



Kazakh, Kyrgyz Presidents Discuss Bilateral Relations



President of Kyrgyzstan Almazbek Atambayev (l) and President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev discuss bilateral relations and cooperation within Eurasian integration associations.

By Merey Kabiden

ASTANA – Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev and Kyrgyz President Almazbek Atambayev met in Almaty on March 26 to discuss bilateral relations and cooperation within Eurasian integration associations.

The leaders discussed bilateral relations in trade, economy, investment cooperation, water management and energy, as well as in the

cultural and humanitarian spheres, according to the President's press service. They also examined the activities of the Kazakh-Kyrgyz Investment Fund, discussed the state of regional security and exchanged views on international issues.

The Kazakh President noted the importance of high-level discussions, which influence the economic development of the two countries.

"Compared to 2011, bilateral trade turnover increased 41 percent, exceeding one billion U.S. dollars. During the years of independence, Kazakhstan has invested in the Kyrgyz economy more than one billion U.S. dollars. There is still a lot of work to do. We are to hold meetings of the Interstate Commission, as well as the Supreme Interstate Council of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. In this regard, we are ready to discuss all

aspects of our cooperation," Nazarbayev said.

President Atambayev thanked the Kazakh President for the meeting and emphasised that Kazakhstan is a leader in the Central Asian region in peace and stability, as well as socio-economic indices.

"During our meetings, I always note something useful for me and always say that I may learn a lot from you," Atambayev said.

In Astana, Top U.S. Diplomat Reaffirms Importance of Strategic Partnership

By Arsen Kulmanbetov

ASTANA – A top U.S. diplomat began her three day tour of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan on April 1 with top-level meetings in the Kazakh capital and a lecture at a university bringing the overriding message of a far away nation being committed to further strengthening bilateral ties and promoting regional cooperation in Central Asia.

Soon after her arrival in Astana, Nisha Biswal, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs, met with Foreign Minister Erlan Idrissov and discussed implementing the results of talks between U.S. President Barack Obama and President Nursultan Nazarbayev that took place in The Hague on March 25.

The two officials noted with satisfaction the work of the Strategic Partnership Dialogue Commission, as well as of the Commission on Scientific and Technical Cooperation.

Promoting trade and investment cooperation also featured prominently in the talks. Idrissov stressed Kazakhstan's interest in seeing more active participation by U.S. companies in industrial and innovative development of his country. Since 1993, U.S. companies invested more than \$25 billion in the Kazakh economy, mostly in

oil and gas. More than 300 joint ventures in key economic sectors work in Kazakhstan. In 2013, trade between Kazakhstan and the United States totaled \$2.75 billion, 9 percent more than in 2012.

Biswal and Idrissov also exchanged views on international and regional security, affairs including the situation in and around Afghanistan and Ukraine.

While in Astana, Biswal also met Prosecutor General Askhat Daulbayev to discuss cooperation in the legal sphere. She also met other senior officials in the presidential office and in the government.

In her lecture to students of the Lev Gumilyov Eurasian National University, the U.S. diplomat focused on promoting security, prosperity and connectivity in the Central Asian region and the shared visions the U.S. and Kazakhstan have in these areas.

"Kazakhstan has a very rich past – the geographic and historical crossroads between East and West," Biswal told the audience. "But I am most excited when I think about Kazakhstan's future, and the role you all will play in building that future, whether as captains of industry and commerce, or as politicians or diplomats – you will make our world more secure, more connected, and more prosperous."

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Research Project on Challenges of European Multilingualism Launches

By Altair Nurbekov

THE HAGUE – A consortium of universities and scholars in 18 European countries has begun a new multi-disciplinary research project with a view to developing policy recommendations on managing the growing challenges relating to multilingualism in an ever-expanding European Union.

Dr. László Marác, a professor of linguistics in the Faculty of Humanities at the Department of European Studies of the University of Amsterdam, is first deputy coordinator of the new project, which also brings together scholars from institutions such as the University of Geneva, the University of Ljubljana, Universität Augsburg and many others.

In an interview with The Astana

Times, Marác spoke about the project, called "Mobility and Inclusion in Multilingual Europe" (MIME), the challenges of multilingualism in Europe and his views on the situation with language in Kazakhstan.

Why did the consortium of universities decide to do this type of study?

The management of multilingualism is really a challenge in Europe. We already have 24 official languages and more languages will have a similar status if more countries join the European Union, like Serbia, Albania and Iceland. Furthermore, 60 minority languages are recognised in European regions and, on top of that, in a number of European cities and megacities, recent immigrant languages are being spoken.

We need to develop a language policy based on serious research in the domain of political discourse, society, education, and transnational communication.

Language policy has been considered a traditional field of linguistics but more is needed to develop a language policy satisfying the linguistic needs of the 21st century.

With my colleague from the University of Geneva, Professor Francois Grin, an economist, we formed a European "dream team" of interdisciplinary researchers, including linguists, social and political scientists, economists and legal, educational and communication experts, among others, working at highly recognised European universities.

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FM Idrissov Visits Moscow to Promote Ties with Russia and Within CSTO

By Ilyas Omarov

MOSCOW – Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan Erlan Idrissov began his official visit to Russia on April 3, seeking to promote ties with the country's northern neighbour, including with a view of the upcoming establishment of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU).

The visit began with Idrissov's annual bilateral meeting with his counterpart, Sergey Lavrov, where they discussed implementing strategic agreements reached at the level of the heads of state of Kazakhstan and Russia.

The two foreign ministers discussed the state and prospects of Kazakh-Russian cooperation in political, trade-economic and cultural areas. They focused on practical steps toward strengthening inter-regional and cross-border cooperation and facilitating further collaboration in the space, energy, transportation and communications areas. The Plan of Joint Actions for 2013-2015 approved by the presidents of the two countries in December 2012 was discussed.

Cross-border cooperation is one of the most concrete ways of developing trade and economic ties between the two countries, contributing the lion's share of annual bilateral trade. Trade turnover between Russia and Kazakhstan was up almost 5 percent in 2013 against 2012 and has reached \$26.5 billion, Lavrov reported after their talk. Kazakhstan's foreign minister called the figure impressive, but said it was just the beginning. "Russia is Kazakhstan's ally and a major trade and economic partner; the trade turnover figure is impressive, but the potential is not fully unleashed. There are some realms in which more specific steps are required," he said.

The next annual forum of cross-



Foreign Ministers of Kazakhstan and Russia Erlan Idrissov (l) and Sergey Lavrov discussed implementing strategic agreements reached at the level of the two heads of state.

border cooperation will take place in Atyrau in the fall of 2014, focusing on innovations in hydrocarbon industries.

During their meeting, Idrissov and Lavrov also exchanged views on a wide range of international issues and cooperation within international organisations, including the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO), the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Build-

ing Measures in Asia (CICA) and the United Nations.

They also focused on fostering security and stability in Central Asia and exchanged views on issues relating to the Caspian Sea's legal status.

Speaking of the EEU, the two ministers announced that the draft treaty establishing the union is to be presented to the three heads of state of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia in Minsk at the end of April, while a month later the signing of this treaty is expected to take place in Astana.

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National Nuclear Centre Develops Innovative Projects, Improves Nation's Health

By Aigul Bidanova

SEMEY – Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev's recent state-of-the-nation address directed officials to develop new domestic high-tech industries. Yerlan Batyrbekov, Director General of the National Nuclear Centre, Academician of the National Academy of Natural Sciences of Kazakhstan and Doctor of Physical and Mathematical Sciences recently discussed the implementation of this goal in the nuclear industry.

