitution of the country: “Any actions that may break the agreement between nations are recognized as non constitutional...”

Propaganda of excellence of war, social, racial, national, religious, clan propaganda are forbidden”.

The idea of carrying out regular meetings of Leaders of world and traditional religions belongs to Nursultan Nazarbayev. According to him, the need to speak about the faith of world public and the role of religions in preserving and strengthening the world has matured long ago.

The first religion in Kazakhstan, according to the number of its followers, is Islam. For ages it has interacted with paganism and shamanism preserved among Kazakhs. As a result, Islam now represents a synthesis of old spiritual ideas and national-domestic traditions of Kazakh people. The second religion in figures is the Russian Orthodox Church. Recently, the Roman Catholic Church has become more active.

According to international experts, in the dialogue between the East and the West sharpening year by year, the mediation of Kazakhstan is becoming more vital. Meetings in such format appear to be an experience deserving attention – to use the spiritual and moral potential of world religions to regulate international conflicts, to counteract global threats, to overcome xenophobia and intolerance.

At the first meeting of religious leaders, UN ex-Secretary General Kofi Annan mentioned in his greeting speech: “Religion can be a special sphere of power. Religions differ, but in our hearts we address general values. Being kind, patient, loving close people – none of the religions can maintain its exclusive rights towards these values”.

According to the Head of the Secretariat of the Congress Kassym-Jomart Tokayev: “The congress leaders of world and traditional religions became Kazakhstan’s significant input in the global process of inter-cultural dialogue and has a special place in strengthening world tolerance and mutual understanding”.

In 2003 the first congress of world religious leaders took place in Astana at a high level. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, President of Russia Vladimir Putin, USA President George Bush, Prime Minister of Britain Tony Blair and other high-ranking officials addressed the congress with greeting speeches.

Almost 30 delegations from Europe, Asia, Middle East and the USA participated in the first congress in Astana, thus representing Christianity and Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism, Daoism, Shintoism, and Judaism.

In the main square of the capital, near the symbol of Astana – Bayterek, which symbolizes the tree of life, 17 tents were put up – the number of leaders of spiritual leaders participating in the meeting. At the end of the meeting all the 17 leaders left their blessings in the golden ball – at the height of 97 meters.

The second congress of Leaders of world and traditional religions took place in September 2006 in the Palace of Peace and Reconciliation built specially for this event, where 43 delegations from 20 countries came together. More than 160 delegates were representing all the main traditional religions of the world. UN, OSCE, UNESCO delegates were present as honorable guests.

The third congress of religious leaders took place on July 1-2 2009. As a result of the meeting a resolution was adopted highlighting the responsibility of religious leaders for the society, the indissoluble connection of religion with morality; an appeal was made to develop the dialogue and cooperation between religions, as well as the importance of preserving cultural and spiritual heritage of each nation was stressed.

The congress also called on all the peoples of good will to counteract the attempts of using religious differences for propaganda of hatred, as well as to promote the efforts of explaining the essence of different religions and civilizations and of improving mutual understanding by educating.

Armenian Apostolic church participated in the second and third congresses. Beginning with 2007, the representative of Armenian Church, leader of Gegharkunik eparchy, member of the Public Council Marcos Bishop Hovhannisyan has been a member of the Secretariat of permanent congress.

“From the beginning our Saint Church accepted the initiative of President Nursultan Nazarbayev to establish the congress of leaders of world and traditional religions with an approval and we share his idea, that “spiritual regression is one of the main reasons of economic shocks of the modern world” and it is necessary to have a new, fairer order and spiritual leaders must become its bearers”, said bishop Marcos.

**“One Could Say Without Hesitation that this Congress is a
Well-established Project”**

Bishop Marcos Hovhannisyan,

*Permanent representative of the Armenian Apostolic Church in the Secretariat of Congress
of Astana, member of the Public Council of Armenia, Head of Gegharkuniq Eparchy*

“You participated in the third congress of Leaders of world and traditional religions in Astana. Would you, please, say whether the idea of collecting representatives of different religions together is something new?”

“The idea of course is not new. The novelty is in the continuity, consistency. We are a traditional religious structure which has a long history and that's why in 2006 the Kazakh side applied with a special invitation to His Holiness Hayrapet to take participation in the congress. Our first meeting was together with His Holiness Hayrapet. It was quite efficient, because his contacts with some of the leaders, by the way not only with Christian, but also Jewish and Islamic leaders, gave rise to personal close relations.

After it, the chief rabbi of Israel, the chief mufti of Syria came to Armenia at the invitation of His Holiness. This is a serious result and this was the impact of the ties in Astana. Afterwards, we got a permanent representation in the Secretariat, which is headed by the President of Senate Tokayev, who requested His Holiness to appoint a permanent representative to the Secretariat. We participate in all the sessions of the Secretariat, come up with proposals connected with the agenda, activities of the congress and work of the Secretariat. There are religious organizations not participating in the Secretariat's activities, because they are not universal, traditional, so they have only the status of a guest.”

“Can it be presumed, that the Congress has its definite place among the “ecumenical” relations?”

“Looking at the path covered, it could be said without any hesitation, that this project has proved viable. And due to the “unquiet” approach of the state leader, this congress is growing. If 20 leaders took place in the first congress, then there were 77 delegates from 35 countries, all in all 400 people at the third congress.”

“Is the congress able to have any role in achieving peace in world hot spots?”

“The aim of the congress is the dialogue which will lead to practical, structural achievements. The congress is becoming the platform, where the representatives of different religions can communicate, acknowledge each other, and not to accuse each other in vain.”

“The preparatory activities of 2012 congress have already started. Will our Apostolic Church put forward its proposals regarding the agenda?”

“Of course, both regarding the agenda and working format. Everything is decided there, nothing is forced upon us.”

“A special pyramidal building has been built for the congress. What meaning does it bear?”

“It means that everybody is going to the same aim, the same climax; the process is from the bottom to the top.”

“Can it be deduced that the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions has given quite a positive impetus to the Kazakh image?”

