



## National Museum of Kazakhstan Opens With Presidential Speech, International Visitors



The National Museum of Kazakhstan



President Nursultan Nazarbayev (r) opening the National Museum of Kazakhstan.

By Michelle Witte

ASTANA – Astana's new National Museum of Kazakhstan was opened by President Nursultan Nazarbayev on July 2, in the midst of two days of events, including a symposium and a cultural fair, to celebrate the launch of the capital's newest attraction.

In his speech opening the project of six years, Nazarbayev noted that the nation tries to give Astana a "present" every year on the city's birthday, July 6. This year, it is the National Museum of Kazakhstan, he said, "a new masterpiece of contemporary architecture."

The museum and the newly opened Library of the First President complete the capital's Kazakh Eli (Kazakh Land) complex, which comprises the museum and library, the Palace of Independence, the Kazakh Eli Monument, the Palace of

Peace and Accord, the Hazret Sultan Mosque and the Kazakh National University of Art. "This is the architectural embodiment of the nation's values," the President said.

At more than 74,000 square metres, the museum is already among the world's largest, and contains stylistically distinct halls or mini-museums within, including the Hall of Independent Kazakhstan, the Ethnographic Hall, the Hall of Gold, the Hall of Modern Art, the Hall of Astana and others. Touchscreens in Kazakh, English and Russian help visitors navigate the museum and there are electronic and multimedia exhibits along with more traditional displays in each hall.

On July 3, the fledgling museum signed a memorandum of cooperation with the Russian Museum of Ethnography and the ROSIZO Russian State Museum and Exhibition

Centre. Exhibitions of traditional textiles from Central Asia and the Caucasus, Russian paintings and national traditions and openness to the world from the two partner museums were on display as the new National Museum opened, a decision British Museum's Senior Curator St. John Simpson called very positive.

"I think the fact that they are exhibiting permanent displays and temporary displays right from the inception, from the opening, shows a lot of foresight," Simpson, an invited guest at the opening, told The Astana Times. "I think that clearly shows that there is a plan to carry on introducing change into the galleries, right from the moment of go, which is unusual and very good," he said.

Change and evolution will be key to making the new museum an exciting place for locals to visit, which is important for any museum, he said.

Temporary exhibits of archival photos and felt clothing were also among the exhibitions on opening day.

As for the museum itself, Simpson said, "It's very dramatic. It's monumental. It's right in the middle of the city. It's what a national museum should be."

Director and Curator of the American University Museum at the Katzen Arts Centre Jack Rasmussen was also on hand for the opening, and also praised the museum building. "The architecture is very, very exciting," he said. The sheer size of the museum means it has great potential for growth, he noted. As for the museum today, "Everything that's been done so far has been done right. The technology, the touchscreens, everything is beautiful. The ethnographic installation, in particular, is excellent."

There is also a sense of ambition about the project, he noted. "I think that everybody is really approaching it as this great opportunity to take a larger stage and to participate in the world community of museums. I think there's a lot of ambition, and that's great."

And, as a visitor who doesn't speak Russian or Kazakh, he said, he found the museum pretty easy to navigate, though he said it helped to have a guide sometimes.

Rasmussen and Simpson were two of a number of museum leaders from around the world, including from museums in China, Russia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria and Kyrgyzstan, invited to attend the opening and take part in a symposium on the role of museums in the rapprochement of cultures.

On the evening of July 3, the museum hosted a festival, "Travel on the Great Silk Road," with re-imaginings of great Silk Road settlements, an applied art fair, children's games, arts and crafts classes, national music and food and other events.

## Government Approves General Gasification Scheme

By Kulpash Konyrova

ASTANA – "The Kazakh government has approved a general scheme for the gasification of the country. This policy document defines economically sound strategic directions to ensure reliable gas supply to consumers," Minister of Oil and Gas Uzakbai Karabalin said on June 24.

The new plan is intended to increase gas production, consumption and transportation, including through building new pipelines, over the next 15 years.

Over the past 20 years, oil production in Kazakhstan has more than tripled and gas production has grown by more than five times. The domestic gas supply, however, is paradoxical. Despite impressive gas reserves, unresolved geographical challenges prevent gas from its southern neighbours, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan.

One reason is that all of Kazakhstan's gas fields are located in the country's west and northwest regions; secondly, the sheer size of the country and its widely scattered population centres have made the construction of gas transportation infrastructure a long process.

Today, 10 of 16 regions in the country have been gasified, mainly the western and southern regions, including the largest metropolis, Almaty. But the north, centre and east of the country remain with a steady supply of natural gas. Meanwhile, over the past five years, gas consumption in the country has been growing steadily and in 2013 was 30 percent higher than it was in 2007.

To resolve the problem with gas supply to the population, the government approved the general scheme for gasification of Kazakhstan in late June.

"The general scheme of gasification defines strategic directions to provide consumers with gas. The legal basis for the development of this document is the law on gas and gas supply," said Karabalin, presenting the document to reporters after the meeting of the government on June 24.

Gas production will increase by 2030 to 60 billion cubic metres per year. Significant volumes of pro-

duced gas – 25 billion cubic metres – will be used for re-injection to maintain the necessary pressure to extract oil from oil reservoirs, the minister said, which is why production volumes of usable gas will reach 21 billion cubic metres per year by 2030.

"According to the forecast, in 2030, the largest consumers of commercial gas will be industrial enterprises and enterprises in the fuel and energy complex, [at] 31 and 40 percent, respectively. Many of these companies are included in the State Programme of Accelerated Industrial and Innovative Development (SPAID)," said Karabalin.

The implementation of the gasification scheme will lead to increased consumption of commercial gas in the domestic market, from 11 billion to 18 billion cubic metres, and the number of gasified settlements will almost double, from 988 to 1,621. All this will be possible due to the active construction of new pipelines and the near-doubling of their length, from 28,500 to 57,500 kilometres.

This year, the first phase of the large-scale Beyneu-Bozoi-Shymkent gas pipeline project will be completed. A capacity of 2.5 billion cubic metres per year has already been achieved at the Bozoi-Shymkent section. It is planned to gradually increase the pipeline's capacity to 10 billion cubic metres. This project will provide gas to the southern, import-dependent regions of Kazakhstan and to more than 500 settlements.

With implementation of the general scheme in Kazakhstan, a total of 13 regions will be gasified by 2030 and the number of consumers of natural gas will increase to 12 million people.

"The necessary investment for the implementation of the General Gasification Scheme 2030 is 656 billion tenge [US\$3.57 billion]. In keeping with the legislation, there are three sources of funding: the state budget, the national operator in the name of KazTransGas and private investments," said the minister.

Continued on Page A4

## Petroleum Industry Cluster to be Created

By Julia Rutz

Petroleum industry development in Kazakhstan was discussed during the July 3 Congress of the National Petroleum Industry in Aktau.

Among the items addressed at the congress was expected government support for petroleum and gas production and refining, petroleum and gas chemistry, mechanical engineering and branch services in the Atyrau, Mangistau and West Kazakhstan regions. The support is expected to come within the framework of the State Programme for Accelerated Industrial and Innovative Development (SPAID) of Kazakhstan.

It was also announced during the congress that the Oil and Gas Ministry of Kazakhstan, the Kazakhstan National Chamber of Entrepreneurs and the Samruk Kazyna National Welfare Fund will become members of a National Cluster Council. Functions of the cluster integrator will be provided by Kazakhstan's state oil and gas company KazMunayGas. Baiterek National Holding is going to be the fiscal agent.

The congress also approved a resolution outlining proposed petroleum industry development. The resolution will be forwarded to the Parliament of Kazakhstan. One of the resolution's

suggestions is the creation of a National Cluster Council, which would address problems related to the development and promotion of supplementary legislation concerning oil and gas sector development; the creation of high-speed communication between production, service, science and personnel cluster departments; and the organisation of various forums to solve problems of further cluster development.

Among the congress's participants were Akim (Governor) of the Mangistau region, Alik Aidarbayev, Vice-Minister of Oil and Gas of Kazakhstan Magzum Myrzagaliev, Managing Director of Oil Assets Management of the Samruk Kazyna National Welfare Fund Malik Salimgereyev, Executive Director of Human Capital Assets Development at Kazenergy Togzhan Kozhaliyeva, Deputy Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Kazakhstan National Chamber of Entrepreneurs Yekaterina Nikitinskaya, as well as representatives of Kazakhstan's state oil and gas company KazMunayGas, Kazakhstan's Oil and Gas Institute and other petroleum industry enterprises.

The congress was organised by the akimat (regional government) of the Mangistau region and the Kazakhstan National Chamber of Entrepreneurs.



Grandiose fireworks dedicated to the celebration of the 16th anniversary of Astana were organised July 6. (See related story on B8)

### INSIDE

#### NATION

New National Defence University Campus Opens in Astana A2

Air Kazakhstan Purchases 10 Q400 NextGen Planes from Bombardier A2

#### ECONOMY & BUSINESS

Nazarbayev Briefed on Industrial Innovation Progress, Launches New SPAID Projects A4

Nazarbayev Visits Aktobe, East Kazakhstan Regions, Launches a KazChrome Plant A5

#### EDITORIAL

Visa-Free Travel as Way to Stimulate Investment, Tourism A6

#### OPINIONS

AHMAD: Kazakhstan Stands Tall in Washington A6

TULL: Kazakhstan, UNDP Work on Developing Country's Aid Agency A7

#### NATION & CAPITAL

Astana Hosts Kazakhstan's First International Kite Festival B1

Kazakhstan Announces Winners of International Journalism Competition B1

# NATION

WEDNESDAY, JULY 16, 2014

## New National Defence University Campus Opens in Astana

By Julia Rutz

ASTANA – The opening ceremony, attended by Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev, of the new National Defence University campus was held July 3 in Astana.

The National Defence University is the only higher education institution in Central Asia that prepares military staff for strategic, operational-strategic and prestrategic tactical control. The university offers master and Ph.D. programmes in military and state management, military and administrative management, technical provision management, logistics management, moral and welfare management and military education management.

About 1,000 armed forces specialists and troops from Kazakhstan and other Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) member states have graduated from the university. Military students can also apply for postgraduate professional studies. This university is also meant to help develop future academic and scientific personnel.

Construction of the university's campus was launched on the order of President Nazarbayev, who is constitutionally the commander in chief of Kazakhstan's armed forces,



President Nursultan Nazarbayev (c) and Defence Minister Serik Akhmetov at the opening ceremony of the new National Defence University campus in Astana.

es, in 2008 and is expected to be fully completed by the end of 2016.

Upon completion, the new 20-hectare campus located near Nazarbayev University will include 16 buildings totalling 107,185 square metres, with 21,020 square metres of hous-

ing. The campus will also feature lecture rooms, computer and language laboratories, convention halls, a cinema hall with 200 seats and a library with 75,000 books.

The university will also feature a centre for simulation modelling that allows students to organise a

fight with a virtual rival. A new scientific military laboratory will also include the latest technology to facilitate comprehensive scientific research on military topics.

So far, five educational and one administrative buildings, as well as one dormitory for 306 residents

have been completed. The completed facilities can accommodate more than 1,100 students.

The teaching staff of the university includes local and foreign professors, with 10 Ph.Ds and 30 Candidates of Science currently working at the university.

## Air Kazakhstan Purchases 10 Q400 NextGen Planes from Bombardier



Purchased by Air Kazakhstan, 10 Q400 NextGen planes from Bombardier Aerospace will continue preparations for the domestic airline's launch in 2015.

By Dmitry Lee

ASTANA – The new airline Air Kazakhstan has purchased 10 Q400 NextGen planes from Bombardier Aerospace to continue preparations for the domestic airline's launch in 2015.

Earlier this year, Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev announced plans with Bombardier President and Chief Executive Officer Pierre Beaudoin to discuss wider cooperation in air and rail transport.

"We can build on the experience of starting a new airline from Air Astana," Nazarbayev said then. Air Astana was launched in 2002 as a 51-49 percent joint venture between Kazakhstan and Britain's BAE systems.

Air Kazakhstan president Nurzhan Shakirov confirmed the purchase of the new planes and announced their delivery date at an aircraft presentation held at Astana International Airport.

"We bought 10 Q400 NextGen aircraft from Bombardier. Each aircraft costs \$23 million. In March and April 2015, five or six planes will be delivered to Kazakhstan. They will immediately go into use for domestic service," Shakirov said.

"The Q400 NextGen turboprop is ideally suited for Central Asia's geographic diversity," said Ray Jones, senior vice president of sales, marketing and asset management at

Bombardier Commercial Aircraft. "The Q400 NextGen aircraft is the most advanced turboprop on the market and has the speed and range required to service Kazakhstan's market with the highest standards of safety, reliability and passenger comfort. Also importantly, the Q400 NextGen aircraft has proven its capability in very hot as well as extremely cold weather conditions; it has been certified for operations in temperatures as low as -54 C."

"With operating costs that are significantly lower than the other 70-seat aircraft currently in production, the Q400 NextGen aircraft offers airlines a distinct advantage," added Jones.

Central Asia is seeing increased demand for modern aircraft as older, less efficient designs pose chronic challenges with high fuel costs and environmental concerns.

Kazakh airlines collectively flew five million passengers, or 9 percent more in 2013 than they carried in 2012. The country plans to upgrade 16 airports to accommodate regional air service expansions in the near future.

With the introduction of the Q400 NextGen aircraft, Canada-based Bombardier essentially reinvented the modern turboprop. Optimised for short-haul flights and seating up to 86 passengers, the aircraft is a large, fast, quiet and fuel-efficient plane that provides the perfect balance of passenger comfort, perfor-

mance and operational flexibility with the lowest seat-mile cost on the market for short-haul regional aircraft. With the flexibility to fly at both turboprop and jet speeds, the Q400 NextGen aircraft can be profitably deployed on short-range turboprop flights and in medium-haul jet markets. Now available in optional dual class, extra capacity and passenger-cargo combo configurations, the Q400 NextGen aircraft's versatility positions it to again reshape the turboprop market through profitable growth.

The Q400 NextGen aircraft features a cabin environment with LED lighting, new ceiling panels, dished window sidewalls and larger overhead luggage bins, plus the company's Active Noise and Vibration Suppression (ANVS) system, provide an excellent cabin experience for passengers.

Bombardier has recorded firm orders for a total of 498 Q400 and Q400 NextGen aircraft. Worldwide, Q400 and Q400 NextGen aircraft have transported more than 295 million passengers and have logged over 4.7 million flight hours and more than five million take-offs and landings. The Q400 and Q400 NextGen aircraft programme includes over 50 customers and operators in over 30 countries on five continents.

Bombardier is the world's only manufacturer of both planes and trains.

## Foreign Ministry, Diplomatic Corps Discuss Kazakh E-Government

ASTANA – A round-table discussion of Kazakhstan's e-government system and of plans to hold a major international conference on e-government development globally in the fall was held in Astana on June 27 with the participation of Minister of Foreign Affairs Erlan Idrissov, Chairman of the Agency for Communications and Information Askar Zhumagaliyev and local diplomatic corps.

The electronic government web portal, [www.egov.kz](http://www.egov.kz), is intended to provide a new format for dialogue between the government and citizens. The portal allows visitors to obtain and submit different documents and pay fines and taxes, as well as directly address state agencies and leave suggestions and comments on bills and public service projects around the country.

The index of e-government development consists of indicators on human capital, telecommunications infrastructure and online services. Today, the computer literacy of Kazakhstan's population is 63.2 percent, while broadband Internet is available to 67.6 percent of the country. As it exists today, Kazakhstan's e-government allows citizens to access 570 services through the e-government portal. The portal provided 38 million services in 2013; so far this year, 22.8 million services have been provided. The portal is visited on average by 43,000 users daily.

"Experience from around the world has demonstrated both the great importance and the real benefits of sharing information and promoting interaction between citizens and government. Today, a high quality information communication sector is no longer an impressive add-on to government services – it has become a critical component of effective government and the way we do business," said Foreign Minister Idrissov in his opening speech.

Zhumagaliyev announced, "We plan to advance mobile government that is aimed at providing services using mobile devices. By the end of this year, more than 50 services will be available through mobile applications."

During the conference, Idrissov noted that besides making people's lives easier by reducing bureaucracy, e-government also aims to fight corruption. In his words, more and more services are being introduced in order to decrease the level of corruption in Kazakhstan.

**"Our country has continued to improve in recent years, rising to 28 out of 193 countries in the UN's e-government development indicators." – Erlan Idrissov**

"I am proud to say we have made significant progress. Our country has continued to improve in recent years, rising to 28 out of 193 countries in the UN's e-government development indicators," said Idrissov. "The e-government system in Kazakhstan is not different from global e-government; it shares the same purposes," he added.

During the discussion, Korean Ambassador to Kazakhstan Baik Joo-hyeon stressed the importance of holding the third Global E-Government Forum in Astana on October 6-7, and congratulated Kazakhstan on the upcoming event. According to UN e-government evaluations announced on June 24, Korea's e-government system has now topped the list of global e-government systems for three years in a row.

During the discussion, Deputy Chairman of the Zerde Joint Stock Company Bikesh Kurmagaliyeva mentioned that e-government in Kazakhstan creates easier ways of developing local businesses. Idrissov also reminded participants about the recently announced visa-free regime for 10 countries with which Kazakhstan has close economic ties.

### NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

"3D copies of artefacts relating to the history of Kazakhstan being kept in museums in other countries may appear in the National Museum of Kazakhstan," Director of the new National Museum Darkhan Mynbay said at a July 4 Central Communications Service (CCS) briefing. "Our country has many unique artefacts that were taken abroad and are currently in other countries and museums. When this is a problem, intergovernmental agreements are often the solution. But there is another option as well, which is making 3D or 4D copies. So we're going to show some artefacts in our exhibitions," he said. According to him, museums are replenished this way all around the world. Kazakhstan-based experts are only now beginning negotiations. Moreover, the director of the museum said that the National Museum's collection will be filled using conventional methods such as purchasing museum pieces after evaluations by specialised commissions, as well as through donations. The opening ceremony of the National Museum was held on July 2 with the participation of President Nursultan Nazarbayev. The museum building consists of seven units (2 to 8 floors) with a total area of 74,000 square metres, which contain archaeological, ethnographic, historical and cultural artefacts of Kazakhstan from ancient times to the present day. The museum has a hall for ancient and medieval history, a hall of gold, an ethnography hall, a hall celebrating independent Kazakhstan, an Astana hall and halls of modern art. There are also rooms for temporary exhibitions, restoration workshops, laboratories, storage facilities, a library with a reading room and conference rooms.

"Construction of EXPO 2017 facilities will be completed before October 2015. At that time, indoor work will begin," head of the state-owned Astana EXPO 2017 National Company Talgat Yermegiyayev said on July 3. The central exhibition pavilion will be finished in December 2016, he reported to President Nazarbayev, who visited the construction site of the future exhibition. According to Yermegiyayev, it is planned to complete the zero cycle of EXPO City ahead of schedule. "We have corrected the schedule. Our zero cycle will be finished in October of this year," Yermegiyayev said. Initially, it was planned to be finished in December 2014. The exposition will be held in the southeastern outskirts of the city, near the golf club, at the intersection of Shamshi Kaldayakov Street and the K-1 beltway. The exposition grounds cover 113 hectares. In addition to exhibition pavilions, this area will include residential complexes, a school, a kindergarten, a hotel, a congress hall and a large park. It is planned to build 26 facilities. Kazakhstan's national pavilion will be a sphere with a diameter of 80 metres. The exhibition will last three months from June 10 to Sept. 10, 2017.

Secretary of the Security Council and Assistant to the President of Kazakhstan Kairat Kozhamzharov took part in National Guard command personnel exercises on July 9, which were held with the participation of the Ortalyk (Central) regional command units. The meeting of the Military Council of the National Guard was held as part of the event. The drills were summarised at the meeting and new tasks for the coming years were defined. At the meeting, Kozhamzharov emphasised the role of the National Guard in ensuring security and order. Instructions on improving the service were issued. Exercises in different areas were demonstrated during the event. Upon completion of the event, Kozhamzharov positively appraised the organisation and the exercises.

# EURASIA&WORLD

WEDNESDAY, JULY 16, 2014

## EXTERNAL NEWS IN BRIEF

Turkmenistan has completed construction of part of the new Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran railway, the Turkmen government reported after a government inspection of the railway project on July 4. The total length of the large-scale railway, which runs from the Kazakh steppes through Turkmenistan's Karakum desert to the mountainous Gullistan province in the north of Iran, is 900 kilometres, 700 kilometres of which runs through Turkmen territory. The railway project has been underway since 2007, when a high-level trilateral agreement between Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Iran was signed.

Creating a favourable visa policy aimed at realising the country's tourist potential and attracting foreign investment by expanding the visa-free zone and improving visa and migration policy is one of the priorities of Kazakhstan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan Rapiil Zhoshybayev told a July 10 Central Communications Service (CCS) media briefing. In 2012, visa procedures were simplified for 48 politically stable and economically developed countries, he reported, and in February, Kazakhstan unilaterally simplified visa procedures for citizens of 28 EU member states. On June 12, President Nursultan Nazarbayev announced the unilateral introduction of a visa-free regime for citizens of 10 countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD): the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy, Malaysia, the Netherlands, the United Arab Emirates, South Korea and Japan. Zhoshybayev reported that a special draft law had been developed in order to implement the project. Under the new law, citizens of these 10 countries may visit Kazakhstan for 15 days without a visa. "A visa-free regime will allow tourism to develop," Zhoshybayev said. "This initiative is aimed at strengthening bilateral relations, creating favourable conditions for potential investors and foreign businessmen and attracting tourists to Kazakhstan." There is also no limit on the number of visits an individual may make. "This will also allow Kazakhstan to actively develop the tourism sphere. Besides, a multiplicative effect is expected in the development of small and medium business, creating new jobs and income for the budget," Zhoshybayev added.