How would you describe Kazakhstan's overall approach

to military versus peaceful atom?

Today, Kazakhstan is known as one of the most active and consistent proponents of a nuclear weapons free world and a country that has taken a number of specific steps in this direction. In August 1991, by decree of President Nursultan Nazarbayev, the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site was shut down. We voluntarily renounced the world's fourth largest nuclear arsenal. We completely destroyed the existing testing infrastructure of weapons of mass destruction on our territory, which was noted in the joint statement by the presidents of Kazakhstan, Russia and

the United States at the Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul in 2012. We renounced the use of highly enriched uranium on our territory and transferred our research reactors to low-enriched fuel.

Kazakhstan, together with other Central Asian countries in 2009, created a nuclear-weapons-free zone in Central Asia and initiated such important international projects as the Universal Declaration on the Achievement of a Nuclear Weapons Free World and The ATOM Project ("Abolish Testing. Our Mission"), aimed at uniting public opinion worldwide against nuclear testing.

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NATION

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9, 2014

21st Session of APK to Focus on Peace, Spirituality, Harmony

By Julia Rutz

ASTANA – The 21st session of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan (APK) will be held April 18 at Astana’s Palace of Independence. The session will focus on the Kazakhstan 2050 Strategy and fostering a culture of peace, spirituality and harmony.

“Ideological problems are the basis of the current crisis the world is facing. That is why the topic of the assembly is so important,” Vice Chairman of the Association of Russian, Slavic and Cossack Organisations of Kazakhstan Anatoly Bashmakov said at a March 26 Central Communications Service media briefing.

“About 1,500 people are expected to attend the event, among them members of the Assembly and representatives of the diplomatic corps, the mass media, international non-governmental organisations and the clergy,” said head of the secretariat of the Assembly Nazipa Shanai.

The session will include meetings with members of Kazakhstan’s Mazhilis, including nine deputies of the Mazhilis who are elected by the APK and excursions around Astana for delegates coming from the regions. The Assembly’s Council will also hold an extended meeting the day before the session begins.

The assembly’s current makeup is a good example of national unity and equal representation of every nation, Bashmakov said. “The Assembly has done a great job to change not only the structure, but also the content of the organisation in recent years.”

The briefing also discussed the opening of Departments of Tolerance in Kazakh universities. The Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan opened the first such department at the Eurasian National University (ENU) in Astana; state universities in Kostanai, Pavlodar and Kyzylorda are next on the list. The departments are meant to instill a sense of tolerance and respect for others among students, as well as help them learn the histories of the different ethnic groups represented in Kazakhstan.

“I believe the Departments of Tolerance will teach ENU students the virtues of tolerance, culture and respect for people of different nationalities,” Bashmakov said.

Kazakhstan 2050 Plan Unveiled Online in 20 Languages

By Julia Rutz

ASTANA – The Kazakh Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Kazcont on March 27 unveiled online access to the country’s Kazakhstan 2050 plan in 20 languages.

The translation of “Kazakhstan 2050: A New Political Course of the Established State” will allow foreign partners to find out more about Kazakhstan’s priorities and goals.

“I would like to note that during the years of independence, Kazakhstan has become a reliable, responsible and respected member of the international community. All the events and processes that take place in our country are monitored by our foreign partners,” said MFA Press Secretary Nurzhan Aitmakhanov.

According to Aitmakhanov, the translation of “Kazakhstan 2050: A New Political Course of the Established State” into languages such as English, Italian and Span-

Senate Speaker Says East Kazakhstan Has Huge Potential to Develop

By Token Aryn

UST-KAMENOGORSK – Chairman of Kazakhstan’s Senate Kassym-Jomart Tokayev led a delegation from the Senate of Kazakhstan on a visit to the East Kazakhstan region on March 28 to discuss the implementation of President Nursultan Nazarbayev’s state-of-the-nation address.

Speaking to students and faculty at Shakarim State University in Semey (formerly Semipalatinsk), Tokayev emphasised that Kazakhstan’s current achievements and its own development model form the basis of a new political course presented by the President in his address, “The Kazakhstan Way 2050: Common Goal, Common Interests, Common Future.”

“The world community recognises our country as a democratic state pursuing a path of political and economic modernisation, and having significantly improved the quality of people’s lives,” Tokayev said. President Nazarbayev’s successful participation in the recent Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague is further evidence of that, Tokayev added. In The Hague, Kazakhstan and the United States adopted a Joint Statement on Co-operation in the Sphere of Non-proliferation and Strengthening Nuclear Security, which covers further work to strengthen physical security at the former Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test Site.

Speaking on the implementation of the Kazakhstan 2050 Strategy, Tokayev stressed that the future and the implementation of the Mangilik El (“Eternal Nation”) concept is largely dependent on the younger generation. He addressed issues related to the government’s youth policy, emphasising education, financial support for students and further legislative innovations securing a minimum guaranteed social package and systemic socio-economic measures.

Tokayev also used this opportunity to call upon the country’s youth to be industrious and work hard because “a dignified life,



Chairman of Kazakhstan’s Senate Kassym-Jomart Tokayev (c) discussed the implementation of President Nursultan Nazarbayev’s state-of-the-nation address during his visit to the East Kazakhstan region.

well-being [and] attaining a new quality of life are to be achieved only through hard work.” At the same time, young people must be mobile and ready to endure tough challenges, Tokayev said. “You should live in those places of our country where your work is needed, respected, and well paid,” he told the audience.

In Semey, Tokayev also visited the SemAZ factory, which assembles trucks, buses and agricultural machines.

In Ust-Kamenogorsk, the regional centre of East Kazakhstan, Tokayev met with the region’s prominent personalities, entrepreneurs and general public. Addressing the assembled guests, he expanded upon the tasks for the country and the East Kazakhstan region in light of the President’s long-term strategy.

“Our country is trusted as a reliable partner in international affairs, and is respected for its

genuine contribution to nuclear disarmament, strengthening international security, integration and for multilateral economic cooperation,” he said. “At the same time, a key course of our activities was and will be peace and stability in the country, equality of all people and ensuring citizen’s rights.”

According to Tokayev, the task of the legislative and executive branches of power is to create economic, legal and social conditions enabling citizens to accomplish their aspirations and hopes.

He emphasised the importance of the President’s recent instructions to the government and the National Bank to ensure fiscal stability, lower the percentage of inactive loans, revive the stock market, decrease the state’s participation in the economy, cut down the shadow economy, improve the investment climate and increase the competitiveness of the agricultural sector.

Tokayev called East Kazakhstan a dynamic region with a unique nature, huge industrial potential, a diverse social infrastructure and a strong agricultural sector. The region is developing steadily, contributing to the country’s overall positive socio-economic trends. In particular, the region is among the leaders in financing industrial and innovative development projects.

Tokayev stressed that Kazakhstan’s senators are actively implementing their constitutional authorities for the development of the regions they represent. “This is very important, taking into consideration the vast territory, diverse climatic conditions and various levels of economic development of the country’s regions,” he said.

The delegation also visited a new sports cluster taking shape in Ust-Kamenogorsk and the Bobrovka+ agricultural farm.

NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev met April 2 with Kazakh Minister of Internal Affairs Kalmukhanbet Kassymov in the Akorda. The minister briefed the President on the country’s crime rates and prevention efforts, according to the Akorda press service. The President noted recent crime prevention successes, including a 17 percent reduction in serious crimes, a 52 percent reduction in robberies and a 3 percent reduction in home burglaries. Nazarbayev emphasised the need for better public disclosure of minor offences and to make punishment for them inevitable. Kassymov elaborated upon efforts being taken to increase traffic safety, in particular, on the installation of street surveillance cameras and “smart” traffic lights in Astana and Almaty and for tougher implementation of a zero tolerance crime policy. At the end of the meeting, the President gave a number of specific instructions on strengthening law and order and public safety, as well as on observing discipline and law by law-enforcement officers.

At a March 31 Central Communications Service (CCS) briefing, Chairman of the Board of the Astana EXPO 2017 Company Talgat Yermegiyayev said the cost of EXPO 2017 would be announced in two weeks. Yermegiyayev is convinced the exhibition will benefit the country. He said about \$1 billion in investments were attracted during EXPO 2008 in Zaragoza, Spain.

Tourists will one day be able to walk among the Saka burial mounds in Issyk, 50 kilometres from Almaty, said archaeologist Bekmukhanbet Normukhanbetov, as reported by Tengrinews on March 26. Issyk has more than 100 burial mounds made by the Saka people; most of them are still unexplored. Saka artefacts in the town date to the fifth century BC. Normukhanbetov said the construction of underground walkways will be carried out along with excavations, and treasures and artefacts found in the tombs will be left there for visitors to view as they were deposited centuries ago. The archaeologist said there is much work to be done before the site will be ready for tourists. He welcomed volunteers to come take part in the excavations.

Kazakhstan has suspended Russian rocket and missile testing on its territory after a meteorological rocket launched from the Kapustin Yar test site in Russia exploded and crashed near the Kazakh village of Shungai. The crash in the western part of the country occurred on March 27. No casualties or major damage were reported, according to Kazakhstan’s Ministry of Defence, which issued a statement on the crash. “The Defence Ministry of Kazakhstan has suspended tests at military fields rented by Russia in Kazakhstan until the causes of the incident are clarified,” the statement said. The Russian Defence Ministry blamed the crash on an engine system failure. The rocket was supposed to reach a testing ground that Russia rents in Kazakhstan. The Kapustin Yar test site extends from southern Russia into parts of western Kazakhstan and is used for testing a variety of rockets and missiles.

The Universiade Village will be donated to and available for use by Almaty students after the 28th University Games, President of the National Federation of University Sports Kairat Zakiryanov said at an April 3 Central Communications Service (CCS) media briefing. “Two big sports facilities will be built in Kazakhstan for the University Games. One will include 12,000 seats and the other will hold 3,000. A Universiade Village for athletes will be built as well. After the Games, this village will be at the disposal of the students of Almaty,” he said. “These projects have already been approved. Necessary finances are being provided for their construction. As Almaty Akim (Mayor) Akhmetzhan Yesimov said at our meeting with the FISU president, the construction of Universiade facilities will start in April,” Zakiryanov said.



EURASIA&WORLD

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EXTERNAL NEWS IN BRIEF

England's Prince Harry and his girlfriend, Cressida Bonas visited Kazakhstan for a ski holiday in late March. The couple and friends stayed at a chalet at the Shymbulak Ski Resort near Almaty. Shymbulak, which is part of Kazakhstan's bid to host the 2022 Winter Olympics, is partowned by a Kazakh businessman. High-profile visitors are seen as a major coup for the resort. According to the U.K.'s Daily Mirror, Kazakh ski resorts may soon become popular among European skiers.

According to the press service of the Committee of Tourism, the Republic of Fiji plans to open honorary consulates in Astana and Almaty. Chairman of the Committee of Tourism Marat Igaliyev met with Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of the Republic of Fiji to Kazakhstan Ravindran Robin Nair to discuss bilateral cooperation in tourism. In particular, the parties discussed Fiji's experience attracting investment for tourism development, solving double taxation issues, tax revisions and the implementation of projects in special tourism areas. The Kazakh side invited representatives of the Fiji National Tourism Administration to take part in the Astana Economic Forum and EXPO 2017. Fiji's representatives invited the Kazakh delegates to the Asia Pacific Regional Development Forum scheduled for June.

In the near future, residents of Kyzylorda will be able to take direct flights to countries such as Russia, Turkey, China and the United Arab Emirates, e-kyzylorda.gov.kz reported. The construction of a new passenger terminal with a capacity of 150 passengers per hour was planned by the regional administration in 2013. Despite a delayed start on construction, representatives of domestic and foreign companies have shown great interest in opening international flights from and to Kyzylorda, which is the administrative centre of a region that is also home to the Baikonur Cosmodrome. "The feasibility study and the design estimate documentation for the terminal have already been prepared. Presently, the project is undergoing state review," Acting Director of the Regional Passenger Transportation and Roads Authority Bakytbek Zhuparbekov said at a media briefing held at Syr Media. According to preliminary information, the cost of the project is 6.2 billion tenge (US\$34.1 million). The project is expected to be completed by the end of next year.

Kazakhstan abstained from voting on the UN General Assembly resolution on Ukraine. There were 58 abstentions on the nonbinding document, which urges countries not to recognise Crimea's accession to Russia. The final tally was 100-11 for the resolution. The UN website notes that in abstaining from the vote, Kazakhstan's Permanent Representative to the UN Kairat Abdrakhmanov said his country is home to Kazakhs, Russians, Ukrainians, Tatars, Germans, Poles, Koreans and others who live in peace and harmony. He said it was important to heed the voice of reason and consider all ways to resolve the situation peacefully and that Ukraine's economic recovery should be a key concern in any action taken. Kazakhstan is interested in a sovereign, stable and independent Ukraine, he said. Unlike UN Security Council resolutions, General Assembly resolutions are advisory and are not binding.

The results of a working visit of a Kazakh delegation to Geneva to present a report on combating racial discrimination were summed up at a March 26 Central Communications Service (CCS) briefing with Senator and Deputy Chairman of the Association of Russian, Slavic and Cossack Organisations of Kazakhstan Anatoly Bashmakov. Bashmakov said the participants of the Geneva meeting expressed gratitude to Kazakhstan's delegation. "Each delegation had two days to present their national reports. We worked in accordance with procedure and I am proud to say that the meeting participants expressed gratitude to our delegation. They want to send their delegations in Kazakhstan to exchange experience regarding interethnic accord," he said.

Eurasian Economic Integration 'Will Continue,' Nazarbayev Says



President Nursultan Nazarbayev spoke to journalists while participating in the Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague.

By Altair Nurbekov

THE HAGUE – Kazakhstan will continue to pursue greater Eurasian economic integration with Russia and Belarus, as it sees integration as beneficial to its economy, while at the same time it will firmly guard its political sovereignty.

That was the message delivered by Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev at a March 25 briefing for Kazakh journalists in The Hague during the Nuclear Security Summit that took place March 24-25.

"Integration allows removing trade barriers and increasing competitiveness," President Nazarbayev said, answering a question about the future of Eurasian economic integration in light of the current political situation. "So we have here a purely pragmatic interest – to develop the country, boost the economy and increase the gross domestic product.

"As for our political independence, it is a constant, and Kazakhstan will cede sovereignty to no one," the Kazakh leader noted during the briefing at The Hague's picturesque Kurhouse Hotel. "But we will voluntarily transfer some economic powers to supranational authorities, as is done, for example, in the European Union where the European Commission makes decisions relating to customs, regulates trade, tariffs, transportation of oil and gas, electricity, railways and highways."

