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**ABOUT SOME SIDES OF DIPLOMACY
AND POLITICAL COOPERATION OF KAZAKHSTAN
WITH THE COUNTRIES OF THE MIDDLE EAST**

Abstract. The general characteristic of diplomatic and political cooperation of the Republic of Kazakhstan with the countries of the Middle East is presented in this article. At the present stage the countries of the Middle East have powerful political, business and intellectual potential. In the international system of energy balance of the countries of this region hold a specific place, that allowed them to create the largest financial and economic centers, rendering on geopolitical alignment of forces in the modern world considerable influence. From the moment of independence the Republic of Kazakhstan tried to establish friendship with the countries of the Middle East, showed the intentions to the closest interaction. Kazakhstan defined them as the perspective partners in the economic, political and cultural relations have all necessary prerequisites and conditions for mutual understanding and cooperation. Signing by Astana and Ankara of a package of important interstate agreements contributed to the forward development both diplomatic contacts between two countries, trade and economic relations, including the summits of the Turkic-speaking states. Dynamically developing bilateral relations of Kazakhstan and Turkey found the reflection in joint actions for implementation of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan project.

Keywords: diplomacy, diplomatic relations, cooperation, trade, humanitarian contracts, international organizations, peace process, legal bases, bilateral relations, long-term cooperation.

Arab countries are considered by Kazakhstan as a basic part of its strategy to boost cooperation and interaction with Islamic world. Arab world is one of the very important players in the global policy. Arab world has big potential to impact or even change the balance of international powers in the future. First of all, as the most sensitive region in the world, Middle East has major influence on the global security system. Arab world has balanced and equal relations with the US, Russia, Europe and China. Arab countries have important place in the world economy. Though, they are not considered something whole and integrated, anyway, with vast energy resources, Arab states still conserve their strategic role in the energy security of global economy. Arab states are also can be seen as a biggest market of investments for Western companies and, vice versa as biggest investors for US and EU economies. Oil-rich Arab states are main consumer of technologies from developed countries. It is obvious that Arab nations have quite strong impact on cultural and civilizational impact on other Muslim nations.

When Kazakhstan has declared its independence, Arab counties totally supported its actions and initiatives in the foreign policy. According to the former Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Saudi Arabia Bagdad Amreyev, interaction with Arab states helps Kazakhstan to diversify its integration into the world community, to balance its foreign policy, to strengthen its position in the international issues, to attract some investments and funds, to reanimate its once-interrupted cultural ties, to have the support from Arab states in its international projects and initiatives and so on [1, p. 7]. And the most important thing is that Kazakh people have been always spiritually oriented to the South Muslim and Arab nations as an integral part of this great civilization. Muslim identity of Central Asian states makes this region an inseparable part of the Ummah.

As for now, Kazakhstan has good image owing its last chairmanship in the OSCE and OIC in the whole Arab world. Kazakhstan was given a chance to chair at the OIC to be closer integrated with the OIC member-states. The majority of Arab countries perceive Kazakhstan positively given its international reputation and pro-active foreign policy. Kazakhstan is seen by Arab experts as a dynamically developing state in Central Asian region. Arab counties support the initiatives of Kazakhstan in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of mass destructive armaments. Arab media highly estimates the economic, political and social developments being realized in Kazakhstan and do not criticize its domestic or foreign policies at all.

Arab experts also notice the growing importance of the region in the international policy. Nevertheless, they state that once forgotten Big Game between the global superpowers in the region has started to take place once again. Arab experts express some anxiety and worry about the weak role that Arab Countries play in the Central Asia. In this context, the only consolation for Arabs remains the Muslim identity of Central Asian nations. According to Tayzhan Bolathan, “Central Asia has to be regarded as continuation of Middle East in geopolitical and civilizational senses. As the expert concludes, Central Asian nations are closer historic relatives of Middle Eastern ones. Hesays that Central Asian countries have more in common with Middle Eastern Arab countries. Both regions has rich natural resources, they are important geopolitical spot, where the interests of global superpowers focused on with closely existed military bases, political elites of both regions still afraid of radical political changes, including possible shift of power, increasing Islamism and people protests” [2, p. 11].