The London-based European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) has participated in a bond issuance by Kazakhstan's national railway company, Kazakhstan Temir Zholy (KTZ), the bank announced on July 4. Kazakhstan Temir Zholy successfully completed the placement of a Swiss-franc-denominated Eurobond on the SIX Swiss Exchange on June 20. The total amount of the issue is CHF 285 million. It comprises two tranches of five and eight years for CHF 100 million and CHF 185 million respectively. The bank participated in the longer-term tranche of the Eurobond. "The proceeds of KTZ's Eurobond issuance will be used to finance much-needed logistics infrastructure across the country, including on the border with China," the bank said in a press release. "The private sector will be actively involved. By further developing its logistics business, Kazakhstan Railways will facilitate increased cargo transit, especially on the critical China-EU trade route." "We are pleased with this successful issuance of the Eurobond by KTZ," EBRD Director for Kazakhstan Janet Heckman said. "The proceeds will be invested in better logistics infrastructure, which will improve the quality of transportation and help to remove physical and non-physical barriers to trade along the route from China to Europe, once known as the Silk Road." As part of this operation, the Bank will support KTZ with structuring the first logistics hub public-private partnership (PPP) project in one of the regions of Kazakhstan and will also provide assistance with improving the corporate governance practices of JSC KTZ Express, KTZ's logistics operator.

## Kazakh FM Says Multi-Vector Foreign Policy Rooted in Nomadic History, Geography

By Malika Orazgaliyeva

ASTANA – In a July 2 interview with Liter daily newspaper, Minister of Foreign Affairs Erlan Idrissov discussed changes in Kazakhstan's foreign policy over the past 10 years, the current status of relations with major foreign partners and efforts by the government to attract investment including through easing visa regimes.

"The world has changed considerably over the past 10 years; the foreign policy of Kazakhstan now has different political, economic and socio-cultural objectives. The work of the foreign ministry has become much more complex as responsibility for foreign policy has increased. Kazakhstan is no longer a young state with weak institutions. Today, it is a mature state and serious regional power," said Idrissov.

He explained that thanks to President Nursultan Nazarbayev, Kazakhstan's foreign policy has become increasingly active since independence. One example is the voluntary renunciation of nuclear weapons. This decision has already earned Kazakhstan a spot in the history books. Not a single global non-proliferation event goes by without the President's participation. A good example is the summit in The Hague in March, where the Kazakh President and his colleagues discussed global nuclear security and the situation in Ukraine.

Another initiative put forward by Kazakhstan's leader is the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), which was all but dismissed in the early years since it was offered in



Idrissov spoke on EEU, relations with Russia, China, West

1992. Yet, during the CICA summit in Shanghai in May 2014, President Nazarbayev launched a new initiative. He stressed that 22 years of the development of this initiative have brought the countries meeting at the summit to a new stage of growth and that now is the time to think about how to transform this forum of cooperation into something structured, tentatively called the Organisation for Security and Development in Asia. According to Idrissov, the Foreign Ministry will actively work to make the President's proposal a reality.

Idrissov said President Nazarbayev's initiative regarding integration in Eurasia is also a case in point.

"May 29 witnessed the birth of the Eurasian Economic Union," he explained. "Some view this union with skepticism, others see a clear interest by certain states. We categorically reject such points of view. In this union, we see a great potential: the logic of life and geography says that the huge landmass, Europe and Asia, must move towards each other. Therein lies the deep sense of the our President's idea. He firmly believes in the final success and effectiveness of the integration processes in this

area. The EEU is but the first harbinger. The process will not end there. [The launch of the union on] January 1, 2015 is but the beginning of a complex, long-term, and, we hope, effective process of integration."

"Our foreign policy is not only active, but also multi-vector – this is the most reasonable approach coded in the nomads' blood and explained by our history and geography," the foreign minister said. "Geopolitical tolerance is in our genes, and our entire history shows that that was a correct choice: by leaning towards one side we will ultimately infringe upon our own interests."

According to the minister, the government of Kazakhstan always tries to give an objective assessment of a given situation and is not afraid to be honest in its dialogue with partners, always attempting to bring its vision of a balanced output to any given situation. The well thought-out policies implemented over the past 22 years demonstrate that it is possible to successfully develop fruitful relationships with competing powers.

"Russia is our natural choice in the long-term. Therefore, it is not by coincidence that we have deep relations in many fields; we wish they will stay like that. We do everything we can to assure that such relations become a constant in our lives."

The minister mentioned Kazakhstan's flourishing relationship with China and the two countries' shared approaches to regional policy and the global issues. In his words, Kazakhstan recognises that China's role in the world has increased significantly. Kazakhstan welcomes the fact that China is pursuing a policy

of multi-polarity in international relations. There is dynamic growth in the mutual trade turnover between two countries. In the early 1990s, annual trade with China amounted to several hundred million dollars, but today, the country is almost Kazakhstan's largest trading partner. Currently, trade with China totals over \$24 billion and the two leaders have set the task to bring the bar up to \$40 billion by 2020.

The foreign minister noted that the West, namely the U.S. and Europe, have in a way sponsored technological and political growth in Kazakhstan since its independence. The country has benefited relations with many European countries through collective means; the EU is now Kazakhstan's largest trading partner. There are currently more than 50 billion dollars in trade with Europe annually, which is almost half of Kazakhstan's external trade turnover; the 70 billion dollars of direct private investments from Europe amount to 40 percent of all foreign investment made in Kazakhstan. This is a huge figure that shows great potential for further cooperation, the minister said, emphasising that Europe and the United States are seen as strategic, long-term partners by Kazakhstan.

"These countries are sources of technological knowledge, international standards, skills, including know-how on how to survive in a market economy, which is a concept we have not yet fully mastered. Therefore, the state of our relations with these countries allows us great opportunity in building new economic and civil institutions," he explained.

Idrissov further emphasised the

importance of building relations with Latin America. Brazil, Mexico, Argentina and Chile are growing economies that are interested in Kazakhstan's markets, he explained. They have seen great achievement and hold great advantages in fields such as agriculture and the meat industry. A new type of fuel is taking over in Brazil: 80 percent of cars in Brazil use ethanol, which is a level unheard of in Kazakhstan. The minister said cooperation with Latin America has impressive horizons.

Another important topic discussed in the interview was the negotiations on visa facilitation. Document reduction and visa pick up simplification are being discussed. Through this, the Foreign Ministry wants to significantly reduce the problems faced by citizens while getting a visa.

"Here again is the principle of reciprocity – the 10 countries [whose citizens will be able to travel to Kazakhstan visa free from July 15] we chose to include in the pilot project were the 10 countries from which we see most of our investments. Thus, we gave an indirect signal to other countries. We are no longer terra incognita on the political map. Interest in our country is growing. However, the steps forward must be mutual. Visa-free travel to Europe is possible, although we will not achieve this goal overnight. But the new visa regime isn't being done only for Europe. Over the past two years, our citizens have been granted visa-free travel to a number of countries such as Brazil, Argentina, Ecuador and South Korea. And we are also actively negotiating with several Asian countries on visa-free travel."

## Relations with Kazakhstan Are Strong, Dialogue is Building, Says Colombian Diplomat

By Malika Orazgaliyeva

Kazakhstan's relationship with countries of Latin America has seen a major expansion in recent months with mutual visits and exchanges. One such visitor recently was Ruben Dario Florez, Minister-Counsellor of the Colombian Embassy in Russia, concurrently accredited to Kazakhstan. He spoke to The Astana Times about bilateral relations with Colombia and his impressions of the country and of Astana.

**Is this your first visit to Kazakhstan?**

Yes, it is my first visit to Kazakhstan and my first impression of Astana.

**What do think of our capital?**

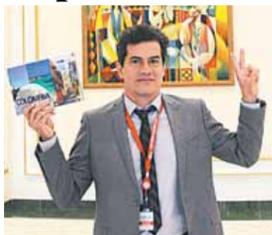
I am really amazed with the project of the city. It is a powerful project. I think this city and its architecture shows the dynamism and achievements of the economic and cultural spheres. Also, it seems to me that Astana combines different traditions and different cultures. These cultures are coming from the origins of the Kazakh culture, from the origins of your identity, since it is a young nation.

On the other hand, the desire of the Kazakh people for a dialogue with the East and the West can be perceived. In my view, it is successfully transmitted through the visual appearance of the high-rise towers, and through the new Astana Opera building. The city expresses the spirit of the modernity and the spirit of the antiquity of the nation.

Your President, Nursultan Nazarbayev, expressed a very deep thought when he built the capital here in Astana, because every nation in the world looks at its roots and strengthens them. But, on the other hand, it is open for dialogue with other nations and cultures. Affirming a desire for evolution is a very important factor in the modern world.

**Please tell us about current relations between Kazakhstan and Colombia.**

In my view, our relations are



Ruben Dario Florez

at a very good level, so we can be proud and glad. Diplomatic dialogue is building on different levels, including cultural, political and economic [levels]. Each of these spheres of collaboration is a special achievement. The first export to Kazakhstan from Colombia was salsa dancing. I think that our Kazakh friends liked it.

Last year, we had a high-level political and diplomatic dialogue. The deputy foreign minister of Colombia, Patti Londonio, took part in a video conference with Kazakh diplomats. So, in my point of view, our relations have a great future. Mainly because Kazakhstan is open: open to other cultures in the same way Colombia is. Our nation has got Indian, Spanish and Afro-Colombian heritage. The Kazakh culture also has a mix of eastern cultures and ancient cultures. This makes a good foundation for our cooperation.

Another important point is the position and principles of Kazakhstan's foreign policy. Tolerance, evolution, openness and intention for integration characterise your country. Kazakhstan has recognised that modern world is multipolar. Colombia shares these positions with Kazakhstan.

**As you know, Kazakhstan has proposed its candidacy for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council for 2017-2018. Has Colombia determined its position?**

At the moment, I cannot say; it concerns talks on a higher level. But from my perspective, I can see that there is a strong intention between the government of our country and the government of Kazakhstan to strengthen our dialogue and cooperation.

## Japanese Embassy Strongly Supports KazAID Initiative, Sees No Limit to Future Cooperation

By Dmitry Lee

ASTANA – Building on their long history of international cooperation, including in nuclear weapons non-proliferation, Japan is voicing strong support for Kazakhstan's new Agency for International Development, KazAID, which has been under development since 2013 and which is seen in Tokyo as an important avenue of cooperation. Japan's investment in Kazakhstan is also growing steadily, most recently with the launch of a production line of Toyota Fortuners in Kostanay, building on top of the existing cooperation in nuclear energy and the oil and gas sector.

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Masayoshi Kamohara assumed office in Astana in November 2013. He received The Astana Times staff at his residence to discuss Kazakh-Japanese relations.

**Japan's Silk Road Diplomacy policy for Central Asia was developed in 1997. Could you tell us a little about this concept, what criteria it includes and what are its strategies and adaptations?**

Many things happened in the first half of the 1990s... especially on the Eurasian continent. In this part of the world, five countries [in Central Asia] got their independence. Having these huge geopolitical changes in mind, the Japanese government developed this idea and, since then, the Central Asian region has taken an independent position in our foreign policy. Japan has been developing good bilateral relations with each country of the region and trying to encourage regional cooperation among our new partners.

One concrete example is the launching of the Central Asia+Japan dialogue [10 years ago]. This year, the meeting is taking place in Bishkek on July 16 at the foreign ministers' level. Every meeting has a common agenda in which all the parties have more or less the same degree of interest. We are looking forward to witnessing further progress in our common efforts.

**There are more than 70 major Japanese companies and Kazakh-Japanese joint ventures in Kazakhstan today. In your view, what draws them to Kazakhstan? What is so attractive to Japanese investors?**

First of all, Kazakhstan has almost all possible natural resources and Japan, on the other hand, has almost nothing but human resources. Thus, there is already a natural condition to



Masayoshi Kamohara

cannot see the end of our endeavour. However, the most important thing at the present stage is to never give up on our final goal.

**Japan's basic policy is of the peaceful use of nuclear energy – but many people in Kazakhstan don't understand this concept. Some are afraid of suffering the fate of the Fukushima Daiichi plant in 2011. Could you explain the concept of peaceful use?**

Simply speaking, it means non-military use of energy. I am not an expert in this field. But I can say it is necessary and very useful to further develop nuclear technology. Today [July 11], Japan has been hit by an exceptionally strong typhoon. Many experts are of the view that the extreme weather we have been experiencing over the past decade could be caused by global climate change triggered by high levels of carbon dioxide emissions. A lot of electric power plants are burning coal, gas and oil, which create huge volumes of carbon dioxide. Nuclear power plants don't produce these emissions. ... Furthermore, if our experts succeed in developing nuclear fusion technology, we will have unlimited clean energy. But this can happen only if we continue our efforts to develop existing nuclear technology.

You mentioned the disaster in Fukushima. I'd like to say that so far, no one has died because of radiation, though many people have been forced to abandon their homes and farmland. Yes, there are damages. But bearing in mind the multi-vector negative effect it would have on the society and economy, it seems to me that abandoning nuclear technology because [of] that accident is the easy way out. ...

[T]he nuclear reactor in Fukushima is one of the oldest types; it belongs to the first generation. We already have fourth generation reactors, which are far safer than the first generation. By the way, if you get sick and go to hospital, you might have x-ray pictures taken. This is also an example of the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

**On a personal note, what is your impression of Kazakhstan?**

Kazakhstan is a very interesting country. I had no experience in the past in a society with nomadic and Islamic traditions. It is a young state with long history. It is always interesting for a diplomat working in a quickly-developing country. ... I hope that Kazakhstan meets its Strategy 2050 goals.

# ECONOMY

WEDNESDAY, JULY 16, 2014

## Nazarbayev Briefed on Industrial Innovation Progress, Launches New SPAIID Projects

By Ruziyat Ospanova

ASTANA – The government presented its report, “New Industrialisation of Kazakhstan: Results of Half Year of 2014,” to President Nursultan Nazarbayev at a July 2 event.

Before the meeting, the head of state visited the exhibition of the same name located in the newly built, Norman Foster-designed, futuristic Nazarbayev Centre, which hosts the Library of the First President and the Foundation of the First President.

Nazarbayev was also briefed on a number of new projects in the manufacturing industry where foreign investors will be involved in the implementation. These foreign investors include major companies, such as IVECO (Italy), Toyota Tsusho Corporation (Japan), Emirates Future (Jordan), LG Electronics (Korea), Byelkamit (Italy-U.S.), Isoplus (Germany) and others.

In his welcoming speech, Nazarbayev noted that it was the first event on Kazakh industrialisation and innovation in the building housing the presidential library, which will be the new centre for the development of science, Kazakh history and other topics. He also mentioned the opening of another building, the National Museum of Kazakhstan, the same day.

The President emphasised that to ensure Kazakhstan’s entry into the 30 most-developed countries of the world, change is needed in the raw materials orientation of the economy. Manufacturing is also very important for the sustainability of the economy against a background of worsening global market conditions for all raw materials.

In his speech, the President also noted that the Eurasian integration process has had a positive impact on the Kazakh economy in diversifying and increasing the share of processed products in the export

structure. Compared with 2009, output of all kinds of vehicles in the past year has increased 24 times. The volume of export of agricultural products in 2010 amounted to \$150 million and in 2013 had already reached \$534 million.

Over the first five years of implementing the State Programme for Accelerated Industrial and Innovative Development (SPAIID), a total of 672 facilities were put into operation.

In the first six months of this year, new production operations were launched in all regions of the country. Major enterprises were launched by the President during the televised event streamed live via a satellite link. These included the launch of the construction of a so-called ‘dry port’ in the Khorgos-East Gate Free Economic Zone on the border with China and the North-East-South power lines in Semey, including installation of the first support of the Semey-Altay

section. In the same mode, new projects including production of drill bits (PDC-bits) in Atyrau, a chemical production plant in Karatau in the Zhambyl region, a fabrication plant of ball and stop valves in the Karaganda region, a cement plant in Shetpe in the Mangystau region, energy boiler equipment production in Petropavlovsk, a house-building plant in Kostanay, construction of a ball-rolling mill in the Pavlodar region and a fodder plant in Kokshetau were commissioned.

Speaking at the meeting, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Industry and New Technologies Asset Issekeshov reported that 672 projects were implemented and 69,000 permanent jobs were created in four and a half years of the implementation of SPAIID. In addition, products for 3.2 trillion tenge (US\$17.4 billion) were produced, exports amounted to 133 billion tenge (US\$724.4 million), the share of finished products in total export

volume reached 8 percent and 325 new products were disbursed.

Minister of Economy and Budget Planning Yerbolat Dossayev noted that SPAIID has helped maintain the rate of economic growth and production and has provided a level of employment during the global financial crisis, serving as the main tool.

“Given the average annual economic growth of 6.4 percent, real GDP growth of 30 percent was achieved. In nominal terms, during this period there was a doubling of the GDP to 34.1 trillion tenge (US\$185.7 billion) in 2013,” Dossayev said.

The head of state also considered the latest data on the development of human capital (health, education, human and scientific support of the SPAIID and employment), as well as measures to implement new technologies, increase the share of local content and expand export potential.

### ECONOMY NEWS IN BRIEF

Kazakhstan will spend about 500 billion tenge (US\$2.72 billion) to ensure economic growth this year, Minister of Economy and Budget Planning Yerbolat Dossayev said at a July 1 Central Communications Service (CCS) briefing. “Special measures on curbing inflation within the planned corridor were taken following the devaluation of the national currency. Inflation reached 4.5 percent over five months of this year,” the minister noted. Speaking of the results achieved due to implementation of the government’s road map, Dossayev said that local executive bodies had been provided with the necessary powers to form and use regional food stabilisation funds in order to prevent food deficits. “Five hundred billion tenge [US\$2.72 billion] was allocated this year to support economic growth. This includes 100 billion tenge [US\$544.87 million] for financial support of small and medium businesses, 250 billion tenge [US\$1.36 billion] for banking sector recovery and 150 billion tenge [US\$817.3 million] for the implementation of industrial and innovative projects,” the minister noted. International banks will cofinance some development programmes and investment projects in key sectors.

“Kazakhstan’s tariff policy programme to 2020 will be adopted in July of this year. The new programme on tariff policy till 2020 will be aimed at establishing an effective system of regulating monopolies,” Minister of Economy and Budget Planning Yerbolat Dossayev told a July 1 Central Communications Service (CCS) briefing, following a governmental meeting. “Yesterday, the draft tariff policy programme was submitted to the government. It will be accepted in July,” he said. He also said that, for the purpose of developing commodity markets, an action plan for the comprehensive analysis of regulated goods and services for their removal from the sphere of natural monopolies had been approved.

On July 1, Prime Minister Karim Massimov held a Cabinet meeting, during which a wide range of issues concerning the country’s socio-economic development were discussed. Minister of Economy and Budget Planning Yerbolat Dossayev reported on the implementation of the road map of the country’s priority socio-economic measures. According to him, 38 of 67 points of the road map have been executed. “Work has been carried out on additional economic stimulus, the diversification and modernisation of the economy [and the] development of the export potential of the country,” he noted. “The implementation of the President’s instructions on additional stimulation of economic growth through a 1 trillion tenge [US\$5.45 billion] allocation from the National Fund was started.” Dossayev also noted that as part of the directions of the road map, 143 projects worth 36.8 billion tenge (US\$200.51 million) in the manufacturing industry have been approved. Eighty-one projects worth 20.4 billion tenge (US\$111.17 million) have already been financed. “Fifty-five projects worth 13.7 billion tenge [US\$74.64 million] have been approved in the food industry, [and] 28 projects totalling 6 billion tenge [US\$32.7 million] have already been financed,” he added. The minister announced the development of a new mechanism for subsidising investments under the Agribusiness 2020 Programme. This mechanism provides for compensation for 20-80 percent of entrepreneurs’ costs when implementing investment projects. In addition, to address priority problems in the financial sector, a concept for the development of the financial environment until 2030 was developed. The government also adopted a comprehensive action plan to attract direct foreign and domestic investment, providing for negotiations with large foreign investors and multinational corporations. Minister of Agriculture Assylzhan Mamytybekov reported on the implementation of a project to develop the potential of cattle meat exports in Kazakhstan’s regions and on the implementation of financial rehabilitation measures for agricultural entities. Minister of Regional Development Bolat Zhamishev reported on approaches to the reform of the heating sectors of cities and towns and the mechanism of acceptance into operation of completed facilities. Following the meeting, the prime minister gave instructions to relevant state agencies.

## Kazakhstan Plans to Remain World Uranium Leader, Says Official

By Yuri Lee

KYZYLORDA REGION – Kazakhstan’s share in world uranium production over the past year reached 38 percent, landing the country in first place.

A recent meeting in the village of Shieli Piaralie with the Chairman of the Board of National Atomic Company Kazatomprom Vladimir Shkolnik and Deputy Regional Governor Galym Amreyev examined developments in the nuclear industry over recent years. Issues regarding key strategic enterprises were addressed.

“I’d like to note that the company finished 2013 successfully and all desired indicators of the physical volume of production were met,” Shkolnik said in opening the meeting. At that, he stated that Kazakhstan’s share in world uranium production was 38 percent, rendering it the number one producer of the radioactive element.

The head of Kazatomprom reminded that there are complicated conditions in the uranium industry, especially in connection with the accident at the Fukushima nuclear power plant in Japan. Almost all uranium producing entities bear losses. However, Kazatomprom was an exception and the company completed last year with a profit of over 30 billion tenge (US\$163 million). Nevertheless, it is not difficult to imagine the scale of the losses of nuclear companies, taking into account the fact that the global market prices for natural uranium decreased from \$55 to 28 per pound.