"All issues in our future [Eurasian Economic] union will be resolved

by consensus. Final decisions will be made with the consent of all three states [of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia]," he said. "Therefore, there should be no concerns as this process is beneficial to all participants, and, in times of crisis, even more so. The integration process will continue as it is also a matter of strengthening our independence."

Negotiations over a treaty to establish the Eurasian Economic Union by Jan. 1, 2015 have intensified in recent weeks and months as the May 1, 2014 deadline for submitting a treaty for signature to the three heads of state draws near. Increased international attention has also been drawn by the political crisis in Ukraine, Crimea's accession to Russia and the ensuing diplomatic wrangling between Moscow and the West.

The idea of some sort of integration in Eurasia in new circumstances was first proposed by President Nazarbayev 20 years ago.

In a speech at Lomonosov Moscow State University on March 29, 1994, President Nazarbayev said: "How do I see the future of that space that used to be one country? Nowadays, in the conditions of sovereignty, recognising equal rights of all, respecting the sovereignty and independence of each state, we could create a completely new union. I would call it the Eurasian Union.

"The basic principle is ensuring equality and respect for the sovereignty and independence of the states,

for individual rights and the identity of each state. Only those states which recognise these principles should be accepted into the Eurasian Union. We would work on the basis of bilateral agreements with those which do not accept or are not yet ready to observe these principles. Naturally, for member states of such a union, special conditions will be created," President Nazarbayev said then.

In the few years immediately following President Nazarbayev's suggestion, the idea of closer Eurasian integration did not find traction. The situation began to change in the late 1990s and early 2000s with the creation of the Eurasian Economic Community, which brought together Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan.

Later, in 2010, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia opted for deeper integration when they set up the Customs Union, removing internal customs borders. In 2013, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan announced intentions to join the Customs Union and their preparations for accession are moving along.

Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia are now negotiating the treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU).

Business leaders in all three countries have also been involved with drafting the treaty to help ensure their interests are protected.

Negotiators expect to present a draft treaty on EEU to the leaders of the three countries in Minsk, the capital of Belarus, at the end of April.

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The EEU is expected to make the migration of people, goods and services between the countries much easier when it is launched in 2015. "The Eurasian Union implies four freedoms: free movement of capital, workforce, services and goods," said Lavrov after the talks.

The two foreign ministers also discussed the situation in Ukraine in detail and reflected on possible ways of resolving the crisis in the country.

Following the talks, Idrissov and Lavrov signed a plan of action on cooperation between the two foreign ministries for 2014 with a view of further deepening the partnership between the two countries.

Later in the day, Idrissov took part in the regular meeting of foreign ministers of the CSTO, which brings together Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan.

The foreign ministers approved a plan of consultations of representatives of CSTO member states on foreign policy, security and defence in 2014-15. The ministers also discussed topical issues of regional and international security and the situation in the zone of CSTO responsibility. They also discussed the situation in Ukraine.

Following the meeting, the foreign ministers issued two statements, one on the April 5 elections in Afghanistan and the other on the situation in the northwestern region of Syria and the town of Kessab.

"We express deep concern with the sharp deterioration of the situation in northwest Syria as a result of opposition between government forces and al-Qaida linked extremist groups, which has led to human casualties and forced the movement of thousands of residents of the town of Kessab, populated mostly by Ar-

menians," the foreign ministers said.

They steadfastly condemned the terrorist acts taking place and the use of force against the civilian population. They also called for the soonest end to violence and for the soonest achievement of a peaceful political settlement in Syria based on the Geneva communiqué of June 30, 2012.

Reaffirming the six countries' commitment to "the establishment of Afghanistan as a responsible regional partner [and a] peaceful, sovereign, neutral and economically prosperous nation, free from terrorism and drug-related crime," the foreign ministers welcomed the upcoming presidential election and the elections for provincial councils there.

"We hope the vote succeeds and is in compliance with laws and regulations and all the requirements of security and law enforcement," the foreign ministers said in a statement. "We are confident that the government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (IRA), with the assistance of the international community, has taken the necessary measures to ensure that all Afghan citizens wishing to participate in the vote have such an opportunity."

They also spoke in favour of "fair, transparent and democratic elections in the IRA, the results of which will be recognised as legitimate and reflect the will of the majority of the population."

The foreign ministers also said they "hope the results of the vote would promote peace in the country, the unity of the Afghan nation, and that the newly elected President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan will continue the course of economic recovery and stable political development of the country, reconciliation in society and improving the welfare of the Afghan people."

In Astana, Top U.S. Diplomat Reaffirms Importance of Strategic Partnership

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Calling Kazakhstan "a leader in this region" that "has set ambitious goals and is making impressive efforts to demonstrate leadership on the global stage," Biswal said "the United States has been a strong supporter of Kazakhstan, and its leadership role."

"As President Obama underscored during his meeting with President Nazarbayev at the Hague last week, the United States and Kazakhstan have an ambitious agenda together, to seize the opportunities of the 21st century and to address its challenges, whether it's building an inclusive and open trade architecture in the region, spurring sustainable economic growth, mitigating climate change, or preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons," she declared. "We want all this because a strong, independent, and vibrant Kazakhstan will not only strengthen the security and prosperity of the Kazakhstani people, and the broader Central Asian region, but also security and prosperity of the American people."

Stressing that both the U.S. and Kazakhstan share a vision of a more connected and integrated region, Biswal stressed that "the world can no longer be divided into blocs, or spheres of influence."

"This globalised world isn't just a reality to which every nation must adapt, it is also fundamentally in all of our interests, because a more connected and interdependent world is also a more secure and prosperous one," she said. "It is this principle that underpins America's rebalance to Asia – the belief that America's security and prosperity is increasingly linked to the challenges and opportunities facing the emerging economies of

Asia, and that we can advance our collective security and prosperity by working together to address common challenges, and in so doing create greater opportunity for all of our people."

She stressed that Kazakhstan is set to gain the most from making this vision a reality as a country that recognised early on that "for a land-locked country at the heart of Eurasia, geography could be a blessing – or a curse."

"And you've chosen to seize the opportunity, not only to make Kazakhstan the hub of a network of trade and transport that spans from east to west and north to south, but also to make this region, historically among the least integrated into the world, a more connected and prosperous place," she stressed. "The Kazakhstan of tomorrow is one that will have strong links and growing trade with Europe and Asia; it will provide energy to the teeming markets of India and China; and it will build a knowledge economy that is connected to global knowledge hubs. This is not America's vision. This is Kazakhstan's vision. This is what your government and leaders have projected: a diversified, sustainable, modern economy. And it is a vision that America shares, and wants to help usher in, through educational partnerships, through business and trade relations, and through our development programs and partnerships."

"It's been said that Kazakhstan has 'powerful neighbors and distant friends,'" the U.S. diplomat said. "Well, let me be clear: the United States may be distant geographically, but our partnership is growing closer every day, and I'm committed to bringing us even closer together. And one of the best ways we can do that is by creating even more opportunities

to bring our brightest minds together."

Biswal expressed appreciation for Kazakhstan's Bolashak programme that has awarded more than 10,000 scholarships to educate Kazakh students abroad over the last two decades, including in the United States, in Europe, and in Asia. She also extolled the virtues of more educational exchanges between universities such as Pittsburgh State University, the University of Pennsylvania, Duke, and the University of Wisconsin and their Kazakh counterparts and people-to-people exchanges.