Position of Arab countries in regard with Central Asia can be considered as a modest one. According to above mentioned expert, in the early period of their independency, Central Asian states needed more financial and political support from Arab world. “How could the leaders of Arab world manage to miss the opportunity of cooperation with this fertile and favorable region? Perhaps, Arabs did not yet realize the importance of Central Asiaacknowledges the expert”. This can be explained by the domestic problems of Arab region by itself, lack of economic interest in Central Asian markets, closeness of some Central Asian states and limited geo-economic and political resources. But, this does not mean that Arab countries have no room in the foreign policy of the region. Some visible investments for infrastructure projects came from the Gulf Arab states like Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates.

There were strong political and cultural relations between Kazakhstan and Egypt before the so-called Arab Spring. Before the global economic crisis very important documents were singed between Kazakhstan and the Gulf Arab states concerning the future economic projects with more than \$ 30 billion. But, they were just expression of intention by Arab investors than their real and final decisions. For example, some Kazakh experts say that in the Western Kazakhstan Arab investors will invest the building of “new satellite-city” of Aktau, and the first energy hub in the Caspian region, development of new touristic zone Kenderli near the Caspian Sea. Financial crisis somehow affected investors from abroad who initially carried big economic ideas regarding development of new projects in Kazakhstan. But, having big financial opportunities Arab investment funds and companies still seek for the new favorable markets to invest. Arab businessmen have already been investing in construction, hotel business, technologies, banking and communications. It is also important for them to diversify their foreign economic relations [3, p. 58].

Kazakhstan’s foreign policy towards Arab counties based on the ideas of prudence, benefits, building and cooperation. As for real policy, Kazakhstan actually seeks for Arab capital flows to be injected into its domestic economy, it need new financial resources and extra credit funds to support its own development. Kazakhstan signed up an agreement with the IDB Bank and approximately \$ 1.5 billion investments will be injected into Kazakh economy in the nearest future. Strategic Partnership Program was signed with IDB Islamic financial institutions and banks like al-Hilal have been successfully working in Kazakhstan. Later there has been declared that Kazakhstani National Bank will introduce principles of Islamic financing, and thus, will attract new credits from Arab financial markets.

In this paper we have studied three Arab countries which include Egypt, Saudi Arabia and UAE’s strategies in Central Asia, and especially in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Egypt as a leading and central country of Middle East and Arab world paid special attention to Central Asia, accurately observing all the development in the region. Egypt as a heavyweight of Arab world must be focused on. Egypt is an intellectual and political leader among all the Arab states. Egypt

once was political and economic partner of the former Soviet Union. As former ambassador of Kazakhstan to Egypt Bolatkhan Tayzhan said, Egypt's political strategy towards Central Asia shows that this region shares the same cultural and geo-economic zone, thus, both the regions can be symbolically considered in the entire geo-political framework. According to the Egyptian experts, Egypt as a rival of Iran, Turkey and Israel, is urged to implement its strategies in Central Asia by the means of cultural and religious tools, spreading the basic component of Islam - Arabic language.

Egypt has always major impact on the Middle Eastern issues including the Arab-Israel conflict. Neither global nor regional issues of Arab counties could be solved without Egypt's standard. In this context, Egypt had initially considered Central Asian states as possible supporters of its Palestine policy, thus, it would strengthen strategic power of Muslim community on the one hand, and insure mutual rapprochement of the two regions on the other. Both regions have significant labor forces, sufficient natural resources, industrial possibilities, some experience in market economy and so on [4].

Egypt has been making an effort to shape the Middle East region free from nuclear power and supports Kazakhstan's CICA initiatives. The common cultural features of Middle Eastern and Central Asian nations are predominated in their relations over their economic cooperation. Egypt needed new energy and fuel resources, new markets for its products and goods. For this purpose, it wanted to take advantage of its newly shaping relations with the Central Asian states. For Kazakhstan Egypt was an open window into the Arab world. Egyptian strategists understand the possible importance of the Great Silk Road project that would in the future connect together the Europe and Asia, thus, the transit role of Central Asia will might only strengthen. In this possible case, Egypt would be ready for international competition for access to these markets. Egypt's strategy is to be a leader among Arab counties in Central Asia [5].

