

**STATE PROGRAMME "THE PATH TO EUROPE" 2009-2011**

Astana 2008

(Unofficial Translation)

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The state program "The Path to Europe, 2009 to 2011" (further referred to in the text as the Programme) has been developed in accordance with the Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the People of Kazakhstan "The Promotion of the Prosperity of Kazakhstan's Citizens is the Main Goal of State Policy" of 6<sup>th</sup> February 2008.

The adoption of the Programme is important in order to solve the pressing issues of the country's internal development, the elaboration of national priorities toward a European course, the strengthening of historical relations, for benefiting from the European experience of integration and institutional-legal reforms and for the intensification of cooperation in areas such as technology, energy, transport, trade and investment.

## 2. BACKGROUND ANALYSIS

In compliance with the Conception of the Foreign Policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the development of comprehensive cooperation with European countries is of a strategic interest to Kazakhstan.

At present, the potential of bilateral cooperation with European countries in technology, energy, transport and trade areas is not fully realized.

It is important to note that the countries of the European Union are devoting special attention to cooperation with the countries of Central Asia in general and with Kazakhstan in particular. Their joint position is reflected in the "EU and Central Asia: New Partnership Strategy" document, adopted at the European Union summit in June 2007. As an internal document of the European Union, the Strategy establishes important cooperation priorities for the EU with Central Asia and Kazakhstan.

The aspiration on the part of a number of European countries to integrate into the structures of the European Union or their interaction with the EU through the mechanism of the European Neighborhood Policy enables them to attain certain achievements in various areas of socio-economical and political development.

The positive experience of cooperation between these countries and the EU states and European agencies was taken into consideration while elaborating this Programme.

The implementation of the Programme will promote the basic principles of the Republic of Kazakhstan's foreign policy which are balanced relations and pragmatism.

## 3. THE AIM AND TASKS OF THE PROGRAMME

The aim of the Program is to bring the Republic of Kazakhstan to a new level of strategic partnership with leading European countries.

To achieve the Programme's aim, the following tasks must be completed:

1. The development and intensification of cooperation of the Republic of Kazakhstan with European states in the following directions:

*Technology; energy; transport; technical regulation and metrology; trade and economic cooperation; SME development; the quality of life; the humanitarian dimension;*

2. Improvement of Kazakhstan's institutional-legal base on the basis of the positive European experience.
3. Creating the conditions for the Republic of Kazakhstan's Chairmanship of the OSCE in 2010.

#### 4. THE MAIN DIRECTION AND MECHANISMS FOR THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE PROGRAMME

### 4.1. Cooperation with European Countries

#### 4.1.1. Creating the conditions for Establishing Technological Cooperation

The intensification of technological cooperation with European countries is aimed at developing high technologies. Interaction with European partners in the fields of nanotechnology and biotechnology will give an impetus to existing and new technological parks in Kazakhstan.

Experts from European countries will be invited to Kazakhstan in order to train the local workforce in the areas of innovative management and for in-service training of engineering personnel employed in technological parks.

Cooperation in the application of advanced European technologies to the modernization of existing and the creation of new transport hubs in Kazakhstan is planned.

The agricultural technologies which are being used in Europe are of great interest for the development of the national agricultural sector. A separate objective is to achieve the gradual transition towards European standards and the certification of production, which will open the European markets for Kazakhstan's agricultural production.

Another important element of the Programme is the development of information exchange in the spheres of science, new technologies, innovative engineering, and technology transfer, including the integration of Kazakhstan and Europe networks.

#### 4.1.2. Developing energy cooperation

In order to strengthen the long-term presence of Kazakhstan in the European market, further activity by Kazakhstan is planned to acquire ports, terminals, refineries, gas stations and other elements of infrastructure in European countries.

A particular element of cooperation with European countries will involve the European experience in the development of basic market principles in the sphere of energy, such as the strategy for energy, the promotion and protection of investments in this sphere, the right to access energy transportation infrastructures, independence of network operators from natural monopolies, industrial sector regulation, and the reform of tariff policy.