"Kazakhstan has benefited from this exchange, and I can assure you that whether in the boardroom or the classroom, Americans have also gained from their interaction with the Kazakhstani people. Whether through musical performances of the dombra, or through English-language translations of Olzhas Suleimenov's poetry, Kazakhstan has enriched American culture and cultural life," she said.

"Our common recognition of the importance of investing in human capital and the strength of our people-to-people links are two of the essential ingredients in the extraordinary progress that we've seen in our partnership," Biswal noted. "The United States became the first country to recognise Kazakhstan's independence in 1991, after which our two nations built a foundation of mutual trust, working together to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Through Kazakhstan's renunciation of its nuclear arsenal – the fourth largest in the world at the time – this new member of the community of nations has earned respect from around the world for its commitment to strengthening global security and respect for international norms. And Kazakh-

stan's hosting of the P5+1 talks with Iran twice last year was key to the international community's efforts to reach a diplomatic solution to the issue of Tehran's nuclear programme. We deeply appreciated Kazakhstan's role in helping make this breakthrough possible, and we will continue to welcome Kazakhstan's engagement on difficult but important global challenges."

The U.S. official called Afghanistan "an outstanding example of Kazakhstan's growing regional engagement and leadership."

"Kazakhstan should be proud of its contribution to Afghanistan's future: Kazakhstan is attracting university students from across Central and South Asia and has committed over \$50 million in funding for Afghan men and women to study at Kazakhstani universities," she said. "That's just one example of Kazakhstan's ambitious support for Afghanistan's security, economic, and political transitions. It has also supported and hosted the Heart of Asia Ministerial in Almaty last year; co-chairing the Istanbul Process Confidence Building Measure on Disaster Management; opening of a trade office in Kabul; and contributed to the sustainment of the Afghan National Security Forces."

According to Biswal, the proposed establishment of Kazakhstan Agency for International Development (KazAID) is "more than just a testament to how far Kazakhstan has come in a short period of time." She said she was confident that KazAID, which still is in the works in Kazakhstan's bureaucracy, "will make a real impact in Afghanistan and beyond."

"A core objective underpinning our efforts in Afghanistan is to support a sovereign, independent, stable, and secure country that

has good relations with all of its neighbours, and is able to provide opportunity for its people. That is also what we want for the countries of the region. This basic but vital notion – that states make decisions not at the expense of their neighbors, and do not re-draw borders through the use of force, simply because they are larger or more powerful – this notion must be the very foundation for respectful and mutually beneficial relationships between states in the 21st century," Biswal said making a bridge to her comments on the situation regarding Ukraine.

"Today, the world is watching events in Ukraine with grave concern. The United States and the international community are committed to supporting Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and helping the Ukrainian people build the stable, secure, democratic, and prosperous country that they deserve," she stressed. "We believe that the only way to resolve the crisis in Ukraine is through diplomacy and de-escalation of military tensions. We will continue to work with the United Nations, with our European partners, with the OSCE, as well as Russia, to find a peaceful path that upholds the international law and norms. We believe that the people of Ukraine, like the other peoples of this region, should not have to choose between friendly relations with Russia and broad ties to the rest of the world. As President Obama has said, 'we want the Ukrainian people to determine their own destiny – to have good relations with the United States, with Russia, with Europe, and with anyone else that they choose.'"

"We also want that for Kazakhstan, for Central Asia, and for all of our partners around the world," the U.S. official concluded.

ECONOMY

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9, 2014

Online Conference Contributes to Overcoming Economic Crisis

By Alina Usmanova

ASTANA – The G-Global info-communication platform sponsored an online conference March 19 to allow Kazakh and international experts to discuss a draft plan to overcome the long-term impacts the global financial and economic crisis have had on UN Member States.

The plan is based on democratic principles and seeks to develop measures to prevent financial and economic recessions and ensure long-term, balanced economic growth. The G-Global info-communication platform has become a tool to develop anti-crisis recommendations for the draft plan. Since July 1, 2013, G-Global portal users, including experts from international organisations and financial institutions, non-governmental organisations, the business community, academia, politicians and public figures, have published more than 13,000 reports and research papers, as well as 45,000 expert reviews and comments. The platform has also facilitated approximately 300 video conferences concerning the draft plan.

National Nuclear Centre Develops Innovative Projects, Improves Nation’s Health

Continued from Page A1

What major projects will the National Nuclear Centre implement in the near future?

First of all, we must complete the construction of the Tokamak Kazakhstan Material Science Research Centre and receive stable plasma. It will certainly be a significant event for the international scientific community, especially in anticipation of EXPO 2017, the main theme of which is future energy. This unit will be used in the research of structural materials under conditions of high-temperature plasma and high flux-neutron fields. Thereby, Kazakhstan will participate in the major international project, International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER), working to create controlled thermonuclear fusion, the solution of which will allow us to create a safe and practically unlimited source of energy.

In order to implement the law On Radiation Safety, it is necessary to establish a state accounting system of radiation doses for the population. A key element of this system should be a national centre of dosimetry [the process of calculating radiation dosages]. A project to do this was developed by our experts. It is currently undergoing state examination.

The centre will use the most modern, high-tech approaches to recording, accounting and verifying individual radiation doses. Our specialists will collect and process information on radiation doses received by people in the course of professional activities or, unfortunately, in the process of medical research. In short, any citizen of Kazakhstan can be examined in the integrated dosimetry centre and get complete information about his or her lifetime dose of radiation. An important aspect of this issue will be reducing the psychological tension in society with respect to radiation and its effects.

Also, our priority is a project to create a national centre for processing and long-term storage of radioactive waste. The project aims to improve the radiation situation in the regions of Kazakhstan, primarily through eliminating harmful effects of radioactive substances and recyclable waste on the population and environment. This is an acute problem for Kazakhstan today.

Our centre already has experience with the disposal of encapsulated sources of ionizing radiation, mostly used in the industry. But the existing capacity today, unfortunately, cannot solve the problem of the whole country. To do this, we need to build a specialised plant for processing radioactive materials and wastes ac-

The March 19 online conference resulted in a new consolidated draft plan. The new plan seeks to create an efficient and globally coordinated policy and reform the global financial and economic architecture.

The G-Global info-communication platform plays an active role in the plan development process. International organisations, research centres and institutes, as well as representatives of the UN member states, politicians, experts and representatives of non-governmental organisations participate in it on a day-to-day basis. Significant contributions to the project’s formation have also been made by the Reinventing Bretton Woods Committee. Marc Uzan, the committee’s executive director, moderated the March 19 conference.

The draft action plan for UN member states is to be adopted within the Second World Anti-Crisis Conference (WAC) on May 21-23 in Astana and conducted with the support of the UN General Assembly (according to Resolution A/RES/68/201 “International financial system and development” of December 20, 2013).

cumulated in large quantities on the country’s territory, with the following possibility of their long-term storage.

In addition, we continue to conduct research on the territory of the former Semipalatinsk test site and surrounding areas and work on the Development of Nuclear Energy scientific and technical programme. This is primarily applied research in support of nuclear energy safety, a feasibility study to justify the construction of nuclear power plants in Kazakhstan, which is especially important now that the decision to build such a plant has been made. There is also research being done in the field of radiation material science and plasma physics and, of course, the development of innovative projects.

What specific innovative projects do you mean?

I’d like to mention that our National Nuclear Centre is the only scientific organisation in Kazakhstan that has everything we need to carry out this work. We have specialists with unique experience in operating nuclear reactors and in conducting complex inter-reactor experiments. We have the largest experimental base, which includes three research nuclear reactors, test benches and installations.