“Definitely. Let us imagine: representatives of different religions from 35 countries come together there, and then they return to their countries with great impressions. During those days Kazakhstan is in the center of everybody's attention. I would like to note, that the mass media in Kazakhstan cover this congress in details, at a proper and highest level. While we were there, all the channels were giving quite serious, long analytical programs concerning the congress.”

Holidays in the Republic of Kazakhstan

In the Republic of Kazakhstan national, state, professional and other holidays are celebrated.

January 1-2	New Year
January 7	Christmas
March 8	International Women’s Day
March 21-23	Nauryz
May 1	Kazakhstan Peoples Solidarity Holiday
May 7	Fatherland Defender’s Day
May 9	Victory Day
July 6	Capital City Day
August 30	The Republic of Kazakhstan Constitution Day
September 1	Knowledge day
December 16	Independence Day

The Cuisine of Kazakhstan

First of all the guest of a Kazakh family is regaled with kumiss - the drink based on mare milk; shubat or airan; next meal is tea with milk or cream, with dried food and raisins. Then the guest tastes horse-flesh or mutton snacks - kazi, shuzhuk, zhal, zhaya, karta, etc. Bread made from wheat flour is put on the table, too.

The major national Kazakh dish is Besbarmak (five fingers). It is cooked from mutton, horse meat or beef. It is usually eaten with boiled pasta sheet and meat broth called shorpa, which is traditionally served in Kazakh bowls called "kese". At the end kumiss is regaled, then again tea, as at the beginning of the dinner.

The ornament of any table – dastarkhan – is Kazakh style cooked meat. It is boiled in large uncut pieces. Then the host is treating every guest and everyone is given a correspondent part: pelvic bones and shank for honorable old people, brisket for son-in-law or daughter-in-law, neck-bone for girls and so on. The most honorable guest receives head of the ram cooked in a particular way. The guest should part the head between the other people obeying to ancient ritual of showing respectful attitude to guests, old people, kids, close and distant relations.

The traditional drinks are kumiss and shubat. Kumiss has therapeutic and freshening features, is used for curing illnesses of lungs and gastrointestinal tracts. Shubat is made of camel's milk and doesn't concede kumiss in its caloricity.

Modern Kazakh cuisine includes not only Kazakh traditional dishes, but also Uzbek, Uyghur, Russian, Tatar, Korean and other favorite cuisines.

Mass Media

Ministry of Communication and Information of the Republic of Kazakhstan is the state structure coordinating the activities of the mass media.

The activities of the mass media of the Republic of Kazakhstan are regulated by the "Law On press and mass media", which was adopted on June 28, 1991. In 1997 president Nazarbayev's order on "Formation of unified information space of the Republic of Kazakhstan" was published.

There are about 1170 newspapers, 450 magazines, 215 central and local TV and radio companies and 15 information agencies. 80% of Kazakh mass media belong to private persons

and organizations, 159 editions – to public unions, 11 - to political parties and movements, 10 - to religious unions.

According to the “Law on Mass Media” no less than 50% of airtime should be in the state language – Kazakh. This law doesn’t expand on cable television, that’s why in this network Russian TV channels are broadly represented.

Printed publications of Kazakhstan and electronic mass media are issued in 11 languages. 18% of the press is released in Kazakh, 35% in Russian, 35% in two languages.

According to the data of 2008 about 2300 newspapers and magazines are issued in the Republic, out of which 220 newspapers and 312 magazines have republican status.

There are mass media mainly broadcasting international news, analytical materials from world events. Among them are international magazines “The Week of the World”, “The Continent”, the “Kazakhstan”, “Khabar” national agency, “Kazinform” information agency, “Kazakhstan” TV-radio Company, “Rahat-TV” independent TV company, “Radio-Kazakhstan” radio-station.

“Khabar” agency is the largest media holding of Kazakhstan. It has two national and one international TV channels, the latter is called “Caspionet” and also one radio-station. This joint-stock is financed by the state and is fully supervised by it.

The following journalist organizations function in the Republic: the Union of Kazakhstan Journalists, the Republican Association of Women Journalists, the Association of Independent Electronic Mass Media. The latter one represents the interests of non-state mass media not only in Kazakhstan, but also in Middle Asia.

Article 20 of the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan comprises provisions on freedom of speech and press, according to which censorship is forbidden, freedom of speech and composition is guaranteed, every person has the right to receive and to spread freely information in any way not forbidden by the law.

“Kazakhfilm Has Become One of the Largest Film Producing Studios Today”

Didar Amantay

Head editor of “Kazakhfilm”

The first film was shot in Kazakhstan in 1925. In those times the studio was called in another way, it received its present name “Kazakhfilm” in 1960. “Kazakhfilm” Cinema Studio was named after Shaken Aimanov in 1982. He was the first Kazakh film director. Now we continue the tradition laid by him at the basis of Kazakh cinematography.

After the pause in the 90s, when one film was being produced per year, Kazakhfilm has recovered its activities. For example, only during this year, the studio has released ten full-length feature films. Yearly we produce 40 documentary films, about five short-length animation films lasting ten minutes. In 2009 we launched two interesting projects. Within the first project, for the first time in the history of Kazakh film, we shot the first full-length animation film based on Kazakh tales and lasting 60 minutes. Within the second, again for the first time in the history of Kazakh film, we began to shoot an animation serial comprising 50 episodes, each lasting 5 minutes. It tells about the history of Kazakh statehood from the 15th century to the present days. Similar projects have been carried out also in Russia and Ukraine.

Beginning with 2009 new equipment has been acquired. Now Dolby system is installed in Kazakhfilm, and if previously we had to go to Paris or Prague in order to synchronize our films to that system, at the moment we don't have such problems and can do that here. The newly acquired equipment allows to minimize film production costs, meanwhile improving the quality, due to which our studio has become one of the largest film producing studios. We are cooperating with various foreign actors and directors.

Now our films are of different genres, we have adventure, action; thriller; author films, as well as we get orders from the Ministry of culture to shoot films connected with holidays.

We have interesting projects in the sphere of youth films. Jointly with Egor Konchalovski, we are producing a film “Zemlya Obetovannaya” on people exiled to Kazakhstan. We have released the film “The Sky of My Childhood”, another one “Real Love.KZ” telling about young people who got acquainted via the internet, is in the stage of preparation.