One of the main elements of the new EU Energy Strategy is the problem of global warming. Taking into consideration that the EU is the world technological leader in the area of renewable energies, as well as the substantial potential for this kind of energy in Kazakhstan, a number of activities are planned within the Programme. These are the organization of familiarization and training seminars in EU countries, participation in the international conferences and exhibitions regarding the issues of incorporation and development of energy-efficient and pollution-free technologies. These activities are intended to promote an exchange of experience.

### 4.1.3. Developing Transport Cooperation

The further development of Eurasian transcontinental transport corridors is planned by means of the harmonization of national legislation and the establishment of the necessary transport services for the free movement of passengers, loads and transportation means, and for increasing all forms of operational transport safety.

The Programme is to promote initiatives which provide:

- The continuation of negotiations on linking national transport networks to pan-European transport networks and consolidating national proposals by concluding appropriate memorandums;
- The participation in special training initiatives for the incorporation of European standards in the field of civil aviation;
- The exchange of experience with port inspectorates for ensuring seafaring safety;
- The participation in expert level negotiations of the transport ministries of European countries and international organizations concerning the issues of the harmonization of the international civil liability insurance for motor transport owners;
- Studying the experience of improving the environmental standards of motor transport;
- The full-fledged participation of Kazakhstan along with European countries in the full range of discussions concerning transport sector.

### 4.1.4. Developing Cooperation in the Areas of Technical Regulation and Metrology

The aim and mission of technical regulation and metrology, which also serve as a means for non-tariff regulation, are guaranteeing high level product safety, the strengthening of competitiveness, the removal of technical barriers to trade, the reduction of the administrative burden on business and the protection of citizens' interests and Republic's economy from the consequences of false metrology.

The development of cooperation in the use of advanced European technologies in the spheres of transport communications, the agro-industrial complex, energy, environmental protection and public health, of medium and small-scale businesses is planned.

The practical incorporation of new technologies must be accompanied by the creation of the corresponding base of technical legislation, normative documents for standardization, measurement devices, a network of testing and measuring laboratories which must accord with the requirements of the EU countries.

In this regard, it is planned that:

- Technical regulations and harmonized standards will be elaborated which will serve to demonstrate that Kazakhstan meets technical standards,

- Kazakhstan will join international standardization and accreditation agencies, including the European Committee for Standardization (CEN), the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and the International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC),
- Existing testing and measuring laboratories will be modernized and new facilities will be set up,
- Measures will be introduced to conclude multilateral and bilateral agreements on the equivalence of accreditation systems, certificates and protocols issued by accredited organizations (this will establish a "green corridor" for Kazakhstan's export promotion), including in the frame of integrating enterprises,
- The base of national standards will be improved placing it in conformity with analogous European arrangements;
- Comparison between laboratories will be undertaken,
- International experts will be engaged to accelerate the incorporation of new management systems within Kazakh companies.

#### **4.1.5. Extension of trade-economic collaboration**

In recent years, the trade in goods between Kazakhstan and European countries has been marked by a rising trend. However, raw materials occupy a dominant position in the export structure. It is therefore necessary to concentrate efforts on the diversification of Kazakhstan's export structure.

Within the framework of trade promotion efforts between Kazakhstan and the European countries, a trade delegation will be established in Europe with branches in a number of European countries.

The main tasks of this delegation will be: to undertake analysis of the impact of the economic policies of European countries on Kazakhstan's ability to achieve its economic interests in the European market; to study trade legislation and the conditions for undertaking external trade activity in European countries in order to inform Kazakh entrepreneurs on the export of domestic products to the EU market, to promote the diversification of Kazakhstan's export structure to the European countries, notably through the use of the European Generalized System of Trade Preferences (GSP+).

Furthermore, this initiative will create the conditions for the export of Kazakhstani goods to external markets. The economic interests of Kazakh producers in the European markets will be protected through bilateral negotiations and through the participation of the Republic of Kazakhstan in annual international exhibitions in the European countries. Together these measures will enable Kazakhstani exports to reach a broader geographical area.