Kazakhstan respects Egypt's leading historic role and its policies in Middle East peaceful regulations processes. Kazakhstan and Egypt are the main countries of their regions. Kazakhstan's exports to Egypt include industrial commodities, agricultural goods, natural resources etc. Egypt's exports to Kazakhstan comprise citrus goods, pharmaceuticals, leather, and furniture, etc. All the Middle East Arab countries need grain and meat. Kazakhstan could work in this direction. There are new opportunities in economy, commerce, tourism, energy. The main problem is a lack of information between the business circles of two countries. There are only 11 companies with Egyptian capital work in Kazakhstan. Iran, Turkey and Israel's cooperation with Kazakhstan in energy, transportation, technologies, military, industry sectors urges Egypt to develop its relations with the region. There are certain interests of Kazakhstan in the Arab world, yet they were not clearly formulated. The mutual relationship of the two regional powers meets long-term interests of Muslim community. But, unfortunately, the two states did not use all the existing possibilities. Two countries could cooperate together in the sphere of nuclear disarmament.

Achievements in education and culture are the good example of mutual relations between Kazakhstan and Egypt. The countries have much in common in terms of history, religion and culture. Egyptian cultural center and Kazakh-Egyptian University of Islamic Culture are real results of common works in this direction. Especially, this university became one of the respectable spiritual and religious centers in Kazakhstan. There is a big importance for Kazakhstan to further develop its relations with Egypt. Egypt could help and support Kazakhstan in its political initiatives and attempts to build closer relations with other Arab countries [6, p. 68].

Saudi Arabia is the most important oil-rich state with the big symbolic impact on the Muslim countries. It implements active Islamic policies, finances, different religious programs. Saudi Arabia is one of the key pragmatist and conservative political and economic players in the international and regional policies. Majority of the Central Asian states define Saudi Arabia as not only the biggest oil-exporter, but, also as financially rich state that could help them. There is certain intention of this country to strengthen its positions in the region, lack of real economic interests from the Saudi Arabia and closeness of both Middle East and Central Asia except Kazakhstan makes this purposes limited. Saudi investors has sponsored many infrastructural projects in Kazakhstan, including construction of the building of Kazakh Parliament (\$10 million), Cardiologic center in Almaty (\$5 million), construction of Cardiologic center in Astana (\$8 million), aid for military school Jas Otan (\$1 million).

The biggest Saudi Arabian companies that work in Kazakhstan are as follows: Zameel Construction Company, Gulf Star oil fields Development Company, Taib Bank, Lariba Bank. Gulf States like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, and Oman have sponsored construction of official state buildings,

mosques, hospitals and medical centers. Saudi Arabian Development Fund could play an important role in the economic issues. This fund issued grants and credits for realization of many projects in Kazakhstan regions. Especially, financial aids were injected into development of underground communications and municipality projects. Saudi Arabian government and private business have big interests in agriculture and cattle-breeding sectors of Kazakhstan. Kazakh investors are interested in tourism and hotel business in Saudi Arabia [7]. The main problems are that foreign policy of Kingdom is not that active as was the case in the early 90's; there are some controversies between the ruling dynasty and elites, inwardness in terms of domestic issues. Kazakhstan could create extra routes to export its raw materials and minerals to the Middle East. There are many Arab investors, who appraise the real investment possibilities in Kazakhstan like Kingdom Holding from Saudi Arabia.