Many festivals are now held in Kazakhstan. Kazakhfilm is the organizer of Eurasian Film Festival, which will take place in Almaty. Newly shot films, as well as short-length films participate in the festival. In case the number of festivals increases, Armenian film-makers may have their honorable place in the lists.

And we would be glad to take part in Armenian film festivals, to present our new projects; most important is to establish and preserve relations between Kazakhfilm and Armenian

film. Armenian literature is interesting for us, no matter in what language it is, for example William Saroyan; we highly appreciate the art of Parajanov, who loved Yerevan very much calling it the city of stones. Armenia is interesting for us and we are ready to cooperate.

All the films are produced in two languages: Russian and English. The main ideology in our films, concerns unification, stability and, of course, education.

“The Main Topic of Our Animation Films is National, Popular Tales”

Zhaken Danenov

Head of animation films of Kazakhfilm, director

Kazakh animation started back in the Soviet years. In those times we used to produce 10-minute-long 5 animation films per year, then after the collapse of the USSR, production of animation stopped for about 15 years. It is three years, since the animation has been actively developing. Taking into account that it has a great importance for children's upbringing, the government pays special attention to this field. All the essential equipment has been newly purchased, the building has been reconstructed and the necessary conditions have been created to produce animation films. We have a young and active team interested in new technologies and now we produce 5-6 films lasting 10 minutes, last year we produced even 7 such films. We have produced one full-length film – the first in our history. The film is made based on the plot of a famous Kazakh tale and we plan to finish it this autumn.

The main topic of animation films is national, popular tales. There is a considerable gap in this field, which should be filled in; children must be acquainted with popular tales and legends. There are authors shooting films on their own plot.

During the Soviet times we also cooperated with Armenian animators. I worked with talented Sahakyants, Levon Khachatryan who used to work in Moscow; I studied also with Avagyan in Moscow.”

“I am Deeply Impressed with the Spiritual Wealth of the Armenian Nation”

Grigoriy Bedenko

Correspondent of “Khabar” Informational Agency

I represent TV channel “Khabar”, which is a part of the Agency. One could say that it is the first button in Kazakhstan, the major channel of the country. We cover all the activities of the President, the government, the Assembly, all state structures and conduct state informational policy. The channel is quite big, having divisions in different areas of the Republic; the center is in Astana and a large branch is in Almaty. “Khabar” has more than a thousand employees, covers major part of the air-time.

I have been working in “Khabar” since its establishment, which means since 1995. I am mainly specialized in extreme spheres and I cover emergency situations. In my working biography I have 5 massive earthquakes: 1999 in Turkey, 2005 in Iran, 2004 tsunami in Sri Lanka, and 2008 earthquake in China. We often visit conflict zones, such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Palestine, as well as we visited Nagorny Karabakh in 2010.

We visited Armenia in connection with the Karabakh issue. In 2010 Kazakhstan assumed OSCE presidency and that’s why we were interested in the activation of the dialogue. We were providing information assistance of that process and that’s why we spent two weeks in Armenia, one week in Nagorny Karabakh, as well as in the territories of Azerbaijan that had suffered in result of the conflict.

I am impressed with the spiritual wealth of the Armenian nation, the emotive attitude towards church and faith, with their aspiration to preserve their own culture and monuments, their history. I have such an impression that priest is the most important person for the Armenian and not the statesman. I am quite impressed by the ancient monuments, churches, khachkars (cross-stones) and, of course, by Armenia’s nature.

After the shootings in Nagorny Karabakh, we produced a film lasting 48 minutes where the spirituality is the main topic.

Initially I was expecting to see the situation of the 90s in Karabakh, that is bearded men, military clothes, shots, explosions, suffering people, destroyed cities, etc. But what I saw changed my imagination on Karabakh conflict. Actually, political means have managed to erase the war. In Stepanakert, where there is no war nowadays, in Shushi where in some places one can feel that more people used to live before and now they seem partly abandoned, development of peace and stability can be felt. Migration, caused by the war, has left its trace on Karabakh. I was also surprised to see that their church was the first building

to be reconstructed, then the remaining things. Of course the biggest and the most important impressions are connected with local people. I had never met such kind, open and generous people before. They were accepting us, telling everything and showing that they are now enjoying life.

But I was unpleasantly astonished with the intense situation. Though the active stage of the conflict is already in the past, it can burst at any moment. I really wish to that people, that their children never see whatever they saw during the years of war.

It's very important that journalists often visit Karabakh and cover the situation, show the progress of post war development. It's also crucial for people and also for politicians to know the truth, to realize that real people live there, who don't need any war.

CHAPTER 6

ARMENIAN-KAZAKH HISTORICAL RELATIONS

Armenian historiography contains very interesting information on people and tribes inhabiting the territory of Kazakhstan. Armenian historians give evidence about various countries and nations on the East of Armenia. The map recomposed on the basis of materials of Anania Shitakatsi's "Geography" is of major and great interest, as it is the only map of Central Asia compiled during the time between 2-9 centuries.

Armenian merchants reached India and China through different ways. One of the roads passed through the present territory of Kazakhstan.

In the Middle Ages Syrian Nestorians carried on active missionary, trade and diplomatic activities along roads to Central Asia, Mongolia and China. There are curious evidences about the representatives of Armenian clergy, who conducted their activities with the Nestorians. They played an important role in organizing the visit of state figures of Kilikia to the capital of Mongol khans.

According to archive materials, formation of Armenian colonies in the southern areas of Kazakhstan as well as in the whole territory of Central Asia was accompanied by rapprochement of Armenians with the nations settled in Turkestan.

The Armenian community in Kazakhstan was formed and increased in the second half of the 19th century, when Russia was spreading its super power throughout Central Asia. The first

Armenian settlements appeared in the territory of Kazakhstan after the formation of Turkestan general-prefecture in 1867. In those times Armenian craftsmen, workers and merchants from Turkmenistan, Karabakh, Nakhijevan and Armenia came to settle here.

According to historical information, already in 1890 about 2893 Armenians and 4815 Russians lived in trans-Caspian Turkestan, and in 1894 there were already 3483 Armenians and 9082 Russians.