#### **4.1.6. Cooperation in the area of small and medium businesses**

The Programme is aimed at strengthening cooperation and at promoting the further development of state policy for small and medium businesses (SMBs) and at optimizing state regulation of medium and small enterprises. Further, the Programme is aimed at improving the taxation system, the provision of easy access to bank credits and to other funding sources, the creation of a generalized system of staff training, and the development of Kazakhstan's legislation based on European standards in the matters of the regulation of small and medium sized business.

The goals identified above will be achieved through the realization of practical measures, including the exchange of experience on state assistance for entrepreneurship, taxation, including for small and medium enterprises; assistance in the development of the infrastructure of entrepreneurship; the elaboration and implementation of joint programs and projects; the organization of joint consultations, seminars, conferences, research and proposals for the development of small and medium businesses.

Cooperation with European countries in the field of entrepreneurship will enable the development of favorable conditions for business in Kazakhstan, in particular, the simplification of access to the European market for Kazakhstani companies through the harmonization of legislation between Kazakhstan and European countries, and through ensuring an inflow of investment to Kazakhstan's economy and the professional growth of small and medium business.

#### **4.1.7. Expanding cooperation in the sphere of quality of life**

The quality of life is understood as the whole range of basic indicators that reflect the social results of a state's economic development, including in the areas of environmental protection, public health, education and the social protection of the general population.

A deepening of Kazakhstan's cooperation with European countries is planned over issues such as the improvement of the general population's quality of life and of environmental conditions, including the development of the national environmental legislation approximating to European standards, the elaboration of joint programs on the issue of trans-boundary problems, on the preservation of biodiversity and on environmental issues resulting from historical pollution.

Measures are planned for coordination on issues including the prevention of climate change, and in the protection of and research on water supplies using the potential of the Eurasian Water Centre located in Astana.

To implement these goals, Kazakhstan will participate in the special working group of the Environmental Directorate of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, under the Environment Strategy for countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA). Kazakhstan will also participate in European environmental organizations.

An important element of the Programme is to provide the general population with high-quality medical assistance meeting European standards. This includes the integration of European information technologies into the medical system, the enhancement of efficiency in public health and administration infrastructure, the improvement of the quality of diagnostic services, the treatment and prevention of diseases (cardiovascular, oncological, tuberculosis, hepatitis, HIV/AIDS and others), blood procurement, an improvement in the accessibility and quality of drugs, the introduction of standards for healthy nutrition, the development of a personnel system and the achievement of competitiveness for scientific research in public health.

To achieve these objectives, it will be necessary to conduct joint activities and projects aimed at the strengthening of citizens health, at the creation of modern administrative approaches suitable for a National Medical Service, educational, scientific, and public health institutions and university clinics, at broadening multilateral relations, and to study the European experience of providing high-quality medical assistance to the general population.

The provision is made for further cooperation in the area of primary, basic secondary, general secondary, technical and vocational education, collaboration in the sphere of higher education, the exchange of students and teaching staff, notably in the framework of programmes such as "Erasmus Mundus", TEMPUS, and on the basis of bilateral agreements with European educational organizations.

Collaboration is planned with European countries in the sphere of technical and vocational education

including: the creation of a system of national qualifications taking into consideration the European experience, the introduction of a system for the certification of qualifications and educational programmes with the assistance of world leaders in the area of certification, and the development of educational programmes that meet international requirements, raising the qualifications of engineering and educational workers and industrial training experts, engaging foreign managers in the administration of inter-regional training centres and the retraining of technical and service personnel, and the employment of foreign lecturers and specialists to educational institutions.

The goals identified above will be achieved through practical measures and projects, including assistance in the development of relations between Kazakhstani and European educational institutions, the creation of a university system and of educational hubs in the sphere of higher education based on the Kazakh-British Technical University and Kazakh-German University, and through the study of European experience in vocational training and the retraining of civil servants and through support for the study of European languages.

The development of the legal base necessary for cooperation with European countries in the areas of military training, military-scientific activity, the prevention and overcoming of emergency situations is planned.