Kazatomprom is looking to remain dominant in the market, Shkolnik said, noting that the company has been recognised as best in the world in a long series of parameters, including the availability of technologies and financial indicators, efficient use of capital and investments. It is unlikely that world leadership in uranium production will change.

As for uranium industry forecasts, they differ, but are optimistic. A rise is expected in one or two years or perhaps even earlier. The latter forecast is advanced by analysts of banks and companies who determine pricing policies.

The head of the company discussed three strategic directions in their work defined by the government.

“The first task is the development of the full nuclear fuel cycle. In the past year, we became co-owners of a uranium enrichment plant. Our product, enriched uranium, was exported to foreign markets and the company profited,” he said.

In addition, Kazatomprom, together with French and Chinese partners, is involved in the construction of a plant for heat-transmitting assemblies to be used in the nuclear industry.

“During President Nursultan Nazarbayev’s visit to China, it was officially confirmed at the highest level that we will design and construct a plant for heat-transmitting assemblies together with Chinese companies. The project has already been approved,” he said. At that, he noted

that today, similar operations in the world are loaded only at 60-70 percent. But in this case, we are talking about the latest technologies and that the plant will be built for new reactors.

By 2030, China plans to build more than 100 nuclear power units, some of which are already under construction, said Shkolnik.

The company has also made progress in a second strategic direction – the development of renewable energy. For almost three years, full cycle photovoltaic panels have been manufactured. Among the achievements is the production of high quality metallurgical silicon for solar modules manufactured by Astana Solar LLP jointly with French companies and construction of solar power plants from domestically manufactured photovoltaic panels in the Aral Sea region. High solar activity and rare rainfalls there create particularly favourable conditions for such business. In addition, the project is very attractive due to the sale price of electricity – 70 tenge (US\$0.38) per 1 kW.

The company develops new wind power technologies. Together with the Japanese company Toshiba, they will build a power station with a capacity of 20.5 MW and a plant for the production of wind turbines with a total capacity of 100 MW per year in the Mangystau region. These products will be in demand in the Eurasian Economic Union.

No less ambitious goals have been set for the company in creating local small capacity energy systems which can use both solar and wind energy. Such systems are needed not only in remote villages and farms, but also in pastures.

The third strategic direction encompasses the development of rare earth metals metallurgy. There is already good progress in this field: in early 2013, a plant for rare earth oxides capable of producing 1,500 tonnes annually was put into operation in the city of Stepnogorsk. The company is successfully increasing its production.

“Here, it is economically feasible to build a metal oxides plant and then implement a large programme to produce super magnets, various alloys and compounds; without such measures, progress in the 21st century is virtually impossible,” Shkolnik said regarding his plans.

This strategic direction of the company in turn implies its participation in new promising projects in the Aral Sea region and the creation of a metallurgical cluster.

The Kazatomprom delegation visited the Uranenergo production centre, which today involves three types of renewable energy. The needs of the enterprise for electricity and heat are provided by solar power plants with 250 kW capacities, a wind combined power farm (Bolotov) with a capacity of 7 kW and a heat pump. It is three times more efficient and cheaper than electric heating.

## Pharmacy Company, Government Seek to Increase Domestically Produced Pharmaceuticals

By Sergei Gorbunov

PAVLODAR – One Kazakhstan-based pharmaceutical company has partnered with 120 companies around the world in manufacturing medicine.

President of the Pavlodar-based pharmaceutical holding Romat, Turarbek Rakish, academician and doctor of sciences, as well as honoured engineer of Kazakhstan, chevalier of the Order of Lomonosov and a holder of other awards, has his own motto – he who walks deals with the road. By exerting great energy and possessing great talent, Rakish has turned a small pharmacy into a major corporation and one of the leading pharmaceutical companies in Kazakhstan with worldwide recognition. Today, Romat operates three modern plants for the production of medicines, biological products, medical devices and polymer instruments and a national network of distributors and retail pharmacies. In the long term, they plan to create new capacities.

According to recommendations from the World Health Organisation, in order to ensure strategic security for the state, the share of domestically manufactured medicines in relation to imports should not be less than 20 percent. That’s why one of the top development priorities of the country is to increase the share of medicines produced domestically in Kazakhstan to 40-50 percent by 2014. The pharmaceutical sector is included in the State Programme of Accelerated

Industrial and Innovative Development (SPAIID).

But today, the production of drugs, especially new and more effective pharmaceuticals, is not only an effort on the part of individual pharmaceutical companies and national associations, but also that of interstate partnerships. This is why Romat has been successfully developing international relations with their colleagues and today has partnerships with more than 120 companies worldwide, namely manufacturers of drugs and medical equipment. Its portfolio always includes products from well-known foreign manufacturers of pharmaceuticals, such as Eli Lilly (Switzerland), GSK (Britain), Nestle (Switzerland), Nycomed (Austria), NovoNordisk (Denmark), Pfizer (U.S.), Schering AG (Germany.)

In partnership with Russian scientists, the company has created new and unique drugs at a chemical-pharmaceutical research centre headed by Kunzaz Murzagulov, the inventor of a number of drugs, doctor of chemical sciences, merited professional of healthcare of the Republic of Kazakhstan and member of the American Chemical Society. One of the significant achievements of the centre is the creation of a radically new anti-tuberculosis agent which was patented in the CIS. Thanks to this drug, doctors in Kazakhstan have already achieved significant results in the treatment of tuberculosis. European pharmaceutical companies have used this medication.

## Government Approves General Gasification Scheme

Continued from Page A1

As for gas production, the main hopes are associated with the large Tengiz and Karachaganak fields. Last fall, the government and Tengizchevroil, the Tengiz field’s operating group comprising Chevron, ExxonMobil, KazMunayGas and LukArco, signed a memorandum on future expansion projects. This is a very important document for the Kazakh economy, which will contribute to the growth of oil production at the project up to 38 million tonnes per year. It will also provide raw materials for the Atyrau oil refinery.

The huge Karachaganak project is being implemented by the companies BG Group, Eni, Chevron, Lukoil and KazMunayGas. In

2013, nearly 12 million tonnes of liquid hydrocarbons and more than 17 billion cubic metres of gas were produced there. Currently, the international consortium of shareholders is considering options for the future expansion of the project, which will also significantly increase gas production at Karachaganak. This process will be completed by 2017 in order to implement the project in 2022.

The development of the gas industry will also boost petrochemical production. Thus, the integrated chemical complex in Atyrau currently under construction will produce 500,000 tonnes of polypropylene and 800,000 tonnes of polyethylene annually.

Kazakhstan is one of the world’s top 12 possessors of proven oil re-

serves and one of the world’s top 20 possessors of gas reserves. More than 100 domestic and foreign oil and gas companies are involved in the development of oil and gas deposits in the country.

The development of the domestic oil and gas sector today is based on large projects like the Tengiz, Karachaganak and Kashagan field development projects. The reserves of each of these fields exceed 1 billion tonnes in oil equivalent.

“Developing our national oil and gas sector, Kazakhstan strives to meet global trends of the industry. ... We intend to continue the development process and the general gasification scheme adopted by the government is one of the steps towards this goal,” concluded Karabalin.

# BUSINESS

WEDNESDAY, JULY 16, 2014

## BUSINESS NEWS IN BRIEF

“About 56,000 entrepreneurs are registered in Astana,” Director of the Chamber of Entrepreneurs of Astana Meirbek Mazhitov told a July 3 Central Communications Service (CCS) media briefing. “Presently, more than 56,000 business entities are registered in Astana, which is 17 percent higher than in 2013. The activity of small and medium business entities makes more than 60 percent of the GDP, and 67 percent of all tax revenue accounts for entrepreneurs. The volume of products manufactured by them in 2013 reached 1,200 million tenge [US\$6.5 million],” he said. Mazhitov emphasised that this indicator shows that the capital city has great potential for the development of small and medium business. The chamber is constantly working on improving infrastructure for small and medium business, he said. During the briefing, Mazhitov also reported that the Public Service Centre had been established this year for rendering assistance to emerging entrepreneurs. “It renders all kinds of services to businesspeople and works as a one-stop shop,” he added. About 1,100 entrepreneurs applied there for help in the first six months of this year.

One of Kazakhstan’s major industrial projects in 2014 is a chemical plant producing reagents for gold producing enterprises in the Zhambyl region. The plant, which was demonstrated on July 2 before a governmental report to the President of Kazakhstan, has cost about 13 billion tenge (US\$70.8 million) and will create almost 500 jobs. A total of 41 projects costing 597 billion tenge (US\$3.25 billion) and providing for the creation of 8,000 jobs have been implemented within the Industrialisation Map in the Zhambyl region since the launch of the programme. Seven innovative, high-level processing, high labour-productivity projects amounting to 25.4 billion tenge (US\$138.4 million) are currently being implemented. They will help create 1,200 jobs. Special attention is paid to supporting Kazakh manufacturers. Twenty-two projects of the Industrialisation Map have received state support through the Business Road Map 2020 Programme. Along with such popular spheres as construction and agriculture, projects are also being implemented in the mining and metallurgical spheres, chemical and light industry, energy, pharmaceuticals and other sectors.

The companies of the East Kazakhstan region produce one quarter of all innovative products in the country. Sixty-one projects in the region with a total investment of 685.2 billion tenge (US\$3.73 billion) are part of the Industrialisation Map. The implementation of these projects is creating 25,300 jobs. The region produces significant energy, but has an electricity deficit of about 2 billion kilowatt hours. To make up that deficit, 13 small wind and hydropower generating stations are expected to be implemented soon. The total cost of these projects is about \$200 million. Kazatomprom is implementing a project to build the country’s first solar battery production complex, with a capacity of 70 megawatts per year. The total cost of the project is \$160 million. Raimbek Vostok Agro, which employs 250 people, successfully implemented a project worth 365 million tenge (US\$1.99 million) to produce packaging materials for dairy products. The region continues to implement such state programmes as the Business Road Map 2020 Programme, the Productivity, the Employment Road Map and the Exporter. Fourteen projects totalling 3.1 billion tenge (US\$16.89 million) have been implemented to develop infrastructure the region lacked. In 2014, five applications for 442.5 million tenge (US\$2.4 million) have already been approved and 19 financial grants amounting to 55 million tenge (US\$299,679) have already been extended to emerging entrepreneurs.

## Nazarbayev Visits Aktobe, East Kazakhstan Regions, Launches a KazChrome Plant

By Dmitry Lee

ASTANA – President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev visited the Aktobe and East Kazakhstan regions on June 23-24 touring and launching a number of industrial and social facilities and meeting with members of the public and local entrepreneurs.

In Aktobe, the head of state highlighted the region’s fast-paced development.

“In the past three years, domestic regional product increased by 1.5 times, reaching 1.8 billion tenge (US\$9.8 million), and industrial production increased by 1.4 times. Seventy-eight construction sites worth 577 billion tenge (US\$3.14 billion) in total were commissioned during the industrialisation programme. Revenue into the budget of the region increased by 1.5 times,” Nazarbayev noted.

The President also stressed that along with economic development, much attention is being paid to social development, which is very important for the population in the area.

“Thirty-one schools were opened [in the region,] along with 144 kindergartens, [so] the region is 85 percent covered by preschool institutions. The state supports healthcare, and over a span of 10 years, life expectancy in the region has increased by six years. This is the main component of all our work,” Nazarbayev said.

The President noted that the new Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) will boost the region’s opportunities. The Aktobe region shares a long border with the EEU neighbour, Russia.

Nazarbayev also addressed a number of problems in the socio-economic development of the region. In particular, he pointed to the lack of dynamic processing industries when compared with



President Nursultan Nazarbayev (c), on a visit to the East Kazakhstan region, launched a KazChrome plant.

mining industry facilities. Several facilities that were built through the industrial programme are idle or running at a reduced capacity.

“Over the past three years, the region imported \$800 million worth of food [products.] This year alone, imported meat and dairy products totalled \$94 million. It is necessary to develop your own capacity to form food reserves around Aktobe,” Nazarbayev stressed.

The President also visited Daru Hospital, the Dostyk swimming pool complex and the construction site of the new Nur Aktobe condominium complex.

He also launched the new ferroalloy plant by the KazChrome company, which is part of the ENRC group of companies. The design capacity of the new plant amounts to 440,000 tons of high-carbon ferro-chrome per year. It is expected to produce 226,500 tons of the product by the end of this year. The project, worth \$843 million, is expected to produce the first metal in its furnace next month. The plant employs more than 500 workers.

The President’s next stop was Ust-Kamenogorsk in East Kazakhstan. He got acquainted with the industrial and innovative de-

velopment of the region, visiting a manufacturing equipment plant that produces processing equipment and electric filters designed to purify exhaust gases. The products are used in thermal power plants, construction enterprises and the metallurgical industry. The percentage of particulate abatement and dust filtering of the plant’s products reaches 99.7 percent.

The President stressed that the region’s dynamically developing sector of small and medium-sized businesses is a priority for the whole country.

“The volume of products manu-

factured by small and medium enterprises has increased by two and a half times. These enterprises provide jobs for a third of all workers. This is important because large enterprises provide the main income for the economy, but they are not able to provide all the jobs needed. Small business is vital in this role,” the President said.

“The average life expectancy in the East Kazakhstan region has reached almost 70 years; the birth rate has increased by 41 percent. This indicates that the standard of living is rising and healthcare is working properly for the people,” he added.

## Kazakhstan Works to Balance Public-Private Partnerships

By Fatima Kurmanova

A lack of understanding is fueling skepticism concerning cooperation between the public and private sectors in provincial Kazakhstan. For example, few businessmen know that such cooperation allows them to see strong returns on investments, remake exploitation costs and share risk and responsibility with the state. It is deputy chairwoman of the Kazakhstan Public-Private Partnership Dana Yeshimova’s job to answer questions about the PPP.

This lack of understanding and the resulting skepticism is not only found in the regions, but also in major urban centres as well. Consequently, it is necessary to promote knowledge about the PPP among the population similar to how it was done with the public procurement institute.

I would like to note that both entrepreneurs and state agencies must understand the project equally and plan their actions step by step. When one side has doubts, the feasibility of even a small project becomes questionable.

Secondly, it’s better to begin with small projects that are innovative and well planned out. Perhaps through trial and error and with successes and opportunity, entrepreneurs will come to favour long term business doings.

Third, the PPP will become attractive to domestic entrepreneurs under two conditions. The first is that it grants them building rights and the second is that it is to bear responsibility for its operations (the mechanism of traditional procurements.) Otherwise, we will again have poorly built hospitals, schools and kindergartens as well as unscrupulous developers. The PPP project needs management

throughout its life cycle: construction (reconstruction) operation and management.

Small scale PPP projects include kindergartens, clinics, playgrounds and the like. Projects are opportunities for domestic entrepreneurs or investors to work with the state. PPP projects are business projects for the owners of private businesses and are investment projects for the state.

Public-private partnerships are part of a format that allows participants to join forces, for example, by creating a consortium and using the resources of construction companies, firms with experience in exploitation and management or in providing services (healthcare, education, etc.)

Social protection such as healthcare, secondary education, preschool education and training, housing, public utilities and transport projects are more appropriate for regions outside of the city centres. No less important are business ideas for innovative projects in infrastructure.

For those who wish to become a co-owner of a business, they should apply to regional PPP centers or subordinate organizations of local authorities who are assigned support functions on PPP projects. Local projects worth 7.5 billion tenge (US\$41 million) will be coordinated and examined by local executive bodies. At the same time, PPP Centres are ready to provide methodological and practical assistance to investors in implementing local PPP projects in the suburbs and rural regions. The PPP is regulated by the Law on Concessions.

The Damu Fund and second tier banks in turn will help attract small scale lending.

**KAZAKHSTAN UNITED FOR GLOBAL SECURITY**

The Republic of Kazakhstan is seeking a seat on the United Nations Security Council as a non-permanent member for 2017-2018. Our priorities within the United Nations reflect four primary issues facing the world today: Food Security, Water Security, Energy Security and Nuclear Security.

In the 22 years since our independence, Kazakhstan has worked tirelessly to address these issues in our own country and beyond. Among many other initiatives and achievements, Kazakhstan is currently:

- ▶ ONE OF THE WORLD’S LARGEST GRAIN PRODUCERS AND WHEAT EXPORTERS. WE HAVE DISTRIBUTED WHEAT AND FOOD TO NATIONS IN NEED.
- ▶ A CONSTRUCTIVE INNOVATOR IN WATER SECURITY COOPERATION AND TECHNOLOGIES. WE HAVE MADE GREAT STRIDES IN THE RESTORATION OF THE ARAL SEA.
- ▶ AN ACTIVE SUPPORTER OF DEVELOPING A GREEN ECONOMY AND ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCES THROUGH OUR GREEN BRIDGE INITIATIVE AND AS HOSTS OF EXPO 2017, THEME OF WHICH IS “FUTURE ENERGY”.
- ▶ A GLOBAL LEADER IN NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION, DISARMAMENT AND SECURITY. AN INITIATOR OF ADOPTING A UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON A NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE WORLD AND A SPONSOR OF THE ATOM PROJECT, A WORLDWIDE PETITION CAMPAIGN TO PERMANENTLY END NUCLEAR WEAPONS TESTING.

These issues are complex and interdependent. They require global cooperation and relationship building. Kazakhstan has come a long way in a short time because we know that cooperation is the key to success. We are dedicated to knowledge and resource sharing in order to help make the world a better, more secure place for its citizens.

The achievement and maintenance of international peace and global security are paramount to the success of the planet and its people. In Kazakhstan, we are ready to do our part to ensure that success as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council.

# EDITORIAL & OPINIONS

WEDNESDAY, JULY 16, 2014

## Visa-Free Travel to Draw Tourism, Investment

Citizens of 10 countries that have either invested the most or have the potential to invest the most in Kazakhstan have been granted visa-free travel to the country in a step widely seen as part of a series of measures designed to maintain the Kazakh economy's competitive edge in a globalising world. It is the right move, and, despite the obvious questions it raises about potential challenges to national security or the loss of visa-generated revenue, the visa-free regime should and probably will get extended and expanded after its one-year trial.

The change, which came into force for travel from July 15, 2014, means all citizens of the United Kingdom, the United States, Germany, France, Italy, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Malaysia, the Netherlands, South Korea and Japan can enter, exit and transit through Kazakhstan without a visa for visits of up to 15 calendar days at a time. There are no limits on the number of such visits per year.

President Nursultan Nazarbayev announced the change at a sitting of the Foreign Investors' Council on June 12 as part of a series of initiatives, including tax incentives, to encourage foreign investment and tourism in the country. The change also comes only a few weeks after Kazakhstan joined with Russia and Belarus in creating a Eurasian Economic Union, and as such is seen as another step by Astana to remain attractive to foreign investors in the newly created unified market of 170 million people.

Kazakhstan's openness to foreign investment has helped the country become one of the world's 50 biggest economies. President Nazarbayev has set a goal for his country to build on its strong growth to join the ranks of the top 30 global economies by 2050.

Tourism is expected to play a key part in achieving this ambition. Kazakhstan, the world's ninth largest country, contains a wide variety of national parks and stunning landscapes from high mountains to deserts.

Astana, the new capital city, has attracted some of the world's leading architects to create a remarkable cityscape, while Almaty, the country's largest city and erstwhile capital, is expected to be shortlisted to host the 2022 Winter Olympics.

Kazakh Foreign Minister Erlan Idrissov said, "By making it easier to visit Kazakhstan, more people will have the chance to discover Kazakhstan's beauty and diversity. It is a country full of opportunities for both business and tourism."

The visa-free programme, which will initially run for one year, may be expanded in 2015 to include more countries. It follows several other measures in easing the hassle for foreign visitors as well as a simplified visa-issuing regime for citizens of almost 50 countries.

"One of our key objectives is creating a favourable visa policy," Rapiil Zhoshybayev, Kazakhstan's first deputy foreign minister and the national commissioner for EXPO 2017, told a media briefing on July 10. "It is necessary for the full realisation of the tourism potential of the country and attracting foreign investment. You can achieve this by extending the visa-free space, improving visa and migration policy, facilitating mutual trips of citizens. In this direction, we have been taking comprehensive measures on an ongoing basis. In particular, in February 2004, Kazakhstan unilaterally introduced a simplified procedure for issuing visas to citizens of 28 EU member states. In 2012, this list has grown to 48 politically stable and economically developed countries."

Currently, Kazakhstan is one of the leaders in terms of foreign direct investment (FDI): it attracted \$183.9 billion in FDI. "The maximal use of the economic potential of the state without this factor is not seen as possible and providing a convenient visa regime for foreign investors is one of the important steps in this direction," Zhoshybayev explained.

"This [new] visa-free regime applies to all citizens of these countries who want to visit our country on a short visit for tourism or for private business; to stay with relatives, friends and acquaintances; get acquainted with the culture of Kazakhstan; to visit historical and natural attractions," he added. "This, in turn, will allow Kazakhstan to actively develop tourism. It will benefit the development of small and medium business, create jobs and replenish the state budget."

According to officials, the abolition of visa formalities, aimed at increasing the number of foreign investors, businesspeople and tourists visiting the country, will more than offset the expected loss of \$4 million generated by such formalities annually.

Furthermore, people who can show their potential in investing and find local partners will also be able to obtain business and investors' visas, allowing them longer stays and visits.

In introducing the new measures, Kazakhstan expects reciprocity from its foreign partners.

"I would like to note that this is done not only with visiting foreign nationals in mind, but also on a parity basis, to facilitate visas processes for our citizens travelling abroad," Zhoshybayev told the media. Idrissov frequently mentions Astana's desired goal of simplifying visa regimes for its citizens, especially with the Schengen states. Since last year, Kazakhstan and the United States have introduced five-year visas, while Kazakhstan has signed visa-free travel agreements with South Korea, Brazil, Argentina, Ecuador and other countries.