Already in early 19th century Armenians had a strong position in the trading stations that were spread on the eastern coast of the Caspian Sea. They played a significant role in the development of relations between nations. Knowing the language of Gypjak well, Armenians often served as translators, mediators, advisers thus becoming a kind of aides for the foreigners in communicating with the Kazakh population. Armenian merchants, craftsmen together with Russians formed the demographic basis for cities Guryev (at present Atirau) and Fort-Shevchenko (at present Aktau).

Despite their own hardships and sufferings, Armenians, who had come to Turkestan, were not only trying to preserve and develop their national culture at any cost, but were also helping the local people to develop their own culture.

In 1900 Azniv and Andranik Soghomonyan established a theatrical group and toured the whole Middle Asia. Tamara Petrosyan – famous Tamara Khanum, was directing the national Uzbek dance group for quite a long period. Composer S. Balasanyan established the first musical theatre in Tajikstan. Stage director Hamo Beknazaryan played an important role in the creation of film-industry in the region. He was one of the founders of the first film-studio in Tashkent.

During the Soviet period Armenians settled in the industrial centers Chimkent, Karaganda, Kustanay, Pavlodar, Almaty. The number of Armenians in Kazakhstan increased in 1937-49 at the expense of thousands of Armenian families exiled from Armenia, Georgia, the Crimea and other parts of the Soviet Union.

Only at the end of 1937 1121 Armenian and Kurdish families moved to Kazakhstan from Armenia and other South Caucasian republics. Hundreds of people removed to Kazakhstan after the Great Patriotic War, when the Soviet government announced about the strategy of appropriation of virgin lands and thousands of volunteers from various Soviet republics left for the KSSR.

After 1991, the government of Kazakhstan paid a special attention to the issue of regulation of inter-national relations. Assembly of People of Kazakhstan was established adjacent to the president's office; among its permanent members are the leaders of Armenian communities – "Luis" of Almaty and "Erebuni" of Kostanay.

Accordinging to the population census of 1999, 15700 citizens of Armenian nationality were living in Kazakhstan.

As to the data of the Embassy of Kazakhstan in Armenia, now 40-45 thousands of Armenians are Kazakhstan's citizens, and if we take into account also the Armenians living and working there, then the number will reach approximately 100 000.

Armenian cultural centers function in 11 large cities of Kazakhstan unifying the Armenian communities and dealing with the upbringing of the growing generation. Only in Almaty some 5-6 Armenian cultural centers function, the first one of which "Luis" was founded in 1991. On its basis a Sunday school has been functioning since 1992 and 35 7-15-year-old children study there.

For already 11 years "Exercis" choreographic studio for children has been functioning adjacent to "Luis" cultural center, and not only Armenian but also children of other nationalities attend the classes. This studio has been a laureate of international children's festivals for many times.

In 2000 "Akhtamar" dance ensemble was established in cultural center "Luis", and Armenian national dances make the major part of its concert lists.

On the basis of Armenian cultural centers functioning in Kazakhstan, on October 30 2004, "Nairi" Association of Armenian Cultural Centers in Kazakhstan was formed and A. Karapetyan, Deputy of the City Maslahat (Municipality) of Almaty, became its president. "Nairi" Association has been rather active and has contributed greatly to public stability, national reconciliation and upbringing of the younger generation, as well as to developing Armenian culture and education and making them popular. Every year "Nairi" Association fulfills actions devoted to socially vulnerable layers, organizes special concerts for the disadvantaged children.

In 2005, the 1600th anniversary of the establishment of Armenian alphabet was celebrated in all Armenian cultural centers of Kazakhstan with grandeur. The main objective of the celebration was to show the successes of the center's children, to familiarize children of other nationalities with the Armenian culture, customs, and traditions.

Since 2006 "Nairi" Armenian national newspaper has been published in Kazakhstan. Publishing of textbook of the Armenian alphabet became a great present for children.

On October 2006, the first Armenian Church - "St. Karapet" was opened in Almaty.

In 2007 the Armenian youth organization "Armenian Youth of Kazakhstan" was established at the initiative of the city's Armenian young people. This idea received the assistance and approval by all the Armenian communities of the country. It has become a tradition to hold

the congresses of the presidents of Armenian communities of “Nairi” Center and of the Armenian Youth in Kazakhstan at one and the same time.

Armenians in Kazakhstan are mainly employed in construction, particularly in road-building. Quite many are engaged in such spheres as industry, education, health.

It is only with great respect that Kazakhs mention the names of such famous political figures as the first Secretary of the Central Committee of Communist Party L. Mirzoyan, the first deputy-president of KSSR Council of Ministers A. Vardanyan, deputies of ministers M. Ter-Vardanov, G. Arakelov and E. Ejikov-Babakhanov.

Among the most revered Armenians of the modern Republic of Kazakhstan are historian and organizer of popular education in Almaty, professor E. Ter-Poghosyan; chief stage director of the Russian Drama Theatre after M. Lermontov, People’s Artist of Kazakhstan and laureate of Presidential Award for Peace and Spiritual Agreement for 1999 Ruben Andreyan; People’s Artist of Kazakhstan and laureate of “Tarlan” Award S. Bashoyan; President of “Bakos” Company and Deputy of the City Maslahat of Almaty Artyom Karapetyan; President of “Dionis” Company Rudik Mnacakanyan; scientist A. Avetisyan; general Vachagan Vlasov; stage director Sergey Pashoyan.

Armenians have always been actively involved in the constantly changing life of Central Asia in areas from agriculture to art, from science to industry, from politics to economics, thus creating preconditions for the worthy life of the coming generations of Armenians, who consider this region their home.

LEVON MIRZOYAN:

DISTINGUISHED STATE FIGURE OF KAZAKHSTAN

“... as long as the cultural centers, beautiful cities, mines, factories, streets, eternal mountains keep functioning, as long as my nation exists, he will never be forgotten. Mirzajan, You are in our souls and in our history. When you return to Armenia, bow your heads to the land that gave birth to the son for my nation...”

Karmanbek Jangarbekov

The flowers of Ala-Tau make a multicolor carpet.

My brother and Armenia's son – Mirzoyan

Gave gratuitously to Kazakh flowers

The wealth of his kind and bright soul.