As for the United Arab Emirates, there has been made very important steps to boost cooperation between Kazakhstan and UAE in the last ten years. In fact, the UAE officials consider Kazakhstan as one of the most important countries in the Central Asian region. The UAE gives all keenness to support the bilateral relations in all fields of cooperation as per the directives of the two countries to strengthen the pillars of the partnership. There is also a great desire to support this relationship in the future in the international cooperation in the framework of political, economic, commercial, investment and humanitarian partnership. There is also one similar point of view between the two countries, regarding all issues at the international level as well as their policies in a lot of regional and international levels, which provide a strong partnership as the United Arab Emirates participates in the number of international activities and conferences in Kazakhstan. As Arab media appraises, Kazakhstan is a favorable region with high economic potential. Arab businessmen can make significant progress in oil, gas and food industry, construction materials, equipment, pharmaceuticals, agriculture in Kazakhstan. Especially, partnership in UAE investments is a priority in mutual relations. Nowadays, some big investment projects in oil and gas and mortgage sector are being implemented [5].

It is well-known, that one of the favorite UAE-financed projects is the construction of the biggest and unique building of Abu Dhabi Plaza multifunctional complex in Astana. This building will be the highest one in Central Asia and 14-th in the world. The launch in Abu Dhabi Plaza is a real contribution to the development of Astana. There are several major projects under the process in the oil and gas sphere, as well as in the banking sector. For example, JSC KazMunaiGaz and public joint-stock company Mubadala Development Company for exploration and development of the Caspian Offshore.

IDB and Asian Development Bank have created Islamic Infrastructure Fund named Al-Hilal Bank with the market capitalization of, at least, \$500 million. It is the first bank in Kazakhstan that works under Sharia principles and the only Islamic bank in the post-Soviet area. Al-Hilal Bank has the plans to invest \$250 million in Kazakhstan. Corporative sectors, industry and minerals extraction has given a priority. Al-Hilal Bank has intended to invest \$1 billion in Kazakhstan.

The joint Kazakhstan-UAE Investment Fund "Al-Falah" with a registered capital of \$500 million also actively works in the market of our Republic and neighboring countries. Approximately 10000 Kazakhstan citizens are now the residents of the UAE. Most of them are working on contract in Dubai and the Northern Emirates, particularly in the trade sector and private business. UAE Etihad Airways Company has launched direct flights between Abu Dhabi, Astana and Almaty. The number of UAE companies, have registered in Kazakhstan, is 50. These firms work in the spheres of tourism, transportations, and services. Especially, UAE-located PD World Transportations Company has serious plans to enter the Kazakhstani market.

As for marketing researches, UAE-located PD World Transportations Company has serious plans to enter the Kazakhstan market. Representatives of Crown Middle East Fuel and Products (UAE, Dubai) have been conducting marketing researches and studying existing opportunities in Southern Kazakhstan's agriculture, especially, in cattle-breeding sector. Kazakh-Arab Fund of Direct Investments with the name of Falah Growth Fund finances launch of poultry farming in Almaty region. There are some investment agreements signed up with Gulf Finance House Investment Company from Bahrain, Ithamar Bank, International Oil-and-Gas Investment Companies from UAE.

In the late of 2000's the idea of construction of energy hub in Western Kazakhstan was supported by Arab companies like PFC Energy International and Gulf Finance House. It is supposed that it may be complex of scientific and industrial facilities, services and transports regional hub. International Petroleum

Investment Company (IPIC) had some plans to cooperate with Kazakhstan in gas and chemical industry. Alnair Capital Holding and Emirates Islamic Bank had some experience in working with Kazakhstani banking sectors [6, p. 70].

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia takes an important place on the regional and world scene. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is one of the largest and richest states of the Middle East, one of the most influential states of the region. It is necessary to add that the Kingdom is the spiritual center of all Muslim worlds. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) was among the first Arab and Muslim countries, which recognized independence of Kazakhstan in December 30, 1991. The Protocol on establishment of official diplomatic relations between two states was signed on April 30, 1994 during the visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. During this visit were discussed the questions of bilateral relations strengthening in all areas of partnership. Work on preparation of the First President Elbasy Nursultan Nazarbayev's official visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which took place in September, 1994 was also carried out. Visit of the President of Kazakhstan to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia marked the beginning of an important stage of bilateral relations development and their advance forward. New important turn in development of the relations between our countries was visit to Kazakhstan of His Royal Highness of the Crown Prince Sultan bin Abdel Aziz, the Deputy prime minister of Saudi Arabia, the Minister of Defense and aircraft (at that time the Second Deputy prime minister), the General Inspector of the Kingdom. This visit took place in 2000. During the visit the strong foundation for political dialogue between two countries and cooperation in the most various areas was laid.