It is only natural for Kazakhstan, a growing country posing no threat in terms of emigration flows, to expect reciprocity.

## Mining and Metallurgy Seen As Actively Growing

By Doszhan Nurgaliev

The mining metallurgical complex (MMC) is one of the key sectors of the economy, the development of which directly affects the level of GDP growth. First Vice-Minister of Industry and New Technologies Albert Rau recently discussed the achievements and prospects of development of this industrial sector.

**What are the overall results of the mining and metallurgical industry of Kazakhstan since the start of the State Programme of Accelerated Industrial and Innovative Development (SPAIID)? How many projects have been implemented?**

The mining and metallurgical complex remains one of the key areas of the economy and an attractive investment target. MMC development has a pronounced social character – this sector employs more than 300,000 people, which makes it one of the most intensive industries in terms of employment. Alongside that, it is a centre of significant investments, including in the framework of SPAIID projects.

As for overall performance, the production volume of metal industries grew from 1,569.9 billion tenge (US\$8.486 billion) in 2010 to 1,772.1 billion tenge in 2013 (US\$9.579 billion); the volume of ore mining increased from 651.2 billion tenge (US\$3.5 billion) in 2010 to 786.2 billion tenge (US\$4.2 billion) in 2013; production of final metal products increased by 2014 from 95.9 billion tenge (US\$522.5 million) to 169.9 billion tenge (US\$925.7 million), which has been achieved largely due to the expansion of production and commissioning of new enterprises within the first five-year SPAIID.

The volume of exports of steel products grew by the end of 2013 from \$8.9 billion to \$13.5 billion; labour productivity in the steel industry has increased by 63.7 percent since 2008.

In general, due to the implementation of the programme for the de-



Albert Rau

velopment of the mining industry of Kazakhstan for 2010-2014 and the launch of projects included in the Industrialisation Map, MMC demonstrates stable growth of economic indicators. It's worth noting that the programme also envisaged the development of energy and transport infrastructure of MMC, training of personnel and a range of other measures aimed at improving the technical regulations, creation of conditions for technological upgrading of enterprises and attracting investments in the sector.

About 50 projects were launched within the Industrialisation Map in the period of 2010-2013 and currently another 33 projects are under implementation.

As a result of this work the enterprises of the industry have mastered production of 106 new commodity items that were not previously produced in Kazakhstan, among which are naval metal constructions, turbine overpasses, composite metal pipes, cables, metal plumbing, various fittings and others. Overall, the contribution of industrial projects of MMC to the manufacturing industry was 7.5 percent; to the gross added value of the industry, 2.6 percent and to the national GDP, 0.9 percent.

**What is the proportion of MMC projects in the total number of industrial projects?**

Within the framework of the Industrialisation Map, 83 projects totaling 1.9 trillion tenge (US\$10.3 billion) and providing for the creation of more than 30,000 jobs are being implemented and as for proportion, it is about 8.95 percent of the total number of the Industrialisation Map's projects.

**Which of the implemented projects can be called "innovative" in the full sense of the word?**

It should be noted that the specificity of each sector assumes its own format. In MMC it is associated with deep processing levels and expansion of product lines. That's why among such projects is the production of baked anodes and primary aluminum by the Kazakhstan electrolysis plant, manufacturing of titanium ingots and alloys in Ust-Kamenogorsk (at the Titanium Magnesium Plant) and a recently-launched technological production line of copper cathode in the project of new metallurgy of Kazzinc.

Meanwhile, the head of state also highlighted among the strategically-important tasks of the current period the development of rare earth industry and rare metals. In this connection I'd like to note the joint venture on the production of rare earth compounds in Stepnogorsk established by the National Company Kazatomprom with the Japanese company Sumitomo. This is high-tech production, which creates preconditions for the formation of the industry's full-cycle production of rare-earth group.

**The President announced the creation of zones of small and medium metal processing enterprises around large companies – subsoil users. How is the idea implemented?**

In the industrial policy of the country, the emphasis is on the production of base metals and development of SME zones, or tonnage high-added value productions, which will be con-

centrated around the plants producing base metals. Today, the possibility of creating such sub-zones is studied in several industries of metallurgy, including the territory of JSC ArcelorMittal Temirtau and Kazakhstan Electrolysis Plant in the Pavlodar region.

**What is done by the government to support MMC given the example of neighbouring Russia, to minimise the impact of crisis on the sector?**

For these purposes, by the President's decree a Council for MMC, geology and subsoil use was established under the President. The Ministry of Industry and New Technologies is interacting with leading enterprises of the industry on their current activities and modernisation plans. Special attention is also paid to such issues as finance, taxation, customs, transport, logistics, rail fares, environment, labour relations and subsoil use.

**The volume of exports of steel products grew by the end of 2013 from \$8.9 billion to \$13.5 billion; labour productivity in the steel industry has increased by 63.7 percent since 2008.**

This year a number of big companies presented their progress reports on the results of the first quarter and plans for the future, including such enterprises as JSC ArcelorMittal Temirtau, Kazakhmys Corporation, Kazzinc, ENRC, KSP Steel LLP, JSC Sat & Company and Ust-Kamenogorsk Titanium Magnesium Plant.

## Kazakhstan stands tall in Washington

By C. Naseer Ahmad

The moment one entered the Concert Hall at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, on July 3, 2014, it felt that something magical was going to happen. And, it did happen with the "Magic Songs of the Eternal Steppe" – a spectacular programme sponsored by the Kazakh American Association.

This beautiful programme set the stage for the US Independence Day festivities that were to follow in Washington the next day. The magnificent white hats and the colourful costumes of the artists blended so well with the music. Sitting next to scholars, scientists and educators, one felt the amazing chemistry that flowed from the stage and absorbed the massive concert hall. The music and the melodies had a mesmerizing effect on the audience.

The "Magic Songs of the Eternal Steppe" bring back wonderful memories from past events in the minds of many Washingtonians. Jerome Barry, Founder of the Embassy Series, remembers: "We have worked with Kazakhstan a number of times when we brought artists in from Astana – we had two wonderful programmes. In addition, we had an afternoon with sixty children from DC Public Schools participating in an afternoon at the Embassy, where the former ambassador addressed the students."

From website of the United Nations Association National Capital Area, Washington, DC, one finds some interesting remarks by Asani Parks, a sixth grader from Leckie Elementary, who remarked, "I liked the music because it was relaxing and calming. I had never heard anything like it before. I want to listen to more."

I looked around to my left and right. There were no children from



the Leckie Elementary School. But, the esteemed fellow Embassy Series board members were all children of Abraham. And, we were perhaps more excited that the sixth graders. To my left was Dr. Ozden Ochoa, Professor of Mechanical Engineering at Texas A&M and to my right was Dr. Anne Howard-Tristani, a wonderful niece of former US Vice-President Hubert Humphrey – a leading Government Relations, International Public Affairs and Higher Education executive.

Speaking of U.S. Vice Presidents, the Kazakhstan Embassy in Washington was home to Vice President James Sherman – whose family line connects to the famous General William Tecumseh Sherman. From his grave, the late Vice-President must be smiling now as the Kazakhstan Embassy kept the interior design without any change – also because it is a heritage building.

Each visitor receives a warm welcome – by the red carpet spread by Kazakh Ambassadors like Erlan Idrissov and Kairat Umarov and the entire staff. Each visit is very pleasing to the eyes especially to view the Kazakh artwork, jewelry, statues, and cultural attire that are on display inside, including a room designed to resemble the interior of a traditional Kazakh yurt, or nomadic tent.

The welcome mat is extended not by the diplomatic staff alone but also by Kazakh intellectuals like Dr. Saule Sataya – who as a visiting Fulbright Scholar took pains to explain the Kazakh history and culture.

And, along the memory lane, in November 2012, the Grand Mufti of Kazakhstan, Sheikh Abdsattar Haji Derbisali, charmed audiences at the Rumi Forum and the Kazakhstan Embassy in Washington. Speaking in a soft voice – without any finger waving or angry rhetoric – he appeared to embody the faith he presented through his book "Islam – Religion of Peace and Creation." With simple words and a smiling face, the Grand Mufti blended the rich cultural history of Kazakhstan – about 70% of population being Muslim – with Islam.

Here in Washington, Kazakh diplomats are often part of the intellectual discourse. For instance, at the Johns Hopkins School of International Studies seminar on World Trade Organization and Central Asian States, Kazakhstan's Ambassador Kairat Umarov recalled his country's record of economic progress and the underlying reasons: geographic location, openness to trade, transparency and stability. He noted that despite being the largest landlocked country in the world, Kazakhstan had more than \$160 billion in foreign direct investment (FDI) to date – accounting for nearly 80 percent of all FDI to Central Asia. He observed, "Kazakhstan is committed to creating and maintaining the best investment climate in our region," and added that his countrymen "would like to see Kazakhstan as a trade and logistics hub, just as it was during the [era of] the Great Silk Road."

In December 2012, Karipbek Kuyukov's beautiful paintings – a work of love with his mouth and feet

– were on display in the Rotunda of the Carnegie Institution for Science, Washington, DC. As the honorary ambassador for the ATOM (Abolish Testing Our Mission) Project, Kuyukov has been quoted as saying: "In my paintings, I try to express (what) the nuclear weapons bring. ... I was born in the nuclear test site zone. I was born without arms, but I have the power and strength to call on the world to stop the development of nuclear weapons programs." His painting "A Mother's Pain" just a few feet from the podium conveyed a more powerful message than all the words spoken that night. Few people could walk away unmoved.

A take away from a Kazakh National Day celebration held in December 2012 at the historic Willard Intercontinental Hotel in downtown Washington was the "The Stories of the Great Steppe" – an anthology of modern Kazakh literature by Dr. Rafis Abazov, Columbia University. In the foreword Erlan Idrissov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, wrote: "The concept of curiosity and love for exploring other cultures is deeply rooted in Kazakh society; at the same time we love to share our culture."

Through the stunning performance of the Kazakh artists at the Kennedy Center in Washington and the sincere remarks of Vice-Minister of Culture of Kazakhstan Askar Buribayev and U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Nisha Desai Biswal, one can see that both for America and Kazakhstan better days lie ahead.

**The author is a member of the Boards of the Embassy Series and Interfaith Voices, a National Public Radio programme, and is a member of the National Press Club in Washington, DC.**

THE ASTANA TIMES

Editor-in-Chief: Roman Vassilenko  
Managing Editor: Tatiana Kostina  
18a Pobeda Avenue Astana, 010000  
Telephone/Facsimile: +7 7172 32 17 29  
Distribution in Astana: +7 7172 44 51 53

Publisher: Svezhaya Pressa LLP  
News and Editorial: +7 701 575 1055  
Advertising: +7 727 252 08 82  
E-mail: info@astanatimes.com  
KazPost Subscription index: 64572

Advertiser bears responsibility for the content of advertisements. The newspaper does not answer the readers' letters, does not mail them, does not consider copies the size of over 5 printed pages, does not review and does not return the materials not ordered by the newspaper. Guest opinions do not necessarily reflect the newspaper's opinion. For reprinting, permissions must be sought and obtained first from The Astana Times, and reference must be made to "The Astana Times".  
The Astana Times is printed at "Media Holding "ERNUR" LLP, 30 Sileti Street, Astana.

The Astana Times is published since November 2010. The Astana Times is re-registered by the Ministry of Communications and Information of the Republic of Kazakhstan under the registration No. 14037-G of 20 December 2013.  
The newspaper is typed and made into pages at the computer centre of "Kazakhstanskaya Pravda". Published biweekly, the size of 8 pages.

ORDER: 634

PRINT RUN: 6,000

# OPINIONS

WEDNESDAY, JULY 16, 2014

## Kazakhstan, UNDP Work on Developing Country's Aid Agency

By Yulia Mager

Kazakhstan has been a member of the United Nations for more than 22 years, and almost just as long the country has been cooperating with numerous UN agencies, and almost just as long the country has been cooperating with numerous UN agencies. In an interview with The Astana Times, Stephen Tull, UN Resident Coordinator and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Resident Representative in Kazakhstan, spoke about the history of this cooperation and its future, including in light of the upcoming creation of a development aid agency in Kazakhstan known as KazAID.

**From your perspective, what was really successful in the cooperation in recent years between Kazakhstan and the UNDP?**

It's not just UNDP. It's the whole UN system that are very good friends of Kazakhstan. So, from the very beginning of independence, Kazakhstan has shown great value and respect to the UN system and we immediately in the first year of independence signed a basic agreement between the UN and Kazakhstan to establish the UN office in Kazakhstan. Over these 21 years, momentum has been building up from 19 UN agencies in Kazakhstan, among them is UNDP. As you saw from the UNDP 20-year archive report, there are many areas of cooperation. This reflects partly the rapid change and transformation Kazakhstan has been going through. Not only that change was happening, but the government of Kazakhstan welcomed international support to change policies. It is not every country that is so open to the international community providing expert assistance. Over these 20 years, from project to project and from meeting to meeting, we've been building the partnership from success to success and learning lessons from what didn't work. One of the big secrets of success is the positive approach of the government of Kazakhstan. The leadership of Kazakhstan recognised since the time of independence, and I think over the years how much change was needed to get the country where it wanted to be in the future. Now, I'm almost four years in Kazakhstan and I find the government very progressive and by that I mean really always looking to how to improve government and society for the future. That's very important. Without the political will of the government, the UN can't help.

There are some particular areas there we've been successful so far. One is economic development. Obviously, it's fueled by natural resources, such as oil and gas and coal. But the economic growth and the ability of Kazakhstan to attract investors and the interest of the business community makes it a very dynamic economy. The second area is in social reforms and there the government also took very seriously the challenge of the post-communist transition of its social system. So that, for example, in welfare systems and social protection and pension policy, the government made very big moves towards a more modern system. A third area is in the environment. Kazakhstan has still a very basic system of environmental protection, but it's moving toward the kind of system it should have. So the government has done a



Stephen Tull

lot to create protected nature areas and to promote biodiversity. It has begun to work in the area of ecotourism and to make environmental protection economically interesting to local populations. Of course, now it has established a very interesting greening strategy. So that says that it's aware that it needs to go from being what we call a brown economy to being a green economy in order to be a modern successful country. And then a fourth area, if I can also say, Kazakhstan in these twenty years wasn't only looking inside, but also looking outside. This might have started within the context of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). So now becoming a different modern development of maintaining partnerships with the former Soviet countries under the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU). But then also, the Nevada-Semipalatinsk movement and the decision to take a leading role in eliminating nuclear weapons is an excellent international initiative. But also I mean generally from the very first days of Kazakhstan independence, I know from the permanent representatives to the UN, that they put many initiatives on the table in the UN General Assembly and in New York. Good ideas for international cooperation came from Kazakhstan. And that's very important. This international perspective is very important for our cooperation because Kazakhstan clearly values regional and international multilateral cooperation.

**The successes of the country were mentioned in the report. From what you just said, how could it affect the future partnership of Kazakhstan with the UN organisations?**

Let's just talk about some of the future development challenges. One thing that has been getting a lot of attention not only in Kazakhstan is the growing inequality. Income inequality and the different kinds of lifestyle that people, for example, living in the city have versus someone in a very rural area. And then modernisation generally, including modernisation of the cities. With the cities developing so fast, how do you make sure that those cities are growing into ideal cities for the future? The environmental challenges, especially how to achieve the goals set out in Kazakhstan 2050 in terms of environment and energy are very big challenges. Water and energy security, this is more of an issue not only just in Kazakhstan, but in the whole region of Central Asia. One thing I want to really emphasise is that you need to also have known that Kazakhstan has made great progress in economic development and social policies, but it has a lot more to do in terms of political develop-

ment. President Nursultan Nazarbayev talks about, with Kazakhstan 2050, the need to focus more on political liberalisation. A few weeks ago at the Astana Economic Forum (AEF), he said Kazakhstan needs to invest in people, infrastructure and entrepreneurship. The President is also talking lately about human development and building human capital. And this is all exactly right. This is what I call development of the civil society. The recent study which Nazarbayev University released on Kazakhstan 2050 is a very good study of the challenges for the future, and one thing that they conclude is that there is a big need for institutionalising change now. There's been a lot done for laws and institutions for the economic system. But it's the time now, with all the change that Kazakhstan is going through, you need more institutionalisation of civil rights and the rule of law. Those are some of the main challenges right now. I think going ahead UNDP and the other agencies are working really focused on this kind of modernisation of the whole society.

**Foreign Minister Erlan Idrisov has also talked about the creation of KazAID.**

I've been working especially with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) since 2011 on that. And my UNDP office, as well as the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, are working closely with the MFA on this. There are many, many countries interested in seeing Kazakhstan develop KazAID.

Kazakhstan, because of its wealth, is able to provide assistance to other countries and I think it's a very important contribution to the foreign policy of Kazakhstan because providing assistance gives the country more prosperous neighbours, which is good. So that the neighbouring countries are more prosperous and more stable, but then also the international community will give more attention to Kazakhstan when it sees it acting across its borders to help others. So already many countries and many of us in the UN see Kazakhstan as a strategically important country in this part of the world. And we think that KazAID is a way for Kazakhstan to continue to play that strategically important role.

There're a few areas where I'm encouraging the government to go ahead and start doing projects. For example, the greening strategy. The environmental change that Kazakhstan is doing inside, including hosting EXPO 2017. This gives Kazakhstan resources and knowledge to be able to share with its neighbours in Central Asia. And that's the idea of the famous green bridge, really. Another area is in what we call disaster risk reduction. And that's just to say that Central and South Asia have earthquakes, floods, avalanches and other disasters on a regular basis. And the international community, including the UN, will come and help when a catastrophe happens. But the first help comes from the people in that place and the neighbouring countries. So the work that Kazakhstan is already doing to set up a disaster centre in Almaty and also within the Istanbul process for supporting Afghanistan taking a leadership role in this area of disaster preparedness, these actions position Kazakhstan to, in the future, be one of the leading pro-

viders of assistance in Central and South Asia. In fact, Kazakhstan already has been one of the leading countries giving assistance in Central Asia and Afghanistan over the last eight years. It's given over \$60 million in humanitarian assistance and then with current development projects and trade activities, it's much higher. So the foreign policy and the KazAID idea is to increase the amount of aid, but also to do it in a more systematic way so that it is most effective. And so that people know that Kazakhstan is providing this assistance. And so it's the international community that needs to know and the people of Kazakhstan need to know what the government is doing to help other people.

**Are there any similar agencies in the region? Russia has Ross-Sotrudnichestvo. Japan has its own agency. Can you recall any others?**

The closest one, besides the Russian Federation, is Azerbaijan, which is also just beginning to develop its aid agency. So they're in the same sort of position as Kazakhstan. Turkey, which isn't too far, has a very strong tradition and agency called TIKA. But those are really it. The other countries from Central Asia are not really in a position to offer the kind of assistance to the neighbours that Kazakhstan is.

**Perhaps that makes the initiative of Kazakhstan more relevant and actual?**

Yes, it's exactly why from the UN and from the international community, we strongly support Kazakhstan doing this.

**What must the country do before creating such an agency?**

I know that the government and parliament are working on the legislation to set up KazAID. That's very important just so that there's a legal basis for it. But then there's only a few people working on KazAID within the government and they're kind of doing it temporarily. So as soon as possible, the government needs to set up an aid agency, whether they call it KazAID or something else, but a team of people who are going to be the professional core for KazAID. There are some people in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs who know and understand very well how the aid system works internationally. But to do the work, they need more people around them, a permanent office, a bigger team. And then also, as I said, Kazakhstan really needs to start what we call its branding. It needs to start doing assistance activities and say this is KazAID. So that for example, the assistance going from Kazakhstan today should be really advertised. Many countries and the European Union, for example, make sure to always advertise that this is assistance from Kazakhstan or from the EU or from France or from the USA. So it's from the people of Kazakhstan, not from the Ministry of Education or the Ministry of Emergencies but from the people of Kazakhstan.

Then another area that I mentioned before: I think it's the right time for journalists to help tell the people of Kazakhstan about this and why it's important. People of Kazakhstan are of course proud anytime that Kazakhstan is getting positive attention from the international community. So think about it if you go to the beach in Turkey

this summer, and you meet there someone from Tajikistan and that person says in conversation, "Oh, you know my village received assistance in rebuilding a school from Kazakhstan." It makes you proud. So I think the people of Kazakhstan want to and need to know this kind of assistance that they're providing to others. And, finally, of course, it's important for the reputation of Kazakhstan in the UN. And when, for example, Kazakhstan is seeking the UN Security Council seat in 2017-2018, this will show that it's a very good international partner.

**Is there any status for these kinds of organisations?**

It represents the country. So within the UN system, we see this as Kazakhstan. And so in many different UN policy setting situations, Kazakhstan has a voice to decide what the international policies will be. And then one possibility for KazAID, which isn't decided yet, but a possibility, is to establish a part of KazAID that will actually go as an NGO and do work on the ground. Let me explain. It could be that the government and KazAID simply give money to other NGOs or UN agencies do work in Afghanistan. So, if there is a project in Afghanistan, building a hospital, Kazakhstan could give money to a UN agency or international NGO to do that project in Afghanistan. Or maybe the government will set up a part of KazAID that does the work itself in Afghanistan. So it's kind of like an NGO within the government. This is what TIKA is, or the Japanese aid agency, or USAID, the German Aid Agency GTZ. They have their own people on the ground to build a school. And if Kazakhstan does that, then those workers will be given certain rights and privileges because they're humanitarian or development assistance workers in another country. So they'll have certain privileges and be protected by the international community when working.