K. Bekhojin

Levon Mirzoyan was born in November 1897, in village Ashan, Nagorny Karabakh. He went to Baku at the age of 15 and soon became a member of a social-democratic non-legal student group. In March 1917 he became a member of the Social-democratic party. In 1917-1918 he was one of the founders of Baku trade union, and a deputy to the Baku Council.

In 1920-1925 Mirzoyan was the president of the federation of trade unions; a people's commissar and the Secretary of the Central Committee of Communist party of Azerbaijan. In 1929-1933 he was the Committee Secretary of Perm okrug (region), the second secretary of the Ural district Committee.

On February 10, 1933 L. Mirzoyan was appointed the First Secretary of the Committee of Kazakhstan region.

When Mirzoyan came to Kazakhstan, the country was in a hard situation as a result of violent collectivization; starvation dominated everywhere. Only during the period of 1931-1933 1 million 100 thousand people became victims of famine and another 1 million escaped. Strained and sleepless working days of Mirzoyan began. Besides the problems connected with the party and the economy, he had to solve the issue of unifying people belonging to different nationalities. The new leader of the country set for himself the goal to develop the economy, industry, agriculture and culture simultaneously. To reach this aim he opened the road for talented specialists, not taking into account the labels pinned on them that were so common in those times. Excellent professionals from different parts of the USSR started to head for Almaty.

Mirzoyan has a great deal in the industrialization of Kazakhstan. Institutes of cattle-breeding and plant cultivation were established to develop agriculture. Hundreds of schools began to function in Kazakh auls (villages), Kazakh University was opened.

In 1934 at the 17th Congress of the Party, Mirzoyan declared that Karaganda could and should become the third coal base in the Soviet Union.

He also paid a great attention to culture. In 1934 the scientific-research institute of Kazakh culture, and then the theatre of Kazakh music opened, which later became the Theatre of Opera and Ballet. Mirzoyan used to personally appeal to famous figures of Russian culture for assistance and they responded with great pleasure.

On December 5, 1936 Kazakhstan received the status of a Soviet Republic. Taking under his leadership semi-literate, hungry and naked people, inheriting a destroyed economy, absence of industry, neglected agriculture, under constant violent terrorism, L. Mirzoyan was able to lay the basis for statehood during five years, to raise the economy, to feed the people, to develop the culture and to inspire trust in their own powers. He was continuously travelling in that unbounded country, getting acquainted with the actual situation, listening to people, speaking in their language, for which he was enjoying their love and respect.

Notorious 1937 year came in the history of the Soviet Union. “Witch hunt” began in Kazakhstan also. On September 22, 1937 an article appeared in the “Pravda” newspaper under the following title: “Dependent on bourgeois nationalists”. It reproached Mirzoyan and Nurpeisov for not having revealed any famous nationalists.

On May 15, 1938 Mirzoyan received a telegram from Stalin to pass his activities to Nikolai Skvorcov and to go to Kremlin in order to be appointed to a new position. Three days later the family of Mirzoyans boarded the train Almaty-Moscow. On May 22 Levon Mirzoyan was arrested in Kuybishev station and taken away. Some time later his wife Yulia Tevosyan, who was the director of Institute of Marxism and Leninism of Kazakhstan, was also detained. Their daughter and son were sent to their uncle Ivan Tevosyan, who at that time held the position of People’s Commissar of USSR in Black Metallurgy. But he was not able to keep the children of people’s enemy for too long; Ivan Tevosyan sent them to Baku to Levon Mirzoyan’s parents and brother.

Nothing is known about the last days of L. Mirzoyan’s life. He was only allowed to leave few lines: “I am swearing on my last breath and on the lives of my children, that I haven’t been the enemy of the party and the nation.”

L. Mirzoyan was charged for espionage and wrong-doing and was shot in the prison of Lefortovo on February 26, 1939. One of the many points of accusation was the following: Kazakh nationalist.

Good names of Levon Mirzoyan and Yulia Tevosyan were restored in 1956. Their relatives received a note: “They are not guilty”. Only after 10 years – in 1966, the main street of Almaty was named after Mirzoyan.

Mirzoyan’s son Vladimir wrote: “I can’t say my father’s name is forgotten. People remember him. His jubilees are celebrated both in Yerevan and in Baku. In his homeland – in the village Ashan, his monument was put up in 1960. Streets in Baku and Almaty have been named after my father”.

In November 1997 Levon Mirzoyan’s 100th anniversary was celebrated with great grandeur in Kazakhstan, grand ceremonies took place in Almaty, Aktobe, Kostanay. His bust was put

up in Aktobe; a square and a street were named after him. Festive events were organized by the Armenian community and the District Assembly of People of Kazakhstan. In the framework of commemoration of the victims of political repressions a conference was held in the honor of Mirzoyan.

Kazakh newspaper the “Eureka” in its publication of December 4, 1997 wrote the following in the article “People Remember Mirzoyan in the Kazakh Land”: “In November 1997, at the initiative of Mirzoyan’s companions and with the consent of the government, days of his remembrance have been organized in Almaty. On December 2, Vladimir and Levon Mirzoyan, the famous politician’s son and grandson were welcomed in Aktobe”.

Though Mirzoyan worked in Kazakhstan for only 5 years, those years became significant for the Republic’s life. Industry and agriculture grew at a high speed, culture of Kazakh people flourished. Mirzoyan entered into the life of the Kazakh people as the closest, genuine person. It’s not by chance, that the people used to call him “Mirzajan”, which means “a bright person with a rich soul”. Mirzoyan was hardly 40 when he was appointed to that position in Kazakhstan, but he had a great experience of party activities.

Seidahmet Kuttikadam wrote about Mirzoyan, “Levon Mirzoyan is the most prominent politician of the 20th century Kazakhstan. His historical heroism witnesses how much an individual holding power can do. A genuine patriot and benefactor is not the person considering himself one of the indigenous people, but the one who works devotedly and incessantly for the good of the whole nation.

Armenian nation’s mighty son Levon Mirzoyan who became the Kazakh people’s selfless son will leave bright and everlasting memory.”