Our experiments to investigate the processes that accompany severe accidents at nuclear power reactors with melting of the core section aroused great interest in the international community, especially after the accident at the Fukushima nuclear power plant [in Japan in 2011].

This year’s funding for such research was significantly increased. During an official visit to Japan by Deputy Prime Minister Asset Issekeshev early last year, we conducted a series of talks with the leadership of the Japan Atomic Energy Agency, the Japan Atomic Power Company and Toshiba that resulted in signed memorandums regarding joint research and contracts.

Several projects on the reduction of fuel enrichment in our research reactors are planned for implementation with U.S. Department of Energy and Russian organisations, and with Russian and U.S. experts we will work on the former Semipalatinsk test site and on monitoring the observance of the nonproliferation and nuclear security regime. ... As for the former test site, of course the work to eliminate the consequences of nuclear tests has not been completed. We plan to complete complex radio-ecological studies of the entire territory of the former test site by the 30th anniversary of the independence of our country.

First G-Global International Journalism Summit to Take Place in Astana

By Rufiya Ospanova

ASTANA – The first G-Global International Summit of Journalism will be held May 20-23 as part of the Seventh Astana Economic Forum (AEF).

The summit will examine the role of journalism in global crises, as well as innovations in media, the development and status of tools for working with vast and complex economic data and how that information can best be presented.

The event will include well-known media personalities, bloggers, international media companies, academics and veteran journalists, according to the summit’s organisers, the government of Kazakhstan, G-Global info-communicative platform, the Eur-

asian Economic Club of Scientists Association and the Success K media agency.

Participants will be encouraged to discuss issues of modern journalism, particularly economic and financial issues. Discussions will also focus on media trends, including technological innovations.

The G-Global Summit will also include a contest with a \$15,000 cash prize for the entity that most effectively utilises new technologies to present complex economic information in a way that is comprehensible and engages the public in global economic issues. The contest will be called, “New media-technologies and innovative instruments in presenting materials on economic issues,” and will be held within the Seventh AEF.



An International Media Exhibition (IMX), Information without Boundaries, will be also held within the framework of the summit to increase the exchange of information and innovations between global media and technology. The exhibition will allow journalists, media professionals and academics to demonstrate their innovations in the field of economic journalism.

Oil Industry Equipment Plant Slated for Mangystau Region

By Olga Zolotykh

AKTAU –Mangystau Region Akim (Governor) Alik Aidarbayev met recently with representatives of the Spanish company Ros Roca Group to discuss building a factory to produce equipment for oil and gas companies at the Aktau Seaport Free Economic Zone.

Construction is expected to begin in June 2014 on a 100-hectare lot on the territory of Aktau Seaport.

“Aktau City has good prospects for development. We considered the possibilities of sev-

eral regions of Kazakhstan, but Aktau has the most suitable climatic conditions and logistics,” said Ros Roca Group’s Founder Salvador Roca.

Together with the Samruk Kazyna National Welfare Fund, the Ros Roca Group has invested 534 million euros (US\$735 million) in the new plant. The plant is expected to create 4,000 jobs and will include an industry training centre.

“Our factories work worldwide. One of our plants manufactures equipment for transportation of chemicals and other hazardous substances. We are leading in transportation of liquefied gas. In

Aktau, we are planning to produce generators, engines, compressors for oil industry,” said company representatives.

The region supports the Spanish company’s project because the plant’s products will be in demand both in the oblast and in the markets of Commonwealth of Independent States countries, said Aidarbayev.

“In the future, we intend to further develop Kazakhstan’s Caspian sector. About \$50 billion was invested only in the Kashagan deposit and there are a number of promising fields in the region,” said Aidarbayev.

ECONOMY
NEWS IN BRIEF

Kazakhstan’s exports of products and some types of machinery and equipment to the countries of the Customs Union grew in 2013, Minister of Trade of the Eurasian Economic Commission Andrei Slepnev said during his visit to Kazakhstan on April 4. “According to the information of the commission, the volume of export of Kazakhstan to the Customs Union countries shrank by 5.9 percent in 2013 compared to 2012 due to lower export prices for mineral products, chemical industry products, metals and metal products. However, the volume of export of some types of machinery and technical products grew in 2013. The export of machinery and equipment increased 4.8 times, export of refrigerators and coolers increased 4.5 times, export of metal-rolling machines grew 5.5 times and export of means of ground transportation grew 2.6 times,” Slepnev said. According to him, in 2013, about 1,200 trucks were exported from Kazakhstan to Russia, a figure nine times higher than in 2012. The export of dump trucks intended for off-road use has also begun. The export of food and primary products for its production from Kazakhstan to the Customs Union doubled last year. The export of grains increased 2.7 times and the export of chocolate products is stably increasing and rose 19 percent in 2013.

Sessions of the Seventh Astana Economic Forum (AEF) and the Second World Anti-Crisis Conference (WAC) will be held as online video conferences on the G-Global information and communication platform from March 27 to April 30. Delegates of the AEF and WAC, which will be held in Astana on May 21-23, are invited to take part in a series of advance online video conferences. From now until the end of April, about 50 online video sessions are planned to be held on the G-Global platform. During the conferences, online discussions will continue on the draft of the World Anti-Crisis Plan Concept that is scheduled to be adopted at the WAC under the auspices of the UN General Assembly. For the first time in international practice, speakers at the AEF and WAC will be able to discuss key issues and urgent problems of the world economy, as well as express their views concerning upcoming events in an online format. Video conferencing in online mode enables a maximum number of participants to conduct discussions, preparing the ground for recommendations that will emerge from the sessions of the AEF and WAC. The schedule of online conferences can be found on the G-Global website.

Tax authorities in Almaty rendered 1,005,903 tax services both online and in data collection and processing centres over the first quarter of 2014. This is 201,236 services or 25 percent more compared to the same period in 2013, the tax department of Almaty reported. Centres of data collection and processing rendered services to 373,193 tax payers. The average time in queues was 3:44 minutes. The Almaty tax authorities daily render services to 8,000-10,000 people, a press statement informs. Introduction of the electronic control system in 2012 led to an increase in the number of services rendered and the improvement of their quality. The system helped to resolve queuing issues and establish effective control over the quality of services rendered.

First Deputy Prime Minister of Kazakhstan Bakytzhan Sagintayev took part in a regular session of the Council of the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) held in Moscow on March 27-28. The prime minister’s press service reported that further development of the Customs Union and Single Economic Space was discussed at the session. One of the main issues on the agenda was the preparation of a draft treaty on the Eurasian Economic Union. Joint activities on the draft treaty as well as provisions designed to meet the mutual interests of member states and foster further integration were considered as well. In key sectors of the economy such as industrial and agro-industrial policy, monetary policy and financial markets, the parties came to an understanding, including in the draft treaty opportunities for the mutually beneficial development of these industries. The meeting also discussed issues of cooperation in the development of competition, transport, energy and natural monopolies.

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BUSINESS
NEWS IN BRIEF

On April 1-2, the eighth regional oil and gas technology conference, OILTECH Atyrau 2014, took place in Atyrau. Representatives from the Ministries of Oil and Gas, Environment and Water Resources and Industry and New Technologies participated in the event, in addition to representatives from the akimat (regional administration), oil production and service companies and oil refineries and petrochemical plants from Austria, Belarus, Germany, Kazakhstan, the Netherlands and Russia. OILTECH Atyrau is one of the main annual events in western Kazakhstan and brings together about 150 oil and gas specialists from different countries. The event focused on relevant issues and major trends in the development of the industry.