Position of both sides, concerning the activity in Islam, was reflected. Prospects of further cooperation between two countries, ways of strengthening of this mutually beneficial cooperation in all spheres were planned. Ministers of both countries received direct instructions to take all necessary measures for implementation of the arrangements, containing in the documents, signed between two states. The most important among them is the document, signed in the sphere of trade, providing increase of annual barter level that would correspond to the mutual importance of states and their economic weight.

Other important result of this visit were the trips of the Saudi businessmen to Kazakhstan with the purpose to examine directly opportunities of our country and search the ways for investment, and also discussion of those privileges, which the Kazakhstan government gives to the Saudi investors. There was an idea of creation joint companies, in which would work the businesspersons from both countries.

Main purpose was to provide exhaustive information on the companies and the organizations, expressing desire to take part in trade and economic cooperation between two countries. Special emphasis was put on companies' activity, strengthening in the sphere of oil production, power, petrochemical industry, as both countries have a wide experience of activity in these areas. Saudi Arabia is one of the most important producers of oil in the world. In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia serious development was gained by the petrochemical industry, front line not only on regional, but also at world level. KSA is the founder member of the Organization of exporters of oil (OPEC). Kazakhstan also has considerable reserves of the oil developed by the petrochemical industry and educational institutions preparing shots of scientists and experts for this promising branch. That is why the President Nazarbayev met in the residence in the city of Riyadh with its Excellency the engineer Ali An-Nuaymi, the Oil Minister and mineral resources, and also held a meeting with the engineer Muhammad of Al-Mada, the head of the Saudi company «Sabik».

The Central Asian counties need finances for realization of big economic projects in energy and transportation. Saudi Arabia and Gulf States could support the region in the name of development their relations with Central Asia. They have sufficient financial resources to have more influence over the region. As for Egypt, it will develop its political strategy with some less important economic projects in the region.

Dubai, which should be regarded as a special partner in the sphere of foreign economic relations, considering the scale of its investment and financial potential in the UAE, may be of the greatest interest in the medium and long term for the creation of the House of Kazakhstan. Network of seven industrial zones, one Business Park, three special free economic zones and two world-class maritime ports effectively function in the Emirate. There are headquarters and representative offices of companies included in Global 2000. In addition, Dubai is actively preparing for the World Expo 2020, creating favorable conditions for attracting foreign direct investment [7]. These aspects will help to synchronize the issues of

building transport and logistics routes with the assistance of Kazakhstan's exporters in accessing the distribution channels in the target markets of the Middle East.

In the conclusion we would like to note, that the Republic of Kazakhstan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) continue to build close and trusting relations within the framework of mutually-beneficial bilateral cooperation, the foundations of which were laid since Kazakhstan has gained independence. Undoubtedly, the dynamics of meetings at the highest level testifies to an unprecedented interaction from the perspective of international relations, in accordance to which the cooperation between Kazakhstan and the UAE is moving forward. Kazakhstan and the UAE effectively collaborate on multilateral platforms, including the United Nations (UN), Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA) and the number of other international organizations and closely coordinate their actions to resolve the pressing problems of the international agenda. This fact objectively reflects the growing political weight of our country among the Arab states of the region against the backdrop of Kazakhstan's active role as current non-permanent member of the UN Security Council in resolving complex international and regional issues, including the inter-Syrian negotiations in Astana, aimed at a peaceful settlement of the armed conflict in Syria and the stabilization of the situation in the region.