“Any Human Must Understand He is Created with the God's Image”

Priest Ter Marcus Sargsyan

Spiritual Pastor of St. Karapet Church in Almaty

“For many years the Armenian community in Kazakhstan didn’t have a church and only during the last years it has begun to function. What is the significance of the church in the life of the Armenian community?”

“If we study the history of the Armenian nation, then we'll see that Armenian Church has always had a unifying role in Armenian reality. Today St. Karapet Church has the same role in the life of our co-patriots living in Almaty. A great number of Armenians came here during the exile of 1938 and they affirmed their future life on Kazakh land. There was neither Armenian Church, nor any Armenian clergyman as those were years of God denial and unfortunately our Armenian nation was kept away from the Armenian Church and spiritual world. Nowadays everything is being done to restore the indissoluble connection between the Armenian people and Armenian Church. Every Sunday our Armenian nation, more and more unified, come to Church to pray, to participate in the ceremony of sacred mass, to receive Eucharist with our Saint master Jesus Christ.”

“Isn't it difficult to bring back Armenians to church?”

“Of course it is difficult, there is a great job to be done and this work will not yield fruits tomorrow or after a week, it demands years, because that connection should flow from the inner spiritual world of an individual; we can't enforce anyone to change their inner world. It is our goal to make everyone understand that he is created by God's image and in order to keep that image perfect, he must be knowledgeable of the Holy book, of what is taught by the Armenian Church.

In 2006 the leader of diocese of Nor Nakhijevan and Russia Yezrast bishop Nersisyan consecrated this church in Almaty, the construction of which was funded by the president of “Nairi” Union of Armenian Communities Artyusha Karapetyan. In 2008 by the order of his Holiness Patriarch, I was appointed spiritual pastor of St. Karapet Church in Almaty and Armenians inhabiting in Kazakhstan.”

“And what is the situation in other Armenian communities of Kazakhstan?”

“The absence of a church already speaks about the situation. Periodically we have visits to different cities; we have been to Astana three times, to Aktau where there is a small Armenian historical chapel built at the end of the 1800s. Together with our fellow countrymen living there we visited that place and prayed. There is also a Christian brotherly cemetery, where our fellow patriots lie. We visit all the cities trying to make things easier for our compatriots, so that they do not feel lack of spiritual ties even at long distances. Now we are elaborating projects in that direction, so that no inhabitant of any periphery or any city should be left away from the Armenian Church and Armenian clergymen.”

“Kazakhstan is a Country Where You Can Live, Work and not be Frightened to Go out into the Street, Here all the Nations are Equal”

Artyusha Karapetyan

President of “Nairi” Armenian Associations in Kazakhstan

“You are one of the most famous representatives of the Armenian community. Please, tell the story of Your family, how did You appear in Kazakhstan?”

“In 1937, during the years of exile, my parents with 5 children came to Kazakhstan after one and a half months on the road. I was born here in 1945. For about three years we lived in Kazakh Sarabaevs’ family, until my parents found jobs and had a house. In those times nobody ever asked what nationality you were or why you had come, how long you were going to stay. Thus, for about three years we were living like relatives in that Kazakh family. For four years I studied in a Kazakh class, as there was no Russian school in our village. After finishing the tenth form I moved to Almaty, entered the university and since that time until now I have worked in the field of food industry. I have fixed four establishments up. When Gorbachev became the first secretary and elections of directors were held, I was elected director in “Backus”, where I directed for 21 years and became a big businessman.”

“And in what conditions does the Armenian community live here?”

“If before we had 25 thousand Armenians, then during the last 5-7 years the number of Armenians has rapidly increased and today already 46 thousand Armenians live in Kazakhstan. It shows that the relatives of those already living here continue to come here and they help each other. Our president said that it would be good for Kazakhstan to be inhabited by citizens of CIS countries. Once he even said that Armenians are a highly intellectual nation and it would be great if they lived in Kazakhstan, of course receiving Kazakh assistance. From that perspective, as the director of the national-cultural center, president of association, I have an objective to help the new comers, including with the questing of receiving citizenship and at present we have 46 thousand Armenians. It would be hard for me to say whether it is good or no, as they leave Armenia and come here, but the Earth is round and people go wherever it is better to live. Kazakhstan is a flourishing country, where different nations live, in comparison with other countries Kazakhstan is a stable and democratic state and the input of the president is great here. He has established the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan, and all the nations living here, their national-cultural centers are represented. Last year even a law was adopted, according to which each nation presents its candidate in the name of the Assembly to the parliament, and this person is not elected but appointed, and during the next session other nations are presented in the

parliament. This means representatives of various nations are involved in the representative power of the parliament. This proves that all our laws are adopted according to the will of the nations living in the country. Of course there are also problems, as we are not able to find rapidly jobs for many of the newcomers. You wouldn't believe, but in the recent period such families have appeared who don't even want to work. Nevertheless, Kazakhstan, headed by our president, is a country where it's possible to live, to work and not to fear to go out, all the nations are equal here."

"Do You maintain relations with Armenia?"

"In the 1980s the Soviet authorities sent me to Armenia to recover the beer factory of Abovyan. In about 1-2 years we managed to fix it up and gave the first production. "Urartu" and "Erebuni" beers were produced. Then I returned to Kazakhstan as I was born here and my family was also here. Besides, we have relatives in Armenia, we often visit them or they come to us. I know that in the recent years Armenia's economy has begun to grow, production is being recovered and I am very happy and proud of this.

Here also we have cognac production. Our cognac has already managed to gain good reputation. I wish the name and fame of Armenian cognac to be restored."

"Please, tell about Your wine-making activities?"

"We have two farms in the southern part of Kazakhstan. We bring the raw material from there, provide corresponding conditions. Annually we reprocess 80 thousand tons of grapes. Today, we are unique in Kazakhstan in the sense that we have our own vine yards and produce natural product. We have our primary, secondary factories, bottling plants and trade network. We have our representatives in all the 14 regions through which we sell our production, which is called "Vinjak". After Kazakhstan enters the World Trade Organization, our production cannot be called "cognac" and "champagne". Those names are patented by France and only they have the right to call their product so. At present we produce 26 sorts of wines, 4 kinds of cognac, brandy and we were first in Kazakhstan to start to produce chacha, so called "wine vodka". I named it "Mesrop" in my father's honor. It has quickly found its consumers. Though here we have Moldavian, Georgian chacha, they concede in their quality and are more expensive. We anticipate expanding the assortment, as it has a great potential and in comparison to vodka it doesn't do any harm to health."