Kazatomprom allocated more than 30 billion tenge (US\$164.8 million) for the implementation of projects in Kazakhstan's regions, Managing Director for Public Relations of Kazatomprom Zharkynbek Ospanov said during an online briefing within the framework of Samruk-Kazyna and Bnews.kz's portal project. "We concluded memorandums with the administrations of South Kazakhstan, Kyzylorda, Akmola, East Kazakhstan regions regarding social responsibility. They provide for construction or other types of projects," he noted. "We completed projects totalling more than 30 billion tenge [US\$164.8 million] over the past three years. Besides, we are actively involved in charity activities and sponsor support. We sponsor the bandy team of Kazakhstan that won the bronze medal at the European championships," Ospanov said.

Issues of cooperation in the sphere of innovations and technologies and the prospects for establishing a Kazakh-Chinese centre of technological cooperation were discussed at a recent meeting of Deputy Chairman of the Board of the National Agency for Technological Development Zhumatai Salimov and Deputy Director General of the Torch High Technology Industry Development Centre of China Xiu Xiaoping, the agency's press service reported. The parties also agreed to develop cooperation in the sphere of technology transfer and the development of innovation. The Torch High Technology Industry Development Centre primarily finances innovations and technology-based small and medium sized enterprises through the Innovation Fund, promotes technology transfer and creates conditions for the development of the technology industry. The fund cooperates with 20 countries.

Kazakhstan's Ministry of Oil and Gas has announced the signing of a memorandum of understanding that will increase the participation of domestic companies in the huge Karachaganak oil and gas project, Trend.az reported on March 28. Kazakhstan's Karachaganak Petroleum Operating B.V. (KPO) and Aksai Industrial Park have signed a memorandum of understanding and a road map for cooperation in the process. The agreements, the ministry said, will contribute to Kazakhstan's development and industrial growth. The road map determines a number of joint initiatives designed to increase Kazakh participation in the overall project by transferring technologies and creating new jobs for local residents. "Our activity mainly focuses on increasing the local potential through sustainable development and transfer of best practices. We hope that as a result of our cooperation, Aksai Industrial Park will be able to offer competitive technological services and products necessary for KPO's production activity," Director General of KPO Damiano Ratti said. The initiative will facilitate the local production of more complex, high-tech products for Kazakhstan's oil and gas industry, he said. More than 3,000 Kazakh enterprises are currently working on the operation of the Karachaganak project. The share of Kazakh content in KPO contracts' products, work and services exceeded 50 percent in 2013, reaching \$461.1 million.

Almaty Region Develops Priority Sectors

By Asset Kalymov

ALMATY REGION – Almaty regional authorities have stepped up efforts to create a favourable investment climate and develop alternative energy.

Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev's most recent state-of-the-nation address directed the country to increase investments in the economy from 18 to 30 percent of GDP. This is one of the benchmarks for Kazakhstan's joining the 30 most developed countries of the world. In order to attract private capital, both domestic and foreign, the administration of the Almaty region has worked out a scheme for the development of priority directions until 2020. It provides for the creation of new high-tech industries in the manufacturing sector, agriculture, tourism, construction and the production of pharmaceuticals. The emphasis is on innovative products, increased productivity and the development of industry clusters.

Dairy, fruit and vegetables, poultry, tobacco and wine clusters are planned for the agricultural sphere, and the construction of greenhouses and vegetable storage capacities will be continued. Several clusters were identified for the efficient use of rich tourism resources: an Almaty cluster, a beach and recreation cluster on the coast of the Kapshagai reservoir, clusters at the Balkhash and Alakol lakes and a cluster near the area's thermal springs and mud spa.

Transit is also a focus. The Kazakhstan 2050 Strategy said that transport infrastructure is the circulatory system of the economy, and it is impossible to break into the top group of advanced countries without quality highways and logistics services.

The proximity of the region to China predetermined the construction of the Zhetigen-Khorgos railway, the Khorgos International Centre of Boundary Cooperation (ICBC Khorgos) and the Khorgos-East Gate Special Economic Zone (SEZ). Thanks to these large-scale projects of the Industrialisation Map, the volume of Kazakh-Chinese cargo transportation has

grown and the Panfilov border district is experiencing a construction boom. Altynkol Station, Nurkent Village and modern shopping centres and logistics complexes have recently appeared there.

In the coming years, there are plans to open chemical, steel, food, textile, footwear, building materials and agricultural machinery production complexes in the SEZ. Investors from Turkey, Singapore, South Korea, Japan, the United Arab Emirates and other countries have shown particular interest in the Khorgos dry port.

According to forecasts by international experts, soon the main cargo flow from China to Europe, the Gulf countries, Central Asia and the Caucasus will shift to overland routes. These will include a railway border crossing at Altynkol and the Almaty-Khorgos highway currently under construction and part of the Western Europe-Western China international transport corridor.

Considerable importance is attached to the New Silk Road project, one of the strong points of which is the ICBC Khorgos. This is an important step toward increasing the capacity of Kazakhstan and its emergence as a major trading, logistics and transit hub of Central Asia, as well as a transport bridge between Europe and Asia.

According to local authorities, four industrial zones planned for the Taldykorgan, Kapshagai, Ili and Talgar districts can become other points of economic growth. According to Deputy Akim (Governor) of the region Serik Turdaliyev, about 300 companies will be located on these territories and investment projects will be substantially supported within the State Programme of Accelerated Industrial and Innovative Development (SPAIID), the Business Road Map and the Performance 2020 and Exporter 2020 programmes. Entrepreneurs will receive subsidies for interest rates on loans, compensation for part of production costs and leasing equipment.

In addition, the investors' service centre under the auspices of the Zhetisu Social and Entrepreneurial

Corporation will help businesses create modern productions of export-oriented products. In general, over the past 10 years, the volume of investments in fixed capital has increased eightfold and reached nearly 400 billion tenge (US\$2.19 billion) last year.

A programme for renewable energy will be given a special role among Almaty's priority sectors. A number of large and small hydropower plants with a total capacity of 745 megawatts are already operating in the region. However, large-scale industrialisation, within which dozens of large industrial facilities in recent years were commissioned, led to the growth of electricity consumption. Today, the goal of reducing energy shortages will be achieved through the construction of 15 small hydro stations and wind farms in the Dzhungar Gate District and Shelek Village.

The regional administration has allocated land plots and approved the funding and work schedule. More than 20 domestic companies have expressed a desire to build hydropower, wind and solar farms in Zhetisu, the informal name of the Almaty region meaning "seven rivers".

The Kainar AKB battery factory in Taldykorgan is going to produce industrial and domestic solar panels and some enterprises have started to manufacture compact mini-plants generating energy from the sun and wind. These products are supplied mainly to residents of remote villages.

The lion's share of projects are implemented jointly with Samruk-Energo and the Zhetisu SEC. Among them is a wind farm in the Shelek corridor and seven similar facilities in other areas. In addition, a memorandum of cooperation for the construction of a solar power plant of 50 megawatts was signed with a major Egyptian company.

The region's mountain rivers account for half the country's volume of hydropower resources. The plan is to increase the power of renewable sources to 919 megawatts. Zhetisu will develop as a green energy zone and some of its processes will be presented at EXPO 2017.

Kazakh Companies Participate in Tokyo Food and Beverage Exhibition



A pavilion of Kazakhstan-based Sun Bee company at FOODEX food and beverage exhibition in Tokyo.