**This is what I believe is done on a bilateral level. What could an organisation like KazAID do on a global scale?**

Yes, absolutely and that's the best way. Almost all of the assistance given by Kazakhstan, \$60 million, is bilateral. The important thing for Kazakhstan is to work more in the multilateral system. So it can contribute to UN agencies for international assistance work. It can contribute to international NGOs to do work in another country. And I think one of the things we start with KazAID is what we call triangular projects. For example, we've been talking about doing something in Afghanistan. So it's the government of Kazakhstan, the government of Afghanistan, plus UNDP can be the partner here and in Afghanistan to make it all work. That's becoming much more of a popular way to do projects.

**Are there any standards according to which states give foreign aid?**

It's entirely up to each country. The thing is what countries do when they compare themselves with others. Kazakhstan a few years ago, during this period in 2009-11, was maybe in the top five contributors of assistance in Central Asia. Some countries are very proud, like the European Union, for example, to be the number one on giving humanitarian or development assistance to a country or Africa or globally. And

there are even clubs of donors. With time, Kazakhstan will have to decide how much money it wants to invest and where it wants to be in a list of overall donors. So the UN and Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) always keep track of which countries are the donors. And so Kazakhstan wants to always be at least on that list somewhere. And what is important is, if it is not all the assistance but humanitarian assistance, you see it goes up and then it goes down. KazAID has to help it grow. Because if Kazakhstan was a donor five years ago, not giving any assistance to its neighbouring countries, nobody cares anymore.

**Can a donor country be a recipient at the same time?**

Yes, there's different ways for Kazakhstan to continue to receive assistance. But you see Kazakhstan doesn't need grants from many other countries, it doesn't need the money. It still wants to have access to major loans, for example, from the World Bank or Asian Development Bank. But individual countries, the European Union and the UN will not be able to give very much money to Kazakhstan. That's okay because Kazakhstan doesn't need our money. Our partnership is that we provide our expertise and advice and we help build the networks with other countries and with experts.

**Is there anything more KazAID could do, which will not be just within the humanitarian assistance? And how KazAID could be different from the others?**

That's really not just the humanitarian assistance. It's hard today to differentiate the humanitarian and development assistance. So, if you are building a hospital in Afghanistan, is it humanitarian or development? It's both. But the main thing is there are many areas where Kazakhstan right now can help with development assistance. I'll give an example: disaster preparedness. Before there is an emergency you're not coming in to help victims, you're building institutions to help victims. Another area is the environmental projects, energy efficiency or renewable energy projects. So the minister of environment describes the green bridge this way: that Kazakhstan is going to expand the use of renewable energy like solar and wind power. It is building networks for supplies from Europe or China of equipment and giving experts the opportunity to come to teach Kazakhstan how to do this. And even developing its own green jobs here, producing equipment and experts in Kazakhstan. So, without the expertise, it's easier under the green bridge to go to Tajikistan or Kyrgyzstan and say, "One of you benefits from what we have already learned and what we already did." It's because Kazakhstan is going through many changes itself that it is in a great position to help other countries to go through these changes. We also have this civil service hub – an "international hub for civil service" – based here in Kazakhstan. It's actually an international hub with different countries, 22 different countries are part of this hub. It shares experiences. What works in one place, might work in another place for civil service reform. Kazakhstan can help share its experience because it has made a very good progress in civil service reform.

## Astana Becomes National, International Sports Centre

By Aitalap Kurgambayev

Astana today is not only the political centre of the country, but also the sports centre of Kazakhstan. The republic, which in a very short historical period made big strides in all areas and set an ambitious goal to join the top thirty most developed nations, has many brands that are famous worldwide. But perhaps the most important of them is our young, beautiful capital.

Astana hosts major summits and forums to solve the most urgent issues of the global economy and politics. And in recent years the young capital has become recognisable as a large sports centre and a venue of continental tournaments and world championships.

According to sociological studies, one in every four residents of Astana is engaged in physical culture and sports. Sports, such as swimming,



boxing, wrestling, football, fitness, athletics and cycling, are especially popular in the capital.

For the last five years the number of individuals regularly engaged in physical exercise and sport in Astana has increased more than two times and now is about 168,230 people.

Unique sports facilities construct-

ed in the capital and an increasing number of national and international competitions confirm the fact that the main city of the republic has become a centre of sports development.

With increasing frequency, representatives of the world sports organisations and federations hold their tournaments in Astana, thereby demonstrating high trust in the country and the city. The capital easily copes with the role of good host of such high-level tournaments as the World Cup stages, licensing competitions and continental and world championships.

Thus, in 2013, a total of 515 sport events were held in Astana, including 102 national tournaments and 37 world-class competitions, and 306 specialised sport events were already held in the first half of 2014.

Contrary to general opinion, in this case the number does not affect

the quality. The capital was one of the first cities in the country to raise its own staff of sports organisers. Today, the Capital club of national sports and mass physical culture is a team of professional managers who are engaged in practically each sport event. Zhiger, created under the municipal administration sport club, helps to organise sports activities for labour collectives of the city.

Actually a good material and technical base is one of the components of victories in elite sports and a necessary condition to increase the number of people involved in amateur sports. The head of state repeatedly touched on the issue of sports development, including the availability of sports facilities for children and adults. The Alau ice palace, Barys indoor ice rink, Sary-Arka cycle track and Astana-Arena stadium not only complement the architectural ensemble of the young

capital, but also present it in a favourable light in the international sports arena.

The number of sports facilities over the past 16 years grew from 76 to 600. Last year alone, 37 public playgrounds in courtyards and school yards were built and more than 100 sports grounds were reconstructed through the account of regional budgets.

In addition, six new facilities in the city are under construction – a universal, multifunctional complex for training Olympic reserve; Kaisar, a sports complex for people with disabilities; a sports complex and a small rowing channel which meet all Olympic international standards; a hockey arena as well as a gym for combat sports. All these sports objects are intended to provide a foundation for future big victories of Kazakhstan athletes.

The capital is one of the regular

suppliers of champion reserve and a favourite one among complex competitions of the republic. For example, a young team of the capital took the second place at the third Youth Games of Kazakhstan.

In sixteen years much has been done for the development of sports thanks to the initiative of the head of state and today we can demonstrate our success. The heritage of the Asian Games, support of sports and physical culture, attention to Kazakhstan athletes – all this played a decisive role in our sports history. Sixteen years ago we set the goal to involve more people in sport and physical culture and to achieve high results in the international sport arena.

**The author is head of the department of tourism and sports of Astana.**

# EURASIA&WORLD

WEDNESDAY, JULY 16, 2014

## Astana, Quito Find More than Politics in Common

By Dmitry Lee

ASTANA – Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan Erlan Idrissov met with his counterpart, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ecuador Ricardo Patiño, who arrived in Astana on his first official visit on July 4.

The sides discussed a wide range of issues in bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation and signed a protocol on political consultations among the two foreign ministries. Ecuador's foreign minister also announced his country's support for Kazakhstan's bid for a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council for 2017-2018.

The meeting had historical value as it was the first official visit of such scope in the history of bilateral relations between the two countries. The Kazakh foreign minister emphasized that Astana considers the Ecuadorian capital city of Quito an important political and economic partner in Latin America. Kazakhstan and Ecuador are bound by common priorities and share similar positions on many international issues, the foreign ministry's press release said.

As Idrissov noted, Kazakhstan is constantly working on visa liberalisation for its citizens. In this context, both sides noted the importance of the early entry into force of the agreement on mutual visa-free travel between the two countries. In September 2013, the countries agreed on a visa-free regime; however, to enforce the agreement, internal state procedures will need to be followed through. Kazakhstan has fulfilled its procedures, while Ecuador is still working on its own.

Ecuador is already the fourth largest trade partner of Kazakhstan in Latin America after Brazil (\$377.1 million), Mexico (\$121.4 million) and Argentina (\$40.1 million). Total trade between Kazakhstan and Ecuador reached \$38.9 million in 2013, which is a 30 per cent growth year on year.

"This is a good indicator, but it is obvious that we have considerable potential for expanding this cooperation," Idrissov said.

An important outcome of the talks was the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan and the Ministry of



Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ecuador Ricardo Patiño (l) and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan Erlan Idrissov had a productive meeting in Astana on July 4.

Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility of Ecuador on ministerial political consultations, which will give an additional impetus to the development of comprehensive cooperation between the two countries.

In an informal Facebook post, Kazakhstan's Foreign Ministry also shared some interesting tidbits from the meeting between Idrissov and Patiño. As it turned out, the Ecuadorian minister "fell in love with Kazakhstan" and hopes that the Kazakhs who visit his country "fall in love with Ecuador." An avid Twitter user, Patiño posted his pictures of Astana online, drawing many complimentary comments from his followers.

The two ministers apparently also noted the major potential for cooperation in trading in agricultural products, such as bananas, roses, shrimp and coffee. Ecuador, one of the world's largest exporters of roses, already ships some to Kazakhstan.

Ecuador supported Kazakhstan's bid to host international specialised exhibition EXPO 2017 and is interested in participating in it.

During his visit, Patiño met with Chairman of the Kazakh Senate Kassym-Zhomart Tokayev, who expressed interest in the enhanced partnership with Ecuador and invited Ecuadorian parliamentarians to visit Kazakhstan's capital. Among other senior officials, the Ecuadorian delegation met with Prime Minister of Kazakhstan Karim Massimov, Minister of Oil and Gas Uzakbai Karabalin and Minister of Environment and Water Resources Nurlan Kapparov.

During the meeting with Karabalin, also attended by Ecuador's

Deputy Minister of Hydrocarbons Jose Icaza, Deputy Minister of Environment Lorena Sanchez, Ambassador of Ecuador to Russia and to Kazakhstan Patricio Chavez and other officials, it was noted that Kazakhstan's industrial sector and Ecuador's agricultural sector complement each other. The two sides agreed to organise trade missions to help boost bilateral trade.

While in Astana, Patiño also visited Nazarbayev University, where he noted that Yachay University in Ecuador had been created along similar ideas and said that promoting education is the only way to create sustained economic and social development.

Diplomatic relations between Kazakhstan and Ecuador were established in January 2012. At the time, then Deputy Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan Kairat Umarov stressed the similarity of the work the two countries had done to consolidate the welfare of their nations and the active efforts of both nations to develop after establishing relations with other countries around the world.

The two countries may have other connections that go back millennia. During a recent festival of ethnic music, The Spirit of Tengri, in Almaty, native American band Yarik Ecuador caused a furore of sorts with sparkling and moving compositions that resonated very well with locals. A scholarly theory exists that proposes that the first people came to the Americas approximately 10,000 – 12,000 years ago from the Altai region – so there is a possibility that native Ecuadoreans and Kazakhs are no-madic relatives.

## Swiss Finance Minister Advances Ties on Visit to Kazakhstan

By Malika Orzagaliyeva

ASTANA – Several meetings were conducted with Kazakh ministers during the recent official visit by the head of the Swiss Federal Department of Finance and Federal Councillor Eveline Widmer-Schlumpf. A Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation was signed between the Kazakh Ministries of Finance and the Swiss Federal Department of Finance.

"The memorandum foresees the exchange of views and experience on issues within the competence of the two ministries. This can include budget implementation, experience in working with international financial institutions, effective public financial management and debt management. Another possible field of cooperation is between the two customs services," explained Widmer-Schlumpf in her interview with The Astana Times prior to the visit.

"Under the agreement, it will be possible to exchange personnel between the Kazakh Ministry of Finance and the Swiss Federal Department of Finance through study visits to promote better understanding between the two countries," she added.

Kazakh Deputy Prime-Minister and Minister of Finance Bakhyt Sultanov said there are plans to set up working groups on the issues of customs procedures, provisions of tax transparency, treasury and public procurement. This memorandum is about cooperation between the two ministries which will lead to an exchange of experiences and introduction of the best world practices in the areas, where Switzerland has succeeded as a developed European state, he added.

According to Widmer-Schlumpf, Kazakhstan and Switzerland have an excellent bilateral relationship. Switzerland is one of the major foreign investment sources for Kazakhstan.

In addition, the two sides exchanged letters supplementing the 2010 double taxation agreement, which governs the exchange of information in tax matters in accordance with the Global Forum of the

OECD. As Sultanov explained, this interpretation is required in order for businessmen and governmental agencies to understand the use of the convention's provisions. He also recalled that documents on the avoidance of double taxation were signed with more than 40 countries, which provide about 95 percent of Kazakhstan's total trade turnover.

"The agreements on protecting investment and avoiding double taxation provide a legal framework for private investment. So far, over 40 Swiss companies already have permanent offices or activities in Kazakhstan. This creates jobs and wealth. It is the duty and the privilege of the government to facilitate this process," said Widmer-Schlumpf.

She also met with Kazakh Prime Minister Karim Massimov in Aktau, Chairman of the National Bank of Kazakhstan Kairat Kelimbetov in Almaty, as well as Minister of Foreign Affairs Erlan Idrissov and the management of the National Company Astana EXPO 2017 in Astana.

During her meeting with Massimov, Widmer-Schlumpf explained that she took notice of the recent measures taken by the Kazakh government to promote the investment climate in the country. Improvements of the conditions for doing business can also strengthen the basis for further Swiss investments in Kazakhstan, she pointed out. The two officials also reviewed future fields of collaboration between the two countries. Massimov underlined the Swiss traditions and know-how in the world's financial sector and expressed conviction that Kazakhstan could profit from the wide experience of the Swiss financial sector.

The cooperation of the two countries in financial issues was the main topic of the meeting between Widmer-Schlumpf and Kelimbetov, following the meeting of the Swiss Bretton Woods Constituency in Baku earlier that week. Widmer-Schlumpf stressed the important role Kazakhstan plays in that group chaired by Switzerland.

During the meeting with Idriss-

ov, the two parties underlined that Kazakhstan and Switzerland have similar views regarding many contemporary global challenges, which create a solid foundation for cooperation in the framework of multilateral structures. In their talks, the collaboration in the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) was also discussed.

Stressing the positive tendencies in bilateral economic relations, the parties emphasized the role of the Kazakh-Swiss Business Council and the Bilateral Joint Commission on trade-economic cooperation.

"Switzerland and Kazakhstan established diplomatic relations in 1992. Switzerland opened an embassy in the capital city of Astana in 2008. Since 2005, regular political consultations have been taking place. In 2012, the Swiss-Kazakh Business Council was founded and last year, Swiss Federal Councillor of Economic Affairs Mr. Johann Schneider-Ammann led an economic mission to Kazakhstan," said Widmer-Schlumpf.

According to the Kazakh agency on statistics, the volume of bilateral trade reached \$4.4 billion in 2013. Considering the role of Switzerland in promoting technologies that use alternative energy sources, Idrissov invited the Swiss delegation to participate in EXPO2017 in Astana.

According to the Swiss Ambassador to Kazakhstan, Mauro Reina, the visit of the Swiss Federal Councillor to Kazakhstan was very successful. Widmer-Schlumpf was highly impressed by the achievements the country had reached in the past 20 years, he said. Apart from the official meetings, she had an opportunity to meet with representatives of Swiss companies active in Kazakhstan. The Swiss business community is very well established in Kazakhstan and offered Widmer-Schlumpf an insight into its experience of doing business in Kazakhstan. The next opportunity to further strengthen bilateral cooperation will be the 3rd meeting of the Kazakh-Swiss Business Council scheduled for November 2014 in Almaty, Reina said.

## Election Turmoil, Loss of Interest by International Community Threaten Afghan Stability, Says Observer

By Dana Borumbayeva

ASTANA – The first democratic transfer of power in Afghanistan's history has been unfolding, grudgingly, since the first round of presidential elections were held on April 5. Round two was held on June 14, with preliminary results announced in early July and the final result to be announced on July 22.

Resident Representative of Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (the German Friedrich Ebert Political Foundation) in Afghanistan Adrienne Woltersdorf discussed Afghanistan's election and the prospects for the country's development with The Astana Times.

In the election, most Afghans appear to be voting along ethnic lines, Woltersdorf said, and it appears that Ashraf Ghani Achmadazi, a member of the country's largest ethnic group, the Pashtuns, is in the lead. Afghanistan has almost always been ruled by a Pashtun.

But after what appeared to be a successful first and second round of elections, allegations of fraud and vote rigging are arising, especially from the camp of Abdullah Abdullah, the candidate seen as the representative of the country's second largest ethnic group, the Tajiks.

"The political landscape of Afghanistan is in turmoil right now, following a stand-off by one of the contenders, Abdullah Abdullah,

in this year's elections. The elections are now seriously marred by allegations of large-scale fraud," Woltersdorf said. Afghanistan's Independent Election Commission (IEC) has not officially published any results of the last round of voting, although on July 7 it did produce preliminary results putting Ashraf Ghani ahead with 56 per cent of the vote.

Observers are very worried about the vote-rigging allegations the Abdullah team has raised. Days after the election, Abdullah refused to recognise the IEC, which he claims is biased in favour of Ghani, Woltersdorf said. Abdullah's campaign is now staging protests in Kabul and elsewhere to protest what he calls fraudulent elections in at least four out of 34 provinces, Woltersdorf noted.

Abdullah has produced little proof so far, she added. But refusing to abide by the UN-monitored democratic complaints-settlement process will severely damage the democratic process, she said, perhaps so much so that the legitimacy of the winner will be seriously questioned. "This will be detrimental for Afghanistan's future president and his credibility," she said. Afghanistan will need a clean government and a successful, democratic transfer of power in order to make it through the transition process and lead after

2014. Right now, the rifts opening up look difficult to heal, she said. "Given the post-election crisis we are seeing now, and looking back, it would probably have been the best possible outcome for Afghanistan to be ruled by a broad coalition of Pashtun tribal leaders and Tajik former war lords and strong men," the expert noted.

But the international community also bears responsibility here, including the United States. "Their representatives have been pushing the Afghans to follow through with the constitutionally prescribed process and to organise the second round of voting, although a lot of people warned of the imminent dangers that would entail," Woltersdorf said, adding that the mistrust runs too deep to think of a coalition now.

In addition to rival challengers, the new president will have to deal with outgoing President Karzai.

"Karzai is not prepared to retreat as elder statesmen," Woltersdorf said. "The master of networking and mediation between groups seems to want to continue playing a decisive role in Afghan politics."

Negotiating a new format for security and NATO involvement in the country will be the major priority of the next president. Both candidates have said repeatedly that they would make the signing of the Bilateral Security Agree-

ment (BSA) with the U.S. a priority. However, the agreement will not prevent the withdrawal of all U.S. troops by the end of 2016, as announced by U.S. President Barack Obama a few weeks ago.

"Many in Kabul interpret this as a de-facto zero option [a total drawdown of troops], something the Afghans have always been afraid of, given the fragility of the Afghan security and the inexperienced Afghan army," the German expert added.

Some 9,800 U.S. soldiers are expected to stay through 2016, mostly engaged in counterterrorism and training.

"Of course, nearly all other international NATO troops will leave when the U.S. troops leave, leaving behind a vulnerable Afghanistan. So Operation Resolute Support, starting in January 2015, looks now more like a light-weight help mission and not very resolute to most Afghans," Woltersdorf added. The Afghan army is doing a pretty good job so far, she noted, but Afghans worry whether their army can handle the country's insurgents. "[E]veryone agrees that the future financial support of ANA [Afghan National Army] by the international community is key."

This means \$4 billion per year needed to support the army of 352,000 – while interest in the country fades and the world faces new

crises. Global leaders must learn from what is happening in Iraq, Woltersdorf said: the disintegration of Iraq's army is a result of a lack of international support and unaddressed ethnic tensions. "If this mistake is repeated in Afghanistan, its army might also choose to give in to insurgents. But right now, I think the army is motivated and really wants to defend Afghanistan," she said.

As for dealing with the Taliban, it's too early to know what will happen, she said. Neither presidential candidate has presented detailed plans for any new peace process. "A lot of people in Afghanistan would support a kind of negotiation process and a peace deal, but not at any cost. The concrete question here is, can negotiations start, even though the Taliban do not recognise the Afghan constitution? ... This is a fundamental question and a future government has to do a much better job of including various stakeholders in the process than Karzai did," she said.

"[T]he security situation within the country varies enormously, not only from region to region, but even from district to district. Therefore it is difficult to jump to any general conclusion," Woltersdorf believes. Some areas have been completely reclaimed by the Taliban after international troops left, others have become more peaceful. "I think the best bet is to

assume that large parts of the national territory will remain in unsafe conditions. This is not only related to Taliban, but also to the general weakness of the government, to bad governance, massive corruption, militias and growing criminal networks involved in the illicit drug production and trade."

One-dimensional solutions will not resolve Afghanistan's manifold security issues. Concerted effort on every level will be needed to stabilise the country, and economic development will have to play a major role, Woltersdorf said.

"Many young Afghans join the insurgency because they have no other economic prospects. That is especially true in the border regions where no economic development has taken place in decades," she said. "[T]he security situation might not deteriorate because of the NATO-International Security Assistance Forces retreat, but it might, in the medium term, deteriorate if the government is not able to offer education and economic opportunities and instead leaves large parts of the provinces to themselves, to deal with criminals and the growing drug traffic. Of course, for better policies the Afghan government will in turn need the financial support of the international community. So, hopefully, they will not turn their backs on Kabul."

# Nation&Capital

WEDNESDAY, JULY 16, 2014

**CULTURE**

**Young Violinist Brings Victory from Moscow**

**B3**

**COUNTRY**

**UNESCO Tackles Earthquake Mitigation, Makes Recommendations for Kazakhstan**

**B4**

**SPORTS**

**Spanish Under-17 Team Wins President's Cup in Astana**

**B7**

## Astana Hosts Kazakhstan's First International Kite Festival



Astana Aspany, Kazakhstan's first international kite festival attracted young and old visitors to enjoy a joyous atmosphere that included shows and surprises in the air as well as on stage.