"You are also the Director of the Armenian National Cultural Centers "Nairi". What role does it have in the life of Armenians in Kazakhstan?"

"The Armenian cultural center, just like other similar centers, deals with organizing necessary events for the nation. We have set Armenian national-cultural centers in each region, for example, only in Karaganda there are 5000 Armenians living. I try to visit all the

regions periodically, we plan all events beforehand, organize meetings with regional leaders; cover those meetings in the mass media, the problems of Armenians are voiced. Besides, we assist our compatriots when they have problems with law-enforcing bodies and state structures. Armenians are law-abiding in Kazakhstan and no major crimes with their participation, for which we would be ashamed, have been registered, and this gives the Armenians the right to live and work in Kazakhstan peacefully. The cultural center also organizes dance and language teaching courses, we have performances and participate in various competitions. We cooperate with centers of other nationalities, support each other.”

“You are also the founder of Armenian Church. What role does it have today?”

“If we return to history sources, there are many nationalities that don't have their state and are spread throughout the world; the Armenian nation didn't have statehood for more than a thousand years and it was the church that preserved its solidarity. We all believe in God and it is the church that fills the gap. That's the reason why I made a decision to found a church. Supreme patriarch of all Armenians has appointed a spiritual pastor who conducts liturgies. Church is one of the most important factors unifying the nation and due to it people become rich.”

CHAPTER 7

ARMENIAN – KAZAKH RELATIONS AFTER INDEPENDENCE

Diplomatic relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Kazakhstan were established on August 27, 1992. Diplomatic representations of both countries function in Astana and Yerevan.

Since their independence Kazakhstan and Armenia have been developing bilateral relations in the spirit of partnership and mutually beneficial cooperation. Regular contacts are held in the framework of CIS, CSTO. In 2009, both of these countries participated in the creation of Collective Rapid Response Forces.

Kazakhstan and Armenia allocate primary significance to the development of cooperation within the framework of CIS, first of all in economic and scientific-humanitarian fields, which strengthen the position of CIS member countries in the world community promoting the advancement of common interests.

The role and significance of Kazakhstan is increasingly growing in international arena. Kazakhstan has elaborated a long-period strategy of development – “Kazakhstan-2030”, according to which the country carries out multi-vector peace-loving policy to provide national security directed at preserving the security zone along its full length.

Armenia assists and treats Kazakh foreign political initiatives positively. In 2010 Kazakhstan was the chairing country of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. This country was the unified candidate of CIS countries and Armenia voted for it.

Armenia and Kazakhstan maintain an active bilateral political dialogue. This is promoted by the fact, that development of cooperation with Armenia is an important direction of Kazakhstan’s foreign policy. It is worth to mention that president Nursultan Nazarbayev offered his mediation during the Karabakh conflict to reach peaceful regulation of the issue. It was he, who visited Stepanakert with Boris Yeltsin.

Kazakhstan consistently supports peaceful solution of Karabakh conflict within the framework of OSCE Minsk group. It also welcomes the initiative of dialogue between Turkey and Armenia directed at regulation of relations.

The Armenian-Kazakh Trade-Economic Committee for Cooperation functions successfully. Metal goods, corn, mountain equipment are imported to Armenia from Kazakhstan. And from Armenia alcoholic beverages, machines for exploiting stone, synthetic rubber and jewelry are exported to Kazakhstan.

In 2008 the total sum of Kazakh investments in the Armenian economy made 50 million dollars, while Armenian investment in Kazakh economy was 2.5 million dollars.

There are 60 enterprises with the participation of Armenian capital registered in Kazakhstan, 21 of which are joint enterprises. The main directions of their activity are wholesale trade, the sphere of services and production of construction materials.

Armenian community in Kazakhstan has a great role in Armenian-Kazakh relations. According to official data 45 thousand Armenians are citizens of Kazakhstan, and if we take into account also the working migrants, then there will be 100 thousand Armenians here.

Relations between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of Armenia have serious perspectives of development. In the political sense Kazakhstan can help to raise the authority of Armenia among the Islamic countries, explaining that Armenian-Turkish and Armenian-Azerbaijani conflicts have nothing to do with religion. Mutual benefit of economies of both countries may become a subject of thorough analysis. Construction of Armenia-Iran railroad will create a connection also with Kazakhstan.

There are fine perspectives also for the development of educational and cultural-humanitarian cooperation. It refers to the study of historical heritage of Gypjak once living in the territory of Armenia. The exchange of students would also be helpful.

“The Political Dialogue among the Two Countries is Developing Very Successfully”

Jazira Mirzakasimova

Chief of the Division, Department of Europe, MFA of Kazakhstan

“How do You estimate Armenian-Kazakh relations, on what level is nowadays the political dialogue?”

“It might be symbolic that today you are interviewing me, as I live in the street named after Levon Mirzoyan. The deserving son of the Armenian nation did so much for Kazakh people during the 30s. The Kazakh also consider him their son and have named him Mrzajan, which means generous. During the 30s, when Kazakh nation was experiencing grave hardships, it was Mirzoyan who was at the lead of our country developing the economy and culture. It was under his leadership that the first constitution of Soviet Kazakhstan was written in 1937, where the development of national culture of Kazakhstan received much significance. I want to express gratitude to the Armenian nation for granting our Nation such a man.

As to modern Armenian-Kazakh relations, then the political dialogue between the two countries is developing very successfully. Friendly relations based on trust have been confirmed between the two presidents, only during the last two years 20 mutual visits at different levels have taken place. Inter-parliamentary, cultural relations are rapidly developing. Unfortunately, the volume of trade circulation is small, only 10 million, which of course doesn't correspond to the opportunities of the Republics. The main reason for this situation is the absence of direct communication; today Kazakh goods are imported to Armenia via Iran by road, by sea via Georgia and railway via Ukraine. However, there is a potential, inter-governmental commission must function actively to develop relations and it could become a serious tool for developing bilateral relations.