The Programme foresees collaboration with European countries in the areas of employment, labor migration, public assistance to low income citizens and disabled people, the development of social services, and the study of experience in movement of persons as service providers without commercial presence from World Trade Organization (WTO) member countries.

#### **4.1.8. Broadening cooperation in the humanitarian field**

Provision is made for the development of partnerships between civil society actors from Kazakhstan and European countries; this will promote the integration of the national civil society institutions with the international community, the realization of social, cultural, educational and information-promotional projects with regard to the context of national interests and the development of the institution of social partnership.

Another element of cooperation with the European countries lies in the exchange of experience in the field of inter-ethnic and inter-confessional accord. Such an exchange would enable Kazakhstan to promote its positive experience in the creation of effective mechanisms for inter-ethnic and inter-confessional accord and to contribute to the formation of a tolerant Eurasian community.

The provision is made for the further improvement of the conditions to develop a balanced gender policy in Kazakhstan using the experience of European traditions.

### **4.2. The Development of Kazakhstan's institutional and legal foundation using the positive European experience**

Substantial work has been undertaken on the improvement of national legislation in Kazakhstan over recent years. An important step was the introduction of an amendment to the Constitution in May 2007.

This work is pursued with the support of the relevant ministries and state bodies. To achieve this aim, there is close contact between the different state institutions at various levels. The substantial potential of the domestic and international expert community is involved.

The main goals of this work are the perfection of Kazakhstan's model of political and state

organization, the study of effective systems of civil service and personnel management, the liberalization of the political life of the country and Kazakhstan's closer linkage to the highest international traditions. In particular, this refers to perfecting legislation for elections, political parties, the mass media (including defamation issues), and reform of the civil service, the judiciary and other spheres of public relations.

Provision is made in the Programme for internships by civil servants in the state bodies of leading European countries, the exchange of experience between bodies of public administration, justice and criminal prosecution, and the improvement of legislation with regards to investigative and judicial examination of criminal actions, civil justice and the implementation of judicial acts.

### **4.3. Priorities for the OSCE Presidency of the Republic of Kazakhstan**

In view of the decision concerning Kazakhstan's Presidency of the OSCE in 2010, made at the Council of Foreign Ministers in Madrid (November 2007), and taking into consideration generally accepted practice, work to refine the details of the Presidency will be undertaken within the framework of the Programme.

The priority issues are: continued efforts for the creation of the conditions to develop democratic institutions in the OSCE area; the development of the transit-transport potential of all OSCE member states and of Eurasian transcontinental transport corridors; the resolution of environmental problems; the strengthening of measures for confidence and regional security, taking into account Kazakhstan's contribution to peace, security and nuclear disarmament; the development of non-military measures for security as part of OSCE activities, particularly in the areas of the fight against terrorism, extremism, illegal drug trafficking, organized crime, arms and human traffic, and the reconstruction of the OSCE partner-state Afghanistan.

Another important task is to use the OSCE potential and tools for the construction of a safe, stable and flourishing Central Asia, increasing the attractiveness of the region, including its economic appeal.

## **5. NECESSARY RESOURCES AND SOURCES OF FUNDING**

The amount of spending to support the activities of the Programme, financed by the Republic's budget, will be determined by the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On the Republic's Budget" for 2009-2011 and will be annually amended during the finalization of the Republic's budget for the corresponding fiscal year.

## **6. THE EXPECTED RESULTS OF THE PROGRAMME**

It is expected that the realization of the Program will help to achieve the following results:

- 1) The attainment by the Republic of Kazakhstan of a strategic partnership with leading European countries in political, economic, and humanitarian areas;
- 2) The creation of favourable conditions for an annual growth of 10% in trade with European countries;
- 3) The organization of a minimum of 5 official visits per year at the level of European Heads of State and Government (in compliance with the schedule of international activities)
- 4) The conclusion with the EU of a memorandum of understanding for the development of transport networks in the context of the linkage of Kazakhstan networks with pan-European

transport networks;

5) The adoption of technical regulations and the harmonization of standards, which meet EU requirements;

6) The improvement of national legislation with regards to European norms;

7) The promotion of the interests of the Republic of Kazakhstan on the European continent.