By Yelden Sarybay

ASTANA – Warm sunshine and gentle winds offered the perfect conditions for the July 5 Astana

Aspany, Kazakhstan's first international kite festival.

Kite pilots from Germany, Spain, France and Russia gathered

for the festival, which was part of the celebrations marking Astana's 16th anniversary as the capital of Kazakhstan.

The festival was held in an open area behind the Astana Music Hall building on the banks of the Yessil River where the public could admire the kites as well as enjoy entertainment on a stage provided for the event. Visitors young and old could enjoy a joyous atmosphere that included shows and surprises in the air as well as on stage.

From noon until 10 p.m., the public was able to see life-sized kites in the form of whales, giant owls, crocodiles and Chinese masks. Among the international masters piloting the kites were Gérard Clément, from the Berk-sur-Mer International Kite

Festival; Rolf Zimmermann, a German kite builder and designer; and Pedro and Esteban González, founders of Los Hermanos Show Kites. The festival also showcased the talents of Red Alert, a professional sport kite group from Russia. The group performed a choreographed show set to music, which resembled a mini-jet aircraft show.

The international kite masters also showed children how to fly kites and hosted a kite-building class. The Astana mayor's office also arranged for children from low-income families to be bused to the event where they were greeted by volunteer groups.

In addition to the entertainment in the sky, DJs Dias Urazbekov, Kaltai Ospanbekov and DJ Fara performed for the crowd.



## Kazakhstan Announces Winners of International Journalism Competition

By Nurlan Meirmanov

ASTANA – Kazakhstan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in conjunction with the Kazakhstan Union of Journalists, announced the winners of the first international journalism competition, "Kazakhstan in the eyes of foreign media," on July 1.

The competition, which ran from April 1 to June 15, aimed to encourage, promote and reward high-quality and objective international journalism on Kazakhstan's economy, trade, culture, art and society.

The inaugural awards, sponsored by Air Astana and the Rixos Almaty Hotel, attracted more than 40 entries from 23 countries, with a prize awarded to the author of the winning entry from each of five regions: North and South America, Europe, Asia, the Middle East and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

The winners were chosen by a panel including Kazakh Minister of Foreign Affairs Erlan Idrissov, Chairman of Kazakhstan's Union of Journalists Seitkazy Matayev, General Manager of the Rixos Almaty Hotel Ibrahim Chelik and Vice President for Public Relations of Air Astana Bella Tormysheva.

Neil Marks, a journalist from Guyana, took the prize in the Americas region for his article for *Kaiteur News* ([www.kaiteurnews.com](http://www.kaiteurnews.com)) on the contrasting cultural adventures of a Guyanese footballer living in Kazakhstan and a Kazakh working in Guyana, as well as on the many similarities between the two countries located on opposite sides of the Earth. "It shows that both Guyana and Kazakhstan internally reached a

certain level at which both countries understand that there is a need to have a wider look, and make a bigger step in order to improve and develop," Marks noted in his article. In addition, despite the differences between the countries, he notes similarities in their mentalities, saying "Guyana and Kazakhstan are different in many ways, but there are similarities which both Walter and Dmitry can testify to – Guyana and Kazakhstan people are friendly and hospitable."

Sibylle Greindl, a journalist from Belgium, won for the European region for her piece for the *Brussels Diplomatic* ([www.brusselsdiplomatic.com](http://www.brusselsdiplomatic.com)) on opportunities in the energy and renewable resources sector in Kazakhstan and the upcoming international specialised exhibition EXPO 2017 in Astana. In her article, she asks, "Why is oil- and gas-rich Kazakhstan showing so much enthusiasm for renewable energies?" Among her answers were, "First and foremost, Kazakhstan is not only sitting on impressive fossil fuel reserves: it does also have an impressive potential in terms of renewable energies." She noted that President Nursultan Nazarbayev has set the ambitious target of increasing the use of renewable energy sources to 50 percent by 2050, from 1 percent these days.

In Asia, Malaysia's Norshazlina Nor'azman won for her series of reports for the *Bernama News Agency* ([www.bernama.com](http://www.bernama.com)) on life in Astana and Almaty, the halal industry, the science sector and her experience of national traditions in Kazakhstan. Nor'azman began her article about Astana, with the words: "Welcome to Astana. The ordinary world was

far behind, and we were clearly the aliens moving about in a science fiction movie."

Hussain Ahmad from the Qatari newspaper *The Peninsula* ([www.thepeninsulaqatar.com](http://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com)) took the prize in the Middle Eastern region for his reporting on the political and economic development of Kazakhstan, its role in Central Asia and the prospects for the Eurasian Economic Union. Ahmad emphasises the contribution of President Nazarbayev in the consolidation of peace and interethnic harmony in Kazakhstan by noting, "Despite its huge ethnic diversity, Kazakhstan enjoys social and ethnic harmony. Many countries in the world are imploding due to ethnic and sectarian strife, and multi-ethnicity is often a recipe for turmoil. Kazakhstan is comprised of people from around 130 ethnicities who happily coexist."

In the CIS region, Ukraine's Svetlana Ostrovskaya won for her colourful report on Kazakhstan, entitled "The Fairy Tale of the Steppes," which featured in the *Wellness Journal* ([www.wellness.org.ua](http://www.wellness.org.ua)) and focused on the cultural and spiritual heritage of Kazakhstan and modern trends in the development of the country. In her article, Ostrovskaya notes that "Kazakhstan is a modern state that cherishes its past but looks to the future!" She also comments on the national project of Astana, saying, "Those who did not believe in Astana had only their own disbelief, while Nazarbayev had the power of faith, a desire and a dream." The author concludes with the remark: "So come to Kazakhstan – you will be quite surprised! And get a bottle of shubat for me on the way back!"

The five winners were rewarded with a trip to Almaty, Astana and Burabai, which will incorporate an extensive cultural programme and opportunities to meet with officials, academics, experts and journalists and scientists from Kazakhstan. Idrissov thanked all involved for their initiative and participation in the competition, saying, "It was extremely difficult for the jury. There were many high-quality entries, but we believe the five winning journalists gave the most lively and interesting accounts of Kazakhstan. We look forward to welcoming them to Kazakhstan and hope their trip will give them an opportunity to see new aspects of our country and encourage international interest in Kazakhstan among the media and their audiences in business, education, science and tourism."

Matayev said the entries had demonstrated an excellent knowledge of Kazakhstan's history, culture, customs and traditions and welcomed the international interest shown in the competition. "We have had strong entries from all over the world, with journalists producing some wonderful work on our country," he said.

"The competition has shown the high level of interest the international media has in our country, and that is positive for all of us, including Air Astana," said Tormysheva, adding, "we are actively developing our international network of destinations, with new routes opening up all the time."

The journalists' winning articles will be republished on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Two runners-up from each region were chosen to receive certificates of gratitude on behalf of the jury.

## Rare and Endangered Birds Are Bred in Almaty Nursery

By Marina Mikhailova

ALMATY – The Sunkar nursery in Almaty, that has bred more than 1,000 birds, recently celebrated its 25th anniversary.

This falcon house breeds rare and endangered birds and keeps more than 400 rare and endangered birds of prey species of Kazakhstan, most of which are falcons and eagles. These include saker falcons, peregrine falcons, barbary falcons, northern falcons, steppe kestrels, steppe eagles, imperial eagles, as well as 20 of the biggest species of gold eagles along with vultures, long-legged buzzards, hawks, kites, white-tailed eagles and eagle owls.

Of the more than 1,000 birds the centre has bred, 632 of them have been released into the wild and the genealogy of each pair of birds is carefully traced. About 150-170 chicks of these birds of prey are hatched annually, and, through selection, they have bred birds of a size and with plumage that is not found in nature.

The falcons bred at Sunkar get high marks by experts at international exhibitions, and the centre itself is entered in the third edition

of the Red Book of Kazakhstan as the country's only nursery raising saker falcons and releasing them into the wild.

The centre also cares for birds that have been hit by a car, injured by poachers or animals as well as those that have been discarded by their owners. Once those birds are nursed back to health, they are released into the wild.

Feeding the centre's birds requires 120,000 day-old chickens per month. The birds also eat rats so the nursery operates a vivarium that keeps 10,000 of these rodents.

Over the last 25 years, the centre has also revived the pure bred Kazakh hound, tazy, and breeds wolves. The wolves are often used in movies.

According to well-known Kazakh ornithologist Nikolai Berezhovikov, the population of Kazakhstan's largest eagles continues to decline as a result of a shortage of food, displacement to the highlands as a result of human activity, anxiety during the nesting period, fires and high voltage lines. Experts have come to the conclusion that unless proper measures are taken, the eagle population will dwindle to a critical mark in Kazakhstan.



The Sunkar nursery in Almaty, home for more than 1,000 birds, celebrated its 25th anniversary.

## Sports Help Countries Introduce Themselves to the World, Says Sports Press Association President

By Ilyas Omarov

BAKU – Since 1995, July 2 has been recognised as World Sports Journalists Day, designated as such at the initiative of the International Sports Press Association (AIPS). Founded on July 2, 1924, in Paris, the AIPS today comprises more than 9,500 journalists and 150 national journalists' unions, including the Kazakhstan Sports Press Association and 45 Kazakh sports journalists.

At the recent 77th AIPS Congress, a memorandum of cooperation between AIPS and Astana Presidential Professional Sports Club was signed, providing for

AIPS assistance in covering the sports club, training Kazakh sports journalists and helping them reach international audiences.

AIPS President Giovanni Merlo discussed the role of sport as a unifying force in the world and the challenges facing the sport press today during a meeting in Baku earlier this year.

*Almaty will host the Winter Universiade in 2017 and will compete to host the Winter Olympics in 2022. What are its chances?*

It is important that Kazakhstan is now becoming widely known in the world, but not everyone has an idea of where your country is

on the map. Currently, we all are witnessing how, through sport, any country can show what it is capable of. ... I think that Kazakhstan can do much more [and] has a good chance to organise the Winter Games. But to give a more accurate assessment of opportunities in Kazakhstan, I would like to visit your country. I'm very curious to see your potential, as well as your mountains, slopes and sun.

*Is the Universiade really a popular competition?*

Of course, the Universiade is inferior in importance to the Olympics, the World Cup and the World

Athletics Championships, and in popularity – for example in my country, Italy – it doesn't beat Series A football. The Universiade is the first step on the way to a big win for future great champions. Many promising young athletes are using these games as a kind of stage of preparation for the World Championships. The Universiade is also quite a massive sports event, where athletes come from all over the world. It is a mixture of sport traditions and human cultures and it is a very powerful symbiosis. Therefore, the significance of the Universiade is still great.

Continued on Page B7

### THINGS TO WATCH JULY

**KINOPARK 8**

July 18-21 at 22:00 The International Dota 2 Championships

**SCHOOLCHILDREN PALACE**

July 20 at 08:45 Group run

**NATIONAL TENNIS CENTRE**

July 21-27 at 11:00 Big tennis tournament Challenger ATP and ITF Women's "Presidential Cup-2014"

WEDNESDAY, JULY 16, 2014

# ATOM Project Ambassador Calls for Humanity to “Avoid More Errors,” Abandon Nuclear Weapons



Karipbek Kuyukov

By Dmitry Lee

Honorary ATOM Project Ambassador, painter and anti-nuclear weapons activist Karipbek Kuyukov called on humanity to abandon nuclear weapons during the international Euro Mediterranean Forum against nuclear weapons in Ankara on June 21-22.

“I am happy to live at a time when the voice of one person can be heard and supported by millions living in the most distant places of the Earth,” Kuyukov, who was born without arms and paints with his feet and mouth, told several dozen experts and activists. “Our voices can become one powerful voice! We have a

choice: to be passive and let the heads of states solve the issue or unite and defend our citizenship and human rights.”

Kuyukov, who was born 100 kilometres from the ill-famed Semipalatinsk nuclear test site in Kazakhstan, has been an anti-nuclear weapons activist for more than two decades and has travelled the world campaigning against the consequences of nuclear weapons.

“I was born in Yegyndybulak Village, which is not far from the nuclear test site. When I was a child, my parents used to tell me stories about how the ground trembled and they were told by the military police to keep the

windows open and leave their houses and take cover outside. At that time, we didn’t know the truth that we were exposed to something horrible, something that left scars until these days,” Kuyukov said.

Several dozen of Kuyukov’s works have been presented in many countries under the auspices of The ATOM Project ([www.theatomproject.org](http://www.theatomproject.org)), an international online petition to help bring into force the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBTO).

“Through my works, I wanted to show the horrible consequences the atomic explosions left on our land for generations, the tears of mothers for their children and

the endless pain of families that have lost their hope of restoring the health of their families,” Kuyukov stressed.

“Together with The ATOM Project, we have travelled to the U.S., Europe, presented our works in the UN headquarters in Vienna. We continue to urge people around the world to support our cause and to sign the petition. We need this today to avoid such errors in our future and to make sure our children have a bright and nuclear-weapons-free future,” Kuyukov emphasised.

“Our exhibition is in Washington, D.C. right now, and we are working on bringing it now to Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan, to acquaint the local populace with my works during the celebration of the International Day against Nuclear Tests on August 29,” Kuyukov explained.

“It is an important day in history. As per the proposal of our President Nursultan Nazarbayev, the United Nations General Assembly declared August 29 the International Day against Nuclear Tests.”

The UN resolution adopting this day as a day against nuclear tests calls for increasing awareness and education about the effects of nuclear weapon tests and the need for their cessation as a means to achieve a nuclear-weapons-free world. The resolution was initiated by the Republic of Kazakhstan to commemorate the closure of the Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test site on Aug. 29, 1991.

“Every single person has a right to decide the future they want for themselves, their families and their nation. Our com-

mon goal is to protect mankind from the nuclear nightmare. Let our sky be clean and our children be healthy,” Kuyukov told forum participants.

During the forum, other speakers supported ideas of a nuclear-weapons free world. Cluster Munition Coalition Spokesperson Branimir Kapetanović from Serbia stressed that, “It is important that in the future, all of us are engaged to a maximum in raising awareness of the dangers and

die immediately. And if a bomb the size of the one dropped on Hiroshima is dropped on Ankara, which is the capital of Turkey, 1.5 million people would die immediately. We create our own diseases. Nuclear weapons are one of them. They are a product of human beings and they are very dangerous. They should be banned immediately,” he said.

In total, 40 other activists, experts, victims of nuclear tests and land mine victims from 30 coun-

**“Together with The ATOM Project, we have travelled to the U.S., Europe, presented our works in the UN headquarters in Vienna. We continue to urge people around the world to support our cause and to sign the petition. We need this today to avoid such errors in our future and to make sure our children have a bright and nuclear-weapons-free future.” – Karipbek Kuyukov**

consequences of nuclear weapons. Since we succeeded in a very difficult voyage, such as banning cluster munitions, there shouldn’t be any reason not to succeed in actions to ban nuclear weapons whose consequences are unimaginably bigger and more monstrous than we have ever experienced as mankind.”

An expert from Egypt, Ahmed Sa’da, mentioned the health impact of nuclear weapons. “If the U.S. uses the nuclear bombs that it has, two billion people would

tries, including from the Middle East, North Africa and South East Europe regions, participated in the conference. Among them were Susi Snyder from Pax/ICAN, Martha Barcena Coqui, ambassador of Mexico, and Sabine Kroissbrunner, deputy head of the Austrian Mission. Other participants came from Albania, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Kosovo, Croatia, Bosnia, Greece, Belarus, Algeria, Georgia, Bahrain, Lebanon, Tunisia, Morocco, France and Sweden.

**NUCLEAR TERRORISM. THE THREAT IS REAL.**  
DENY THEIR CHANCE TO DESTROY OUR LIVES.  
SIGN ON FOR A NUCLEAR WEAPONS FREE WORLD.  
[TheATOMProject.org](http://TheATOMProject.org)

WEDNESDAY, JULY 16, 2014

## Mezzoforte, Level 42 Bring International Jazz to Astana



Iceland's Mezzoforte and British band Level 42 played on the city's Congress Hall stage at the celebration of Astana Day.

By Yelden Sarybay

ASTANA – Residents and visitors to Astana were treated to music by some of the best international jazz bands during this year's Astana Day celebrations.

Iceland's Mezzoforte and British band Level 42 played on the city's Congress Hall stage as part of the annual events celebrating Astana as Kazakhstan's capital.

The bands lent the celebrations a jazz-funk vibe, which could be felt

throughout the Congress Hall venue. The stage was filled with shiny musical instruments and the large sign with the name of the event provided a groovy backdrop.

The doors opened at 5 p.m. on July 7 for the musical event, which began with an introduction by Saginai Abdullin, a famed Kazakh musician and showman.

Mezzoforte, who have been creating their unique sound since the 1970s, connected well with the Kazakh audience, even without

lyrics. An hour of rhythmic tunes of the saxophone and guitars needed no translations.

As the stage crew prepared the stage for the second half of the performance, the host introduced Level 42. Crowds who travelled from around the country to see their idols could be heard cheering and whistling in anticipation. Level 42 frontman Mark King had made a video inviting the Kazakh public to come hear their music.



## “Eternal Nostalgia” Premieres in English at ENU, Hopes to Go International

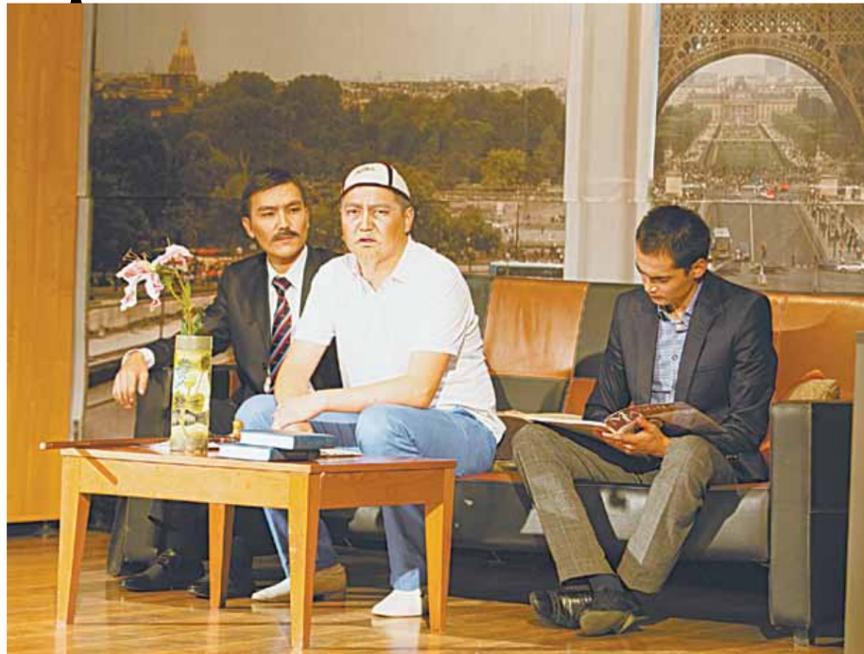
By Malika Orazgaliyeva

ASTANA – The Shanyrak Youth Theatre of Astana's Eurasian National University (ENU) staged a drama by famous Kazakh playwright Zhotai Zhumat, “Eternal Nostalgia,” on June 28. The performance drew praise from those in attendance.

Young director Zhabul Tlepov and his colleagues, current and former students of the ENU, staged the play to coincide with the city's celebrations of Astana Day, July 6.

The drama describes the yearning of an old man, Assan, to see the homeland he left as a child. Assan left Kazakhstan with his parents in the 1930s and, after 70 years or so, begins to miss it and dream about his native land. Assan, who now lives in Paris and is set to turn 80 in a year, begs his two adult sons, Marat and Yelzhan, to bring him back to his homeland.

The two sons, who have families and businesses of their own, are split between returning to Kazakhstan and staying in France. Marat, the oldest, shows a more business-oriented, bare-knuckled approach and categorically refuses to leave his business behind, leading to a split between the two families.



A performance of “Eternal Nostalgia” staged by The Shanyrak Youth Theatre of Astana's Eurasian National University.

Yelzhan, however, gives his father an airplane ticket to fly to Astana as a birthday gift.

Upon arrival in Astana, Assan, Yelzhan and Yelzhan's son, Yelaman, encounter a young local suf-

## Young Violinist Brings Victory from Moscow

By Olga Kazantseva

MOSCOW – Kazakh musician Ruslan Turuntayev was the winner in the category “Violin” at the recent VIII International Tchaikovsky Youth Competition. He opened the gala concert in the Great Hall of the Metropolitan Conservatory after the closing ceremony of the prestigious musical forum.

The Moscow State Conservatory, which hosted the competition, provided its classrooms for pre-contest rehearsals to 130 young musicians from 19 countries. Honorary jury chairmen in three categories were world famous university professors, pianist Alexei Nasedkin, violinist Viktor Tretyakov and cellist Natalia Shakhovskaya.

The main objective of the festival was educational, the organisers emphasised. But no less important is the fact that due to this festival, the talented youth have an opportunity to present their musical skill to a broad audience. The participation of eminent figures of musical culture allowed an objective and impartial selection of the most worthy in the new generation of musicians.

The victory in the junior competition is a real claim for participation in the adult competition and Turuntayev plans to use this right.

The audience welcomed his performance of Concerto No. 5 in A mol by Vieuxtemps, accompanied by the Eurasian Symphony Orchestra conducted by Aydar Torybayev, with applause.

“Actually there were a lot of emotions, a lot of joy from the opportunity to play in all rounds, in all concerts. But it was psychologically difficult, of course, because I really wanted to win, and it was the highest competitive level in my experience. Now I dream of performing at the Tchaikovsky Competition for adults,” he said after the brilliant performance.