The Armenian community plays the role of a bridge in the matter of cultural-public relations. There are many famous people, scientists, businessmen among Armenians; there are Armenian cultural centers in 14 cities of Kazakhstan. Personally I respect the Armenian

nation; Armenian culture, Armenian history, which are known to us through those centers and attract me very much. At present there is an Armenian Church in Almaty, the Armenian language is taught in Sunday schools.”

“You mentioned various spheres of cooperation. What ways can You identify for developing relations and which are the primary issues?”

“Launch of the Chair of the Kazakh language in Yerevan State University has a great role in cultural and public cooperation. I know that manuscripts are preserved in Matenadaran and in the Institute after Mesrop Mashtots, which give evidence on the ancient culture of Kazakh nation. Exchanges of scientific workers, acquisition of experience will be welcomed.

I don’t exclude the importance of tourism development, either, as our generation knows about the nature of Armenia, about beautiful Lake Sevan, still remembers Armenian dishes, Armenian hospitality, but the younger generation is unfortunately uninformed of all that. The reason is the absence of direct communication. If there are direct flights, then tourism will also develop.

It is a flaw that Armenian artists don’t visit Kazakhstan, that Armenian culture is not represented, that weeks of Armenian films are not held. I believe that at this point scientific and cultural-public cooperation should be developed. It will promote rapprochement of both nations.”

“There is much talk about the significance of exchange of experience. In what issues can the experience of Kazakhstan be helpful for Armenia and how can Kazakhstan gain lessons from Armenia’s experience?”

“I think that a serious field of exchange of experience is the educational system as well as health service. I am aware that medicine is well developed in Armenia.

Finally, I would like to wish wise, beautiful Armenians development, prosperity. I wish all Armenians, including the ones living in Diaspora to meet only on good occasions, never to witness again what happened in 1915, always to live in peace and to have more smiling faces in all Armenian families.”

Kazakhs on Armenians and Armenian-Kazakh relations

Yerzhan Ashikbaev, Chairman of International Information Committee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan (25.06.2009)

“I believe that the role of Kazakh citizens having Armenian origin is quite significant not only in the inner politics of Kazakhstan but also in the future development of friendly, constructive relations between our two countries. Armenians are one of the most active ethnic groups in Kazakhstan, who have their input in the harmonious development of interethnic, inter-religion relations.”

Kamal Burkhanov, Member of the Committee on International Affairs, Defense and Security Community of Mazhilis of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan

“We have a big Armenian community headed by Artusha Karapetyan. He is my good friend and we have known each other for quite a long time. He is the chairman of “Bacchus” company, producer of the best Kazakh wine and vodka. Kazakh “Jenis” (Жеңіс) cognac is our brand. Here the Armenian community is flourishing in all senses. It should promote and I believe it does promote the development of interrelations, but for different reasons we haven’t managed to reach broader communication – trade circulation is very small. We buy equipment, machine-tools from you for Eastern Kazakhstan. You have fine machine-tools for crumbling up stones.

I used to have Armenian friends. I was studying with Sargsyan, though I don't know where he is now. I had a friend Artashes interested in archeology like me. Armenian cognac was equivalent of gold in the Soviet times and was considered the best in those times.

Of course Armenia is a wonderful republic. Unfortunately, at present we don't have the appropriate relations, we are gradually departing from each other. It's difficult to come to you, there is no land route. We are now building roads to China and Europe, but are not able to build a road laid with asphalt or a narrow railway to favorite Armenia, with whom we grew up, used to be friends. I guess if we managed to get to the Iranian rail, it would be easier to come to Armenia.

I think we should work together, that is in the Armenian community, and there is still so much work to do. The potential exists, we need each other. We speak the same language, have the same mentality, there is a community living here. We must only try to deepen those interrelations, to make them better, warmer.”

Larissa Brovataya, Chairman of Information and Archive Committee of the Ministry of Culture of Kazakhstan

“I have been to Yerevan a few times. In the Soviet times my father worked in Yerevan for 2-3 years. What do I know about Armenia? I know that very kind, hospitable people live there. I am familiar with the Armenian cuisine. Well, barbeque is well-known to everybody. I also know how kind Armenian women are. You can address anybody with a question in Yerevan and you will be met as a familiar person.”

Saltanat Akhmetzhanova, Dean of Economics Faculty of Eurasian National University in Astana, Doctor of Economics, Professor

“First of all, as a person remembering the Soviet Union, I would say that Armenia is a wonderful, friendly country, where clever people with a sense of humor live; it's interesting to talk to them, to learn many things from them. We would like to work, to cooperate with the scientists, with our partners, to write joint books, monographs, to conduct joint scientific and educational projects.”

Kenzhebolat Zholdybai, Advisor to the Chairman on Informational and Creative Issues of National Company “Kazinform”

“Personally I have very warm attitude towards Armenians. I don't have close friends, but I have met many Armenians during my lifetime. Armenia is an interesting country. It has its relevant place in the Caucasus, and not only there. It would be profitable in cultural, economic, political senses to contact with Armenia. There can't be another opinion.”

Kanat Akyldaevich Sakhariyanov, First Deputy of the Chairman of the Board of JSC Agency “Khabar”

“I have a warm attitude towards the Armenian nation, because one of my closest friends in institute was Suren. He isn't now in Kazakhstan and works in another country but we still maintain relations. He is one of my best friends.

I know that Armenian culture is very rich, very old. The same can be said about Kazakhstan, so we must strengthen our roots, our historical ties. And the fact we are talking without the assistance of a translator is already a great merit, it's our wealth.”

Summary

In the second book about Kazakhstan we have tried to introduce more comprehensive and diverse information about this Middle Asian country, which plays an active role not only in the region, but also in the international arena.

Studying the experience of the Republic of Kazakhstan since independence, witnessing its achievements and progress not only in the outer world but also in its internal life, there is a wish to see Armenian-Kazakh relations more active, specifically because we have 70 years' history of close and cordial relations while living within a common powerful state.

There is a large Armenian community in Kazakhstan able that is able to preserve its national identity, culture thanks to the elaborately developed policy of the authorities concerning the 130 nationalities populating Kazakhstan.

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