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ҚАЗАҚСТАННЫҢ ОРТА ЖӘНЕ ТАЯУ ШЫҒЫС ЕЛДЕРІМЕН САЯСИ ҚАРЫМ-ҚАТЫНАСЫМЕН ДИПЛОМАТИЯСЫНЫҢ КЕЙБІР ҚЫРЛАРЫ ЖАЙЛЫ

Аннотация. Мақалада Қазақстан Республикасының Орта және Таяу Шығыс елдерімен дипломатиялық және саяси ынтымақтастығына жалпы сипаттамасы берілген. Қазіргі кезеңде Орта және Таяу Шығыс қуатты елдерінде саяси, іскерлік және зияткерлік әлеуетке ие. Елдің халықаралық жүйесіндегі энергия теңдеуішті мүмкіндік берген осы аймақтың ірі орталықтары оларға елеулі ықпал ететін күштерді орналастыруды геосаясатқа арнаған қазіргі әлемдегі қаржы-экономикалық қатынаста алатын орны ерекше. Қазақстан тәуелсіздік алған кезінен бастап Орта және Таяу Шығыс елдерімен достық қарым-қатынас орнату ниетін көрсете отырып, өзіне тығыз өзара әрекет етуге тырысты. ҚР мен осы мемлекеттер арасындағы экономикалық, саяси және мәдени тұрғыдан көрініс тапты, себебі оларда Қазақстан болашағы зор әріптестерінің өзара түсіністік пен ынтымақтастық үшін шарттар осы өңірлердегі барлық қажетті алғышарттар қалыптасты. Осы елдер арасындағы дипломатиялық байланыстар мен сауда-экономикалық қатынастарды дамыту, сондай-ақ мемлекетаралық келісімдердің пакетін Астана мен осы мемлекеттер үлгі ретінде маңызды ықпал етті, оның ішінде саммиттер шеңберінде түркітілдес мемлекеттердің. Қазақстан мен осы мемлекеттер арасындағы қарым-қатынастар қарқынды дамып келе жатқан осы жобаны іске асыру жөніндегі бірлескен іс-қимыл Баку - Тбилиси - Жейхан өз көрінісін тапты.

Түйін сөздер: дипломатия, дипломатиялық қарым-қатынастар, ынтымақтастық, сауда, гуманитарлық келісім шарттар, халықаралық ұйымдар, бейбіт процесс, құқықтық негіз, екіжақты қатынас, көпмерзімді байланыстар.

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О НЕКОТОРЫХ ГРАНЯХ ДИПЛОМАТИИ И ПОЛИТИЧЕСКОМ СОТРУДНИЧЕСТВЕ КАЗАХСТАНА СО СТРАНАМИ СРЕДНЕГО И БЛИЖНЕГО ВОСТОКА

Аннотация. В статье представлена общая характеристика дипломатического и политического сотрудничества Республики Казахстан со странами Среднего и Ближнего Востока. На современном этапе страны Среднего и Ближнего Востока обладают мощным политическим, деловым и интеллектуальным потенциалом.

В международной системе энергобаланса страны этого региона занимают особое место, что позволило им создать крупнейшие финансово-экономические центры, оказывающие на геополитическую расстановку сил в современном мире значительное влияние. С момента обретения независимости Казахстан стремился установить со странами Среднего и Ближнего Востока дружественные отношения, демонстрируя намерения к самому тесному взаимодействию. Казахстан видит в них перспективных партнеров в экономическом, политическом и культурном плане, так как между РК и государствами данных регионов сформировались все необходимые предпосылки и условия для взаимопонимания и сотрудничества. Подписание Астаной и Анкарой пакета важных межгосударственных соглашений способствовало поступательному развитию как дипломатических контактов между двумя странами, так и торгово-экономических отношений, в том числе и в рамках саммитов тюркоязычных государств. Динамично развивающиеся двусторонние отношения Казахстана и Турции нашли свое отражение в совместных действиях по реализации проекта Баку – Тбилиси – Джейхан.

Ключевые слова: дипломатия, дипломатические отношения, сотрудничество, торговля, гуманитарные контракты, международные организации, мирный процесс, правовые основы, двусторонние отношения, долгосрочное сотрудничество.

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