The 15-year-old musician already has solid experience. In his professional baggage there are numerous awards, as he has repeatedly been the winner and laureate of international competitions. His special pride is the victory in the junior contest Muzsiente Giovanni in Italy, the fatherland of Paganini, where his performance, without exaggeration, created a furor.

Another authoritative recognition of his talent is the attention of world-famous Russian musician Vladimir Spivakov. Turuntayev



Ruslan Turuntayev, the winner in the category “Violin” at the recent VIII International Tchaikovsky Youth Competition.

is a fellow in the fund of the outstanding violinist and conductor and a participant in many of his concert programmes. Thanks to the fund of the maestro, Turuntayev won a priceless gift – a violin of the famous French master Emile Boulanger.

But the triumph of the young talent is also recognition of the Kazakh school of classical music, said general director of the international youth competition, Honoured Worker of Culture of the Russian Federation Andrei Shcherbak.

“Kazakhstan is our reliable and very close partner. From the first days, representatives of your country participated in the competition. The ties between the University of Arts in Astana and the Moscow Conservatory and Central Music School are indissoluble and fruit-

**The victory in the junior competition is a real claim for participation in the adult competition and Turuntayev plans to use this right.**

ful. In particular, a great role in the promotion of talents in the category ‘Violin’ belongs to Aiman Musakhodzhayeva. She purposefully works to establish a strong national violin school in the republic. And I think that Kazakhstan will repeatedly surprise the world with their talents,” said Shcherbak.

collapses in front of Assan, and Assan decides to help the young man by paying for the surgery he needs. In his last monologue, Assan asks the Almighty for his grace upon his motherland and his people.

The young local later searches for Assan to thank him for his help, only to find out that it is too late.

The drama is undoubtedly very patriotic, sometimes very straightforward and predictable. This does not diminish the quality of the text or the performance of the cast, however, and is balanced by some very frank and well-argued points by Marat about the merits of staying in one's adopted nation.

“This play is intended to show to the spectators the particularities and divergences in opinions of today's youth,” Zhotai Zhumat, the playwright said in an interview afterwards. “The two key characters of the play, Marat and Yelzhan, have completely different points of view regarding globalisation and modernisation of the Kazakh people's way of thinking and the national mentality. They also differ regarding issues such as patriotism and the preservation of culture and values.

“The play was very emotional and I certainly wish success to the cast in their future performances in Kazakhstan and internationally,” ENU Professor of Sociology Marcus Kaiser of Germany said after the performance.

“It was very moving and, on a few occasions, I could hardly hold back tears,” Roman Vassilenko, chairman of the Committee for International Information of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said. “At one particularly dramatic moment, I heard the background sound of rain and of a thunderstorm. I thought it was an intentional sound effect, which would have been rather appropriate, but then I realised that the rain had just started outside. It was very symbolic, showing, perhaps, that the spirit of the sky, Tengri, welcomed the play and its message of one's all-encompassing love for his motherland.”

The director and the author want to build on this success and stage another performance in the fall in Astana.

“The play was staged for the first time in English today,” Zhumat said. “And in the future we hope to put this play on the stages of theaters in other countries.”

WEDNESDAY, JULY 16, 2014

# UNESCO Tackles Earthquake Mitigation, Makes Recommendations for Kazakhstan

By Natalia Valuyskaya

ALMATY – For the first time in the history of Central Asia and the Commonwealth of Independent States, UNESCO held an international conference on the problem of earthquake mitigation in late May in Almaty. Director of the Institute of Seismology of the National Scientific and Technological Holding Parasat, Doctor of Technical Sciences and Academician of the Kazakhstan National Academy of Natural Sciences Tanatkan Abakanov recently discussed its outcomes.

## What is the forum's significance for the international image of Kazakhstan?

The forum, planned by the UN and included in the action plan of the international cooperation of the Ministry of Education and Science of Kazakhstan, has great importance for Kazakhstan's image in the eyes of the world public. We hope it will provide a real mechanism for attracting foreign investors in the construction industry in seismically active areas in

Kazakhstan. The forum gathered more than 20 world-renowned scientists from all over the world in addition to domestic experts.

The result of the work is creating conditions to attract new scientific methods and technologies in Kazakhstan, the UN proposals to the Government of Kazakhstan to mitigate consequences of devastating earthquake if it takes place in our country, including Almaty, as well as providing timely effective international assistance. The participants of the forum adopted a resolution which is compulsive for all countries with a strong threat of destructive earthquakes.

## You have said that special attention in the document is paid to the seismic safety of Kazakhstan...

Absolutely correct. The forum recommended increasing the network of seismological observations by two times in comparison with the currently existing monitoring (to open 52 new seismic stations in Kazakhstan). There is a need to create a special international experimental centre in the

Almaty region for the study of seismic processes and the seismic resistance of construction projects.

Also it is recommended to ensure constant geodynamic and engineering monitoring of the man-made environment of the nuclear, oil and gas industries and mining and metallurgical complexes, as well as hydro-technical facilities in Kazakhstan. No less important is to provide the basic seismic stability of social infrastructure, life support systems, including educational and residential objects located in the earthquake-prone regions.

## What caused the increased interest of the international community to the problem of seismic safety?

The matter is that the world has entered the next phase of global seismic activity. This is evidenced by the devastating earthquakes in Japan (in 1995 and 2011), Turkey (1999), Afghanistan (2002), Iran (2003), China (2003, 2008), Indonesia (2004 and 2009) and other countries. The process of intensive seismic activity will continue up to

2025 and affect Kazakhstan.

Speaking about the problem of manmade earthquakes' genesis, it should be noted that in the 20th century, strong and catastrophic earthquakes took place in oil and gas fields. Sensible earthquakes also began on the hydrocarbon deposits in Kazakhstan. As it is known, there are 214 hydrocarbon fields in western Kazakhstan, 81 of which are under development, and only two deposits are monitored. Large hydraulic structures also provoke strong and destructive earthquakes. Currently, Kazakhstan has erected such hydraulic systems as Bukhtarma, Ust-Kamenogorsk, Shulbinsk, Kapshagai and others. All of them are located in the areas of high seismic risk. But none of these objects, as far as we know, has the seismological monitoring of areas with water reservoirs.

## Actually the problem of seismic safety in Kazakhstan is multi-faceted and complex.

Of course, and here we can separate the main directions of activ-

ity: the forecast and monitoring of earthquakes, the assessment of seismic hazards (mapping of seismic zones of different details, assessment and mitigation of seismic risk of settlements and industrial enterprises, ensuring seismic safety of strategic facilities, such as nuclear power plants, hydroelectric power stations, waterworks, oil and gas, mining and metallurgical complexes).

It's worth mentioning that the problems of seismic safety are paramount for all countries that are located in regions of high seismic intensity. In this context, UNESCO conducts consolidating works. Thus, the Hyogo Declaration, which emphasised the importance of strengthening cooperation between the countries in this connection, was adopted in 2005 at the World Conference to reduce consequences of disasters held under the auspices of UNESCO in Japan. UNESCO's determination was reflected in the programme of the International Platform for Reducing Earthquake Disasters, which was adopted for implementation in

2008 and will continue in the future. In 2012, our Institute of Seismology was officially registered by UNESCO among nine countries which conduct intensively research of seismic safety.

## What can you say about the situation in our city?

As known, the most seismically active area in Central Asia is the territory of Zaili Alatau, where Almaty is located. Therefore, the issues of earthquake prediction, assessment of seismic hazard and provision for the seismic stability of the national economy are fundamental in addressing the problem of seismic safety of the city. Results of the earthquakes' analysis show that early organisational and engineering activities and reliable management of people at the threat of earthquakes and liquidation of its consequences greatly reduce losses of life and material damage.

In general, the power structures and media should pay particular attention to preparation and training of the population for earthquakes. An illustrative example is the experience of Japan, where moral and psychological preparation is introduced in all preschools, schools, higher education institutions, organisations and enterprises. Also, we need a good education TV programme on the seismic protection of the population.

# EU Civil Service Reform Project Brings Kazakh Civil Servants, Journalists to European Public and Media Institutions

By Michelle Witte

ASTANA – Representatives of Kazakhstan's Agency for Civil Service Affairs and the Presidential Administration, as well as journalists covering civil service reform issues, visited Brussels and Paris from June 23-27 on a study visit organised with the support of the EU project, Civil Service Reform and Modernisation of the Government of Kazakhstan. The tour included a series of meetings with key European public institutions, including the European Parliament and the European Commission, as well as visits to mass media outlets.

During a meeting at the Information Technology Department of the EU Commission in Brussels, the parties exchanged views on the effective application of information systems in human resource management and personnel selection. During a meeting at the European Office for Personnel Selection, they also discussed the implementation of the newest recruitment tools for civil service and talent management. "There are some processes that are particular to the approaches and mechanisms of European Commission staff selection procedures. But the aim and tasks assigned are common to both of us. This process of experienc-

es exchange was very useful for us," said Deputy Chairman of the Agency for Civil Service Affairs of Kazakhstan Ali Komekbayev.

Prospects for technical cooperation between Kazakhstan and the EU in the civil service sphere were discussed during a visit to the Development and Cooperation EuropeAid office. At the meeting, Kazakhstan was assessed as a dynamically developing country in the Central Asian region and the issue of moving to a qualitatively new level of cooperation between Kazakhstan and the EU was discussed.

The European representatives expressed interest in Kazakhstan's civil service experience, including

the operation of the Regional Hub of Civil Service in Astana, which is intended to create a base for the exchange of relevant experience between the countries of Central Asia and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). It was noted that this initiative is important not only for Kazakhstan, but also for the EU.

"Since the best practices in the field of civil service will be expanded through Kazakhstan to other Central Asian states, it will positively affect the relations of countries in the region and it can serve as a tool to maintain stability and peace," said George Mirogiyannis, team leader of the Civil Service Reform

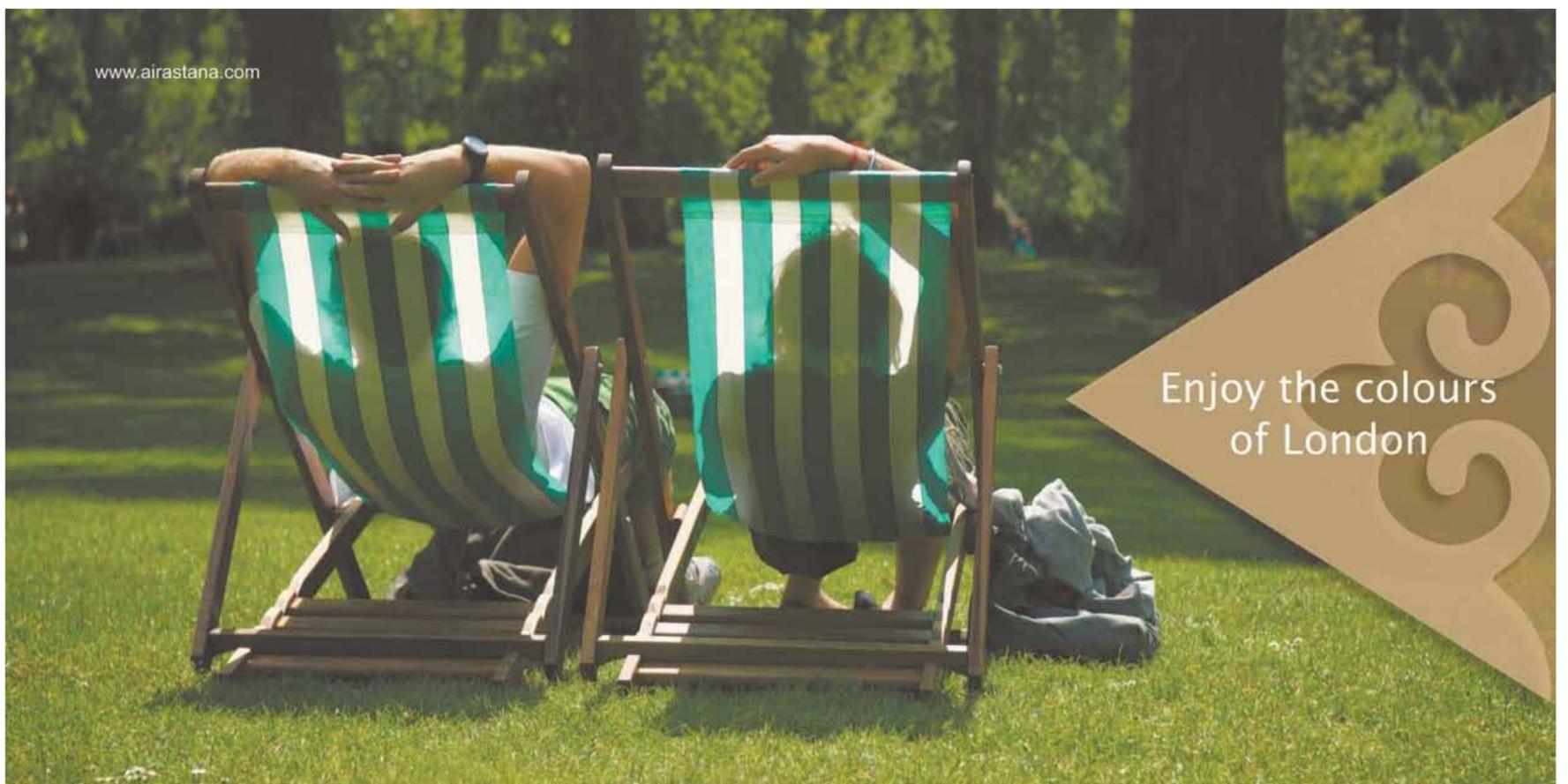
and Modernisation of the Government of Kazakhstan project.

Cooperation issues between state authorities and mass media and mechanisms to secure public control and transparency of government bodies were raised during the group's visit to the Unit of Media Services and Monitoring of the European Parliament.

The visit to EuroparTV, the European Parliament's television station, and the meeting organised there for media professionals were of particular interest to the Kazakh delegation. Kazakh journalists were selected for the visit through a creativity contest conducted by the EU project last year.

In Paris, study tour participants visited the National School of Public Administration (ENA), the Auditing Chamber and the State Council of France. Journalists visited the editorial office of the French newspaper Le Figaro as well as Channel 3 television, where the role and the importance of mass media in civil service reform were discussed.

The Civil Service Reform and Modernisation of the Government of Kazakhstan project is an international initiative to integrate the European experience of state governance into Kazakhstan. The main purpose of the project is to enhance and build the institutional capacity in human resource management of Kazakhstan's Agency for Civil Service Affairs and Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan.



www.airastana.com

Enjoy the colours  
of London

Best Airline Central and South Asia, Skytrax World Airline Awards 2012 & 2013

Enjoy Air Astana's award winning service on the only non stop flights from Astana to London, now three times a week.



air astana  
from the heart of eurasia

WEDNESDAY, JULY 16, 2014

# Football Tournament Helps Orphans Pursue their Dreams

By Rufiya Ospanova

ALMATY – Towards a Dream, the second national football championship among orphans held June 17-20, provided an opportunity for eight teams from all regions of Kazakhstan to fight for the main prize – a trip to Milan.

Football teams from Astana, Almaty, Karaganda, Pavlodar, Aktoobe, Taraz, Kostanai and Semey met in the city's central stadium.

The opening ceremony of the final match was colourful. A member of the Almaty Maslikhat, the local representative body, Oleg Pechenik, the director of the central stadium, and Elvira Nurbayeva, a representative of PetroKazakhstan, came to support the boys. Kazakh singer Abdulkarim Karimov also performed during the final game.

"We share the principles of sport and it's no coincidence that the charitable foundation Baurzhan promotes and supports sports for the second year. We believe that sport will help you find true friends for life, gain self-confidence, teach ways to overcome obstacles and achieve set goals. This will help you in life regardless of what path or which profession you choose," said Zhuldyz Omarbekova, a member of the political council of Nur Otan.

The final turned out pretty stubborn and emotional, as neither team wanted to concede victory, but the Almaty regional team won. The Barys team scored the top corner kick from midfield in the first minutes of the game. Thanks to the technique and agility of the boys, a powerful support group and the

care of the coach, which actively manifested itself throughout the match, Barys defeated Sunkar by a score 5-1.

Yugay Danil, the best Barys goalkeeper, shared his impressions. "I am very pleased that our training has not passed in vain, because for a year we were diligently preparing for the championship. At boarding school, we were told that we should not come back without victory," he said.

The best players of the tournament were awarded prizes and gifts amid a festive atmosphere.

"I am very happy that we won. It was a difficult victory, because all our rivals were strong and worthy. We believed that we would get the cup, it is in our hands. I am grateful to the Baurzhan foundation for realising my dream," said 12-year-



The Championship among orphans provided an opportunity for eight teams from all regions of Kazakhstan to fight for the main prize, a trip to Milan.



old Barys player Amangeldy Kusainov.

The Towards a Dream championship is not only an incentive for an active and healthy lifestyle, but also a chance for young football players to show themselves. Not every orphaned child who has the talent and ability can show his worth and have a chance to get into professional football. Especially for this game so-called "selectioners" were invited who were looking for talents for the national team. Vasily Maryunyak, head football coach of the National Sports College, noted Victor Maloivan, a very promising player from the Aktoobe Alga team.

According to the coach, this

calm and responsible boy is actively involved in sports. He is a multiple champion on the football field and in skiing. The boy wants to play on the Aktoobe team, but in his wildest dreams he sees himself as a part of the Bavaria football club.

Another pleasant surprise for the children was prizes and gifts from companies such as RESMI Group, Raimbek Bottlers, Capital Partners, Nike and the Kairat football club.

According to the organisers, this year's championship attracted a record number of players. Preliminaries were held in 10 cities among 20 teams. About 300 boys in the 11-14age group fought for the right to participate in the fi-

nals. Eight teams got tickets to the final tournament and stayed in the southern capital for four days. During their stay they were invited on interesting city tours.

The Baurzhan charity foundation traditionally organises annual visits to the leading foreign football clubs for the winners of the championship. This year, the champions of the tournament were granted a ticket to Italy, which was realised thanks to the support of the investment and industrial corporation ZHERSU. The boys will go to the Milanello sports centre to meet renowned players such as Kaka, Robinho, Mario Balotelli and others. The trip is scheduled for the end of August.

# CHOOSE FUTURE ENERGY!



**EXPO 2017**  
• Future Energy •  
Astana Kazakhstan







expo2017astana  
expo2017astana.com



WEDNESDAY, JULY 16, 2014

## World Cup of Inflatable Sailboats Held in Kazakhstan



Balkhash-2014, a World Cup race of collapsible and inflatable sailboats, was organised in the tract of Tamgaly Tas began to attract more tourists.

By Serik Rza

Balkhash-2014, the World Cup race of collapsible and inflatable sailboats, was held recently for the first time in Kazakhstan.

The event was organised by the Marins International Association of Collapsible Steering Multi-hulled and Inflatable Sailing Ships in collaboration with the Tabigat Ecological Union, the Almaty

Federation of Sport Tourism and Pacific LLP.

The hosting of the event on Kazakhstan's largest lake has its origins beginning in 2001 when the Tabigat Ecological Union under the leadership of Mels Yeleusizov, who has come to be known as the country's "chief ecologist" for his multi-year campaigning, held the first Ile-Balkhash regatta. Gradually, the Purple Wind Festi-

val, organised in the tract of Tamgaly Tas began to attract more and more tourists. Every year, this water rally attracts 5,000 people and 500 participants.

This time, a 325-kilometre route ran along the shore without crossing the lake. Thirty-six teams from Kazakhstan, Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and the Baltic countries took part in the competition. The main guest of the tournament Anatoly Kulik,

master of sports of the former Soviet Union who once crossed the ocean on a sailing catamaran, noted the amazing beauty of the lake.

The competition was fierce and some participants had to be checked by medical personnel on shore after their boats turned over. But the participants were satisfied with the event, which achieved its goal of drawing attention to the lake and its region.

## Kazakh, Austrian Climbers Plan Khan Tengri Expedition



Maksut Zhumaev

By Yelden Sarybay

Maksut Zhumaev, the famed Kazakh alpinist who conquered all of the world's highest peaks, is going to ascend Khan Tengri, the highest point in Kazakhstan, and he recently outlined his planned route with representatives of the Austrian Alpine Club.

The three-week climb is scheduled to begin July 26 and will reach the highest point of the Tien Shan mountain range. Its height is more than 7,000 metres. Zhumaev will climb with the Austrian alpinists who have come to discover Kazakh climbing.

The expedition will be the first joint project with athletes and tourists from Austria after the signing of a memorandum of understanding and cooperation between Kazakh and Austrian partners in 2012.

"In fact, I have a small debt to pay to Khan Tengri," Zhumaev said. "In 2011 our team, CSKA,

climbed there. It was during harsh frosts and we were hoisting the flag of the Winter Asian Games. For us it was very important. The team was in harsh conditions. The climb was quite severe. There were snowfields up there all the time. We needed to walk down the ridge constantly. During training, I developed pneumonia. And while climbing, I felt sick and had to attract a rescue helicopter for evacuation. So then I did not ascend and I remain in its debt."

The 37-year-old Kazakh alpinist barely returned home after climbing Mount McKinley, the highest mountain in North America. Climbing it, he said, he was on the brink of life and death. Strong winds and almost zero visibility greatly hampered the way. But despite the bad weather, he managed to overcome the mountain height of 6,200 metres. At times, the climber recognised that he wanted to quit and go home. But Zhumaev recalled his 70-year-old coach,

who two years ago conquered this mountain, so he had an incentive.

Now Zhumaev continues to engage in the development of Kazakh tourism. He said that in the next year a special Austrian mountain-

climbing magazine would publish the Kazakh mountain trails where you can go on an expedition. "That's how we open new streams of tourists to our country," concluded the athlete.

## Government Boosts Medical Tourism Efforts in North Kazakhstan



Pantotherapy will be developed in northern Kazakhstan and its Aiyrtau area.

By Yelden Sarybay

The industry of pantotherapy, the use of an extract from the horns of the maral, will develop in northern Kazakhstan and the Aiyrtau area will see a new tourism project, according to the press service of the Committee for Tourism Industry of the Ministry of Industry and New Technologies. The official opening of a core tourism project in the Aiyrtau area of the region was based on one of the recreation sites.

Native to Kazakhstan, and most widespread in the Altai Mountains, the maral is a large, semi-wild deer. Its horns, called "panty," are the young, ossified, growing horns of adult male deer that are covered with velvety bristles, with plenty of symmetrically-arranged outgrowths. The antlers contain a biologically-active medicinal substance in combination with hormonal properties. Maral breeders say that the secret lies in a special root that the deer eat, which grows only in the Altai and the Far East.

The Aiyrtau area will be positioned as a tourism cluster in northern Kazakhstan. Today, there are 23 recreational facilities and about 40 tourist sites. A master plan is envisioned for the development of the cluster. It will be set up as a special portal for tourists and promises a huge potential boost for the region.

The government's official statement states that "there are plans to develop medical, cultural, historical, environmental and other types of tourism in the region. Particular attention will be paid to the development of medical tourism. Pantotherapy will be actively developed, in particular during the planning of the 2014-2015 maral breeding season."

Pantotherapy is developed today in East Kazakhstan, where every year hundreds of people travel for treatment. During the spring season, the antlers are soft, rich in nutrients and contain trace elements and hormones with a huge biologically-stimulating multilateral force.



# THE ASTANA TIMES

Dear Friends,

We are pleased to announce that readers in Kazakhstan can now subscribe to the print edition of **The Astana Times**. The newspaper will be delivered to your door twice per month.

If you're interested in receiving **The Astana Times** in print, along with enjoying our online stories, act now! Contact **KazPost** near you and set up the subscription using our new subscription index **64572**.

We hope all of you continue to enjoy reading and sharing our stories.

Sincerely,  
Roman Vassilenko  
Editor-in-Chief  
The Astana Times

THE ASTANA TIMES  
astanatimes.com

## SPORTS

WEDNESDAY, JULY 16, 2014

## Spanish Under-17 Team Wins President's Cup in Astana



The national Under-17 Spanish football team, the winners of the 7th annual Kazakhstan President's Cup tournament.

By Yelden Sarybay

ASTANA – The national Under-17 Spanish football team won the 7th annual Kazakhstan President's Cup tournament played at the Astana Arena on June 24-30.

National youth teams from Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, in addition to Spain, participated in the tournament.

"The development of youth football is one of the main direc-

tions for the Kazakhstan Football Federation and we pay this much attention. Work is done carefully and seriously," said Football Federation of Kazakhstan Director of National Teams Vladimir Nigergaus. "We have every reason to

hope for success in this tournament. The main objective of our team is to prepare for the European Championship qualifying match, which will be held in Hungary. The task is to exchange experiences in tournament games against teams from Europe."

At the end of the tournament, the top three teams were awarded for their efforts. President's Cup organisers also announced the tournament's best players in various categories. The best goalkeeper was Behrooz Hyrum from Tajikistan, best defenseman Nicolosi Kurshavishvili of Georgia, best linebacker Spniard Francesco Villalba. The best strikers were Daniel Villanueva from Spain and Georgi Arabidze from Georgia. Spain team captain Alen Karlez was named the best player of the tournament.

Karlez, as the captain of his team, received the tournament trophy from the hands of Vice-President of the Football Federation of Kazakhstan and national football legend, Seilda Baishakov.

Kazakhstan President's Cup has for three years been included in the official list of international competitions of the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) and the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA.)

The winning team of the tournament received \$10,000, the runner-up received \$6,000, and the third place team received \$4,000.

## Astana Team Racer Leads Tour de France after Stage Ten



Vincenzo Nibali

By Dmitry Lee

While most in Kazakhstan are enjoying the summer weather, the Astana Pro Team is forging ahead and setting the pace in the Tour de France 2014 several thousand miles to the west where its captain Vincenzo Nibali regained the yellow leader's jersey by winning a stage on July 14.

"My legs felt good. I knew the last three kilometers were the toughest, and that's when I accelerated," said Nibali after he finished. "I thought Joaquim Rodriguez would follow but he seemed to have trouble."

Astana rider was content riding in the peloton for most of the day with his Astana team driving the pace until Nibali took over with a couple of kilometers left. He put the heat on and made an acceleration nobody else could match. It wasn't long until he caught up with the one remaining rider from the break, Rodriguez, and flew by him.

It was the type of acceleration one would expect from a Tour leader and the type that will be remembered by the competitors around him. It is not going to be an easy task to take away the yellow from Nibali again as two-time champion Alberto Contador crashed out with a fractured shin after a high-speed spill.

Earlier last week, Bilel Kadri gave France its first stage winner at the Tour de France in the entree to the Vosges mountains on Saturday July 12. Meanwhile, Nibali of Astana pro Team extended his lead over his biggest rivals. Over two minutes back, an attacking Contador duelled with Nibali to capture second place at the uphill finish of a rainy 161-kilometre (100-mile) ride from Tomblaine to Gerardmer La Mouselaine ski resort. Contador gained only seconds on Nibali, and was still 2.5 minutes behind him.

Nibali launched an ingenious late game attack to win Stage Two earlier the week before and took commanding lead in the Tour de France on July 6 and, since then lead the prestigious tour into stage nine despite giving away Stage Three to Marcel Kittel of Germany, who showed that

he may be the sprinter to beat at the Tour de France.

"It was a fabulous day for me, I gave it the good fight," Nibali, who collected his first Tour stage win and first yellow jersey, said after the race then. "It was difficult. There was a lot of headwind... I was lucky enough to have attacked at the right moment."

Over the last six kilometres, several of the prerace favourites to win the race played a cat and mouse game, quickly switching up the leadership of the breakaway bunch. But Nibali, a 29-year-old rider who has won both the Italian Giro and Spanish Vuelta, timed his attack perfectly by bursting ahead with less than two kilometres to go and holding off surging chasers during the hilly 198-kilometre race from York to Sheffield.

"I had to give my all to win. My legs were really hurting. Today, I was thinking more about winning the stage than taking the jersey," Nibali added.

The Italian was up front with a bunch, including defending champion Chris Froome of Britain and Spanish two-time winner Alberto Contador, each of whom burst to the front of the escaping bunch near the end. Others in the group included 25-year-old American rider Andrew Talansky and Tejay van Garderen.

"It was a very hard day but the home crowd's support was great," said Froome, the Team Sky leader. "I'm tired, but I hope everyone's tired after a day like today."

Running from July 5 to Sunday July 27, 2014, the 101th Tour de France will be made up of 21 stages and will cover a total distance of 3,664 kilometres.

There will be 9 flat stages, 5 hill stages, 6 mountain stages with 5 altitude finishes, 1 individual time-trial stage, 2 rest days, and 9 new stage cities: Leeds, Harrogate, York, Sheffield, Cambridge, Ypres, Oyonnax, Risoul, Maubourguet Pays du Val d'Adour.

For the first time in history, the Tour has now included cities in Britain. It will also cover some parts of Belgium.

The three-week competition will determine the new winner in Paris on July 27.

## Kazakhstan Launches Website in Effort to Host 2022 Winter Olympic Games

By Julia Rutz

National Olympic Committee (NOC) Secretary General Timur Dosymbetov unveiled on July 3 the official website for Kazakhstan's effort to win the right to host the 2022 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games in Almaty.

The website is meant to make people aware of the Games and its facilities, should Almaty win in its bid. It includes location descriptions, city maps and information about upcoming events.

"The launch of the website is an [important] step for us all as it [facilitates the next step] — bringing

Almaty and Kazakhstan in general to the world," explained Dosymbetov. "Despite the fact that our country is very young, we have our traditions preserved throughout history to lead winter sport games like other countries that are also developing winter sports."

"Few people know that Chimbulak (popular ski resort in Kazakhstan) was first opened in 1954 and already in 1962 the resort welcomed international guests to participate in ski competitions," he continued. "Chimbulak will become the area for all high-mountain competitions in 2022. In 1951, Medeo, which is now

known as one of the best high-mountain and high-speed icerinks in the world, was chosen to lead the first skating competition held in Almaty. We also constructed a springboard diving complex four years ago that is now successfully operating. I can say that we are developing permanently, step by step. After the Asian Winter Games in 2011, the right to host the 2022 Winter Olympic Games is a great honour for us and a main long-term goal."

The website, <http://almaty-2022.org>, also allows the public to provide input about Kazakhstan's effort to host the Games.

In related news, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) announced on July 7 that Almaty, Beijing and Oslo, were chosen as the three finalists to host the 2022 Winter Olympics.

"The Executive Board was impressed by the legacy plans of each of the three cities, and will continue to support any future candidate or host city in developing them further," Thomas Bach, president of the International Olympic Committee, said in a statement on IOC website.

The decision on the host city for the 2022 Winter Olympics is expected in the summer of 2015.

## Sports Help Countries Introduce Themselves to the World, Says Sports Press Association President

Continued from Page B1

Kazakhstan still has only five accreditations for journalists to the Olympics, but 155 athletes from Kazakhstan participated in the London Olympics and 55 athletes in Sochi. Do you think this quota needs to be increased?

I am a member of the Commission on Olympic quotas and will protect the rights of all journalists. The criteria depend on many things: on results, on the number of newspapers. The number of quotas is not only a technical question. Usually, a thorough discussion is held and then a decision is made on the last quota. There are quite different situations, but I think that sport in Kazakhstan is developing successfully, and accordingly, the number of Kazakh journalists covering today's largest competitions must grow.

There is much debate about the impact of new technologies on sports journalism. What is your opinion?

Now, many people are talking about the beginning of a new era — an era of blogs and Facebook and Twitter. Once, I listened to the chief editor of the Reuters agency, David Schlesinger, explain the notion of 'a civil journalist.'

"Now the boundaries between a text and an image, professional reporter and citizen journalist, begin to blur. The old way of thinking does not work. We must live with this," he said.

Schlesinger predicted that the first reports from the stadium at the next Olympics would not come from Reuters, the Association Press or Agence France-Presse, but from ordinary bloggers, who would tell us about the results using mobile phones. "In fact, old media will not control the dissemination of news in the future," he added. Schlesinger also said, "[The new era] means to work with mobile phones and digital cameras, to work with the open media, and not against it."

In my opinion, sports journalists should take this statement seriously. We need to accept new technologies and not be afraid of them. We must work together with the leadership of the federations in the accreditation issues.

But one thing should be clear: new technologies should not serve as an excuse for neglecting the duty to defend the values of our sport, but also our society. We must continue to fight for the freedom to express our thoughts, and not only through the Internet. This will help prevent any future

use of the Internet as an instrument of power to stop real freedom of speech.

Politics still occasionally affects sport — just look at the Moscow Olympics in 1980. But as they say, all press is good press.

It's a funny thing, but at the time, it was the best thing the International Olympic Committee [IOC] could have come up with to promote the Olympic Games. Before the Moscow Olympics in 1980, interest in the games in general had fallen away. But Jimmy Carter, then the U.S. president, by the decision to boycott, helped sport instead of killing it. Then, thanks to IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch, the big controversy was launched: whether or not to participate in those Olympics. People stood for compliance with the Olympic Charter, preserving the Olympic spirit. ... The publication where I worked, La Gazzetta dello Sport, saw sales increase in the summer of 1980, because people wanted to get more information.

It was the same four years later in Los Angeles, where Moroccan runner Nawal El Moutawakel won the 400 metre hurdles for the first time. If the Soviet athletes had participated in the Olympic

Games in the United States, she would never have reached the final. Moutawakel's gold medal made people respect her in her country and made a sort of revolution in their minds. So these boycotts were a blessing for someone.

There was also quite a lot of unsportsmanlike sentiment before the Sochi Olympics.

The Winter Olympics, kissed by the sub-tropical climate and inspired by President Vladimir Putin of Russia, were, to be honest, well organised and successful. It was certainly the most visible sports event in the world, due to the uproar before the start of the games on the problem of gays and security. Even those who had never been interested in winter sports gave at least a peek at the opening and closing ceremonies and the odd race.

As expected, nothing tragic happened, but if there had been an attack, it would have endangered the future of sport, because every event, both large and small, would have become open to blackmail. ... The counter measures of the anti-terrorism forces of the many countries that cooperated were perfect.

Thomas Bach, who made his debut as IOC President in Sochi,

is satisfied because he experienced a great Winter Games — but at the same time, he's also now a little worried, because the organisational level was so high that it won't be easy to maintain the same standard in future. There are few countries that can guarantee the same investment, not only for the infrastructure but also for the staff. In the coming years, Europe will find it difficult to beat the Asian competition of Kazakhstan and China, which have resources and suitable sites.

What are the new challenges for young sports journalists?

There are a lot of them. And to overcome them, we representatives of the older generation need to share our experience. I say straight off that I am on the part of the young generation. I prefer to look to the future, because the young generation is amazing. We must allow them to meet each other, because they will build a better future.

Is free media a myth or reality?

It can be a reality if we believe in it. The problem is when you are independent, your price is higher. If you are corrupt, your price will go down. [I]t is a market problem. ... I was always independent.

[B]ut independence doesn't mean we write what we want. Independence means we write in a proper way, criticism when necessary, give an opinion when necessary and also send new messages.

Is there a connection between sport and money? What comes first, sport or money?

When you say sport, there is always big money. Money is not the problem. There is another problem: corruption, manipulation of results — this is the big problem. Money is never a problem, because sport is the biggest industry in the world. It creates many jobs. Don't look only at the players, who receive millions; look how many people can have a decent life in the world thanks to sport. We have to think like this: money is never the problem; the problem is that we have to fight against corruption.

What do you need to become a sport journalist today?

The most important is culture. If you have culture and knowledge, you can be a very good journalist. Also, you must be a very curious person who wants to find a solution, information, because if you are lazy, it's better that you don't do journalism.

# CAPITAL

WEDNESDAY, JULY 16, 2014

## 16th Astana Day Marked with Days of Events, Launch of New Facilities



The celebration of the 16th anniversary of Astana included several days of festivals and concerts.

By **Rufiya Ospanova**

ASTANA – The nation's capital celebrated Astana Day on July 6 with several days of festivals and concerts by world renowned and national singers and bands, including Akon, A'STUDIO, Mezzoforte, Level 42 and many others. The event is held annually to celebrate Astana as Kazakhstan's capital.

Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev gave a speech during this year's celebration in which he noted that Astana is the only capital in the world that was built in 10 years in the 21st century.

"The creation of Astana is closely connected with the fate of the nation and chronicles its independence. In this capital, we opened a new page in the history of our nation and look into the future with confidence. Astana has become an important symbol of statehood and sovereignty. All of these are results of our joint hard work," Nazarbayev said.

The President also met July 6 with the country's leadership, who con-

gratulated Nazarbayev on the Day of the Capital and his own birthday.

Thirty-seven of Astana's couples also marked this year's anniversary by getting married on July 6. The ceremony was held in the square in front of the Atameken Complex. Weddings on Astana Day have become a tradition, and this year was the seventh such ceremony.

"The ceremony of marriage dedicated to the celebration of Astana Day is a colourful, fun project that includes a lot of joy, laughter, smiles, champagne, dancing and fun contests. The young couples decided to register their relationship on this day exactly, and I wish a happy family life to all the newly married," said Elmira Suhanberdiyeva, head of the Astana Department of Education.

After the ceremony, the couples released white balloons into the sky.

Other celebrations were held in the days leading to July 6, including a flag-raising ceremony on July 4 marking the official start of Astana Day celebrations. President Nazarbayev, who is also the Supreme

Commander of the Armed Forces, presented epaulettes to graduates of the country's military institutions. Youth festivals were also held around the city on July 5.

An international kite festival was also held on July 5, attracting kite masters from around the world. It was the first such festival held in Kazakhstan, and the public was treated to a sky full of marine animals, dragons and other fantastic creatures.

On July 5, the Magic Astana international illusionists' festival took place in the Palace of Peace and Accord. The Saffronov Brothers, participants of the Amaze Me show, as well as illusionists Alexandra Skachkova, Anton Abrashekov, Alexander Muratayev and Pavel Karakhtanov performed.

As part of the 16th anniversary celebration, squares and public gardens transformed into spaces for folk festivals and youth events. One such event in front of Mega Astana shopping and entertainment mall included a celebration of Kazakh and world hip-hop culture and sports.

Thematic park festivals were also held as part of the celebrations, including the opening of the first Kun Alemi festival.

"Our parks may be of interest to anyone. You can come to the Lovers' Park and walk or immerse yourself in the memories of Retro Park. You can learn to play the drums [or admire] pottery in Zheruiyk Park. ... You can immerse yourself in Art Nouveau style [or] climb in the mirror maze," a city park administration statement said.

Astana officially became the capital of Kazakhstan in December 1997. In the summer of 1998, its formal presentation to the world took place.

Annual celebrations also include the commissioning of new buildings or infrastructure projects in the city which has grown from a town of 280,000 people to a major city of 840,000. This year was no exception, as the National Museum of Kazakhstan and the Nazarbayev Centre were commissioned, in addition to new campuses of the National Defence University.

## Sixteen Grants to be Awarded to Innovative Entrepreneurs

By **Michelle Witte**

ASTANA – Sixteen projects have been approved for funding through the Innovation Grant Programme run by Astana's Technology Commercialisation Centre (TCC), the TCC announced on July 9. Grants will be given in two categories: proof of concept, a \$120,000 grant for a six-month implementation period, and industrial prototype development, a \$400,000 grant for an 18-month implementation period.

The Innovation Grant Programme, funded by the government of Kazakhstan and run by the TCC, seeks to identify commercially viable scientific and technological ideas in energy, raw materials and/or products processing, information and communication technologies and life sciences.

Seven proof of concept grants were awarded. Winners in the life sciences category were Kairtai Almagambetov for a project on a probiotic preparation for the prevention and treatment of bacterial infections; Sluken Rakhmadiyeva for a project to develop technical standards for a domestic drug preventing liver damage; Zinegul Sarmurzina for a project to develop biological wastewater treatments; Svetlana Vizer for a project to develop a domestic plant-growth stimulator, and Shokhan Alpeisov for a project to develop a module for the magnetic stimulation of grain. Nurzhan Sarsembayeva won for a project to research and produce additives to increase poultry fodder production in the raw materials and products processing category and Nurbol Bakhtybayev won in the information and communication technologies category for a project to develop geographic information systems to determine mining project parameters.

Industrial prototype development grants in the life sciences

category went to Markhabat Batyrkhanov for a project to develop processing, production and sale procedures for a drug for cattle disease; Bayan Sagindykova for a project to organise the production and sale of anti-aging skin care products within the Customs Union and Vasiliy Lyapeikov for a project to justify new environmentally friendly ways of chemically treating crops for pest control purposes.

In the raw materials and products processing category, Uzak Zhababayev won for a mobile oil tank cleaning device for the domestic market, Sarsenbek Montayev for the production of small-scale rubber producing and rock-crushing technologies, Vladimir Mironov for an iron-based powder filler and Talgat Yeshzhanov for a project to produce biomass to enhance oil recovery from reservoirs. In the information and communications technology category, Kamila Shukeeva won for a project to create a one-stop shop to detect counterfeit products and Adilbek Bissenbayev for a project to develop a cloud strategy computer game based on Kazakh and Turkic history.

The grant programme is a major part of a three-year programme at the TCC operated by CRDF Global, which intends to build connections between science and business, support science and technology entrepreneurs and develop the culture of innovation in Kazakhstan.

The programme received more than 500 applications, which Erik Azulay, lead expert at the TCC, called a "huge response ... larger than many of the grant programmes we've seen before" in an Astana Times interview at TCC last month. The applications were reviewed for their scientific validity as well as their commercial value. Forty-three were chosen to give a final presentation; of those, the 16 listed above are to be funded.

## Pastry Artists Awarded at Capital Day Confectioners Festival

By **Michelle Witte**

ASTANA – Astana's sweets shops were honoured and assessed in a morning sugar rush on July 4 at Congress Hall at the second Astana Confectioners' Festival, a celebration of sugar and spice.

Three awards were given at the festival: best cake, best design and best confectionery. The best cake laurel went to the Aprel bakery, best design to Michelle Bakery and best confectionery to the Madlen

confectioners shop. The three won certificates and prizes.

Twenty of the capital's bakeries took part in the event, displaying cookies, cakes and pastries for sale and for sampling. Amid an entertainment programme including singers, dancers, crowd games and a contortionist, capital residents tasted the products on hand and stocked up on treats for later.

This is the second time the festival has been held, said Rizgul Kalgabayeva, deputy head of the

department of business and industry of the Astana Akimat (city hall), the organisers of the event. "It has gained a lot of attention and today we can see a lot of confectionery producers, as well as coffee house and confectioners shop representatives. Two months ago we started our preparations for this event, so I think everything is well organised today."

A 30-kilo birthday cake was also presented to Astana on the city's birthday.



A demonstration of deserts at the second Astana Confectioners' Festival.



A member of Global Hotel Alliance




**Perfect place for your perfect meeting!**

Special Summer Conference package includes:

- \* Meeting space
- \* 2 Coffee-breaks
- \* Business lunch
- \* Free Wi-Fi

from 10 000 KZT per person per day (VAT included)




www.rixos.com

7 Kunayev str, 010000, Astana, Kazakhstan,  
+7 7172 24 50 50, astana@rixos.com

**RIXOS**  
PRESIDENT ASTANA