By Victoria Kern

TOKYO – Three Kazakhstan-based companies, Sezam Eco, Sun Bee and Maslodel, recently presented their products and honey in Japan at FOODEX, the largest food and beverage exhibition in Asia and the Pacific.

Over the course of the four-day event, the enterprises conducted more than 100 negotiations with potential foreign buyers. Several Asian companies showed interest in Kazakh-made products, in particular, linseed, caraway and peanut and pumpkin oil rich in Omega 3 fatty acid. Kazakh honey producer Sun Bee held talks with Japanese wholesalers and distributors. Canola oil, represented by Maslodel, is in demand in Asian markets because of its beneficial properties and wide use in cooking and food production.

This was Kazakhstan's first par-

ticipation in the 40-year-old FOODEX exhibition. The country's appearance was made possible by a two-year cooperation agreement between Kaznex Invest and Jetro (Japan's foreign trade organisation). Jetro runs a support programme for producers from developing countries exporting to the Japanese market.

"Kazakh-made products are able to enter the demanding Japanese market, one of the busiest in the world, due to their environmental friendliness, originality and quality. In this regard, our products are competitive," said Kaznex Invest Managing Director Dzhalil Bulatov.

Taking into account these possibilities, Kazakhstan's embassy in Japan is proposing to open a Kazakh shopping mall. Next year, Kazakhstan plans to increase the level of its participation in FOO-

Astana Airport Selects SITA for Ongoing Transformation

By Arsen Kulmanbetov

ASTANA – Astana International Airport, Kazakhstan's second-largest international airport, has introduced SITA's AirportVision flight information display systems to provide real-time flight information to its growing passenger base.

"SITA's flight information systems give us a cost-effective way to keep passengers informed, while helping to facilitate passenger flows," Radilbek Adimolda, Astana International Airport's deputy chairman of the board, said, according to a joint press release from the two companies.

Astana Airport has seen rapid development along with the capital city. Passenger traffic here is growing at a rate of 15% annually. In 2013, the airport handled more than 2.6 million passengers and 8.4 tons of cargo. Astana Airport serves more than 15 airlines and operates 120 flights per day both within the Commonwealth of Independent States and to other regions. The airport's quality management system in passenger service and fueling operations is certified as complying with ISO standards.

In recent years, Astana Airport and SITA, one of the world's leading companies in air transport communications and IT solutions, have partnered on several airport modernization projects.

SITA's next generation Airport Management solution, the first in Kazakhstan, enables the airport to monitor and control its operations in real time. Another company-developed product, AirportConnect Open is a passenger processing system allowing the airport and its airlines and handling agents to access their respective IT applications in real time on shared equipment. It also enables any airline to use any agent desk, gate

position or self-service kiosk for passenger check-in, bag drop and boarding. SITA's departure control system, MaestroDCS Local, automates departure control processes at the airport, which improves productivity, accuracy and security.

"Over the last two years, Astana International Airport has transformed itself into an intelligent airport, which can track, manage and share real-time information," Dmitry Krasnov, SITA's vice president for Russia and CIS, said. "Our most recent deal with Astana is a natural extension of the airport's leading-edge airport management and passenger processing systems."

SITA delivers and manages business solutions for airline, airport, Global Distribution System (GDS), government and other customers over the world's most extensive network, which forms the communications backbone of the global air transport industry.

SITA's portfolio includes managed global communications, infrastructure and outsourcing services, as well as services for airline commercial management and passenger operations, flight operations, aircraft operations and air-to-ground communications, airport management and operations, baggage operations, transportation security and border management, cargo operations and more.

According to the company information, SITA's global reach is based on local presence, with services for around 450 air transport industry members and 2,800 customers in 200 countries and territories. Set up in 1949 with 11 member airlines, today SITA employs people of more than 140 nationalities, speaking over 70 different languages. In 2012, it had consolidated revenues of US\$1.57 billion.

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EDITORIAL&OPINIONS

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9, 2014

Government Reshuffle to Help Meet Regional, Global Challenges



Early April brought the most significant political news of the past several months in Kazakhstan when Prime Minister Serik Akhmetov tendered his resignation, triggering a reshuffle that affected the top leadership in the executive and legislative branches of power. The prime minister is the head of the government, so Akhmetov’s resignation on April 2 automatically meant the resignation of the country’s entire government.

Upon Akhmetov’s resignation, President Nursultan Nazarbayev said the cabinet had been successfully fulfilling its tasks and thanked officials for their hard work. The President then emphasised that new approaches were needed to achieve ambitious goals set in the Kazakhstan 2050 Strategy against the background of the complicated situation in the world’s economy.

He then moved quickly to nominate former Prime Minister Karim Massimov to again lead the government. Massimov is Nazarbayev’s former chief of staff and already the longest-serving prime minister in Kazakh history thanks to Massimov’s work in that position from 2007 to 2012.

“[The Kazakhstan 2050 Strategy] goals aimed at getting Kazakhstan into the top 30 most-developed countries of the world require advanced solutions. Amid the global financial and economic crisis, we may also face some difficulties. We need to cooperate with international financial institutions and attract investments into our country. We need an experienced leader who knows the field to do this job. Karim Massimov possesses the needed experience and knowledge,” Nazarbayev said, introducing him to the Mazhilis (lower house) of Parliament, which has the constitutional authority to approve nominations for the head of government.

In turn, Mazhilis Speaker Nurlan Nigmatulin expressed support for the candidacy put forward by the President. He reminded that Karim Massimov had already served as prime minister before and had proven himself an effective manager during the time of the global financial crisis.

Massimov’s candidacy was quickly approved by an overwhelming vote and the President signed the decree on his appointment immediately while still at the parliament.

By April 4, all the appointments in the new government had been made by two presidential decrees: one appointing Serik Akhmetov as the new defence minister and the other reappointing all other members of the cabinet.

Meeting with the top brass of the Ministry of Defence, President Nazarbayev announced the appointment of Akhmetov as defence minister, emphasising his managerial experience: “I believe he is the most appropriate candidate to fill the position. We have deliberately chosen a civilian for the position. We should be further developing defence industry enterprises, equipping the army with advanced weapons and ensuring public money is used effectively.”

Adilbek Dzhaksybekov, the former defence minister, has moved up and was appointed secretary of state, a position Massimov had concurrently held since January when Marat Tazhin was relieved of his duties.

Mazhilis Speaker Nigmatulin, himself, also changed jobs in the reshuffle as he was appointed by presidential decree head of the presidential administration, replacing Massimov. Nigmatulin had served as deputy chief of staff to the president, akim (governor) of the Karaganda Region and deputy chair of the ruling Nur Otan party. As an erstwhile campaign chief for the President during the 2011 presidential election, he is also widely believed to be a strong organiser who ensured smooth and efficient operations of the entities he ran.

Following Nigmatulin’s departure, the Mazhilis overwhelmingly elected former Vice Speaker

Kabibulla Dzhakupov the new Speaker of the Mazhilis. Dariga Nazarbayeva, the former chair of the Mazhilis’s Committee for Socio-Cultural Development was elected Mazhilis Vice Speaker. Sergey Diyachenko retained his position as Vice Speaker as well.

The chain of top-level appointments in the Kazakhstan government were long expected and are widely seen as an effort to give a new boost to the economic work of the government and to the overall managerial work of the presidential administration. Ministers in Akhmetov’s cabinet were heavily criticised for mishandling the pension reform last year, including by the President himself, and had to face a lot of public questioning following the 19 percent depreciation of the tenge versus dollar exchange rate in February, even though that move was done by the National Bank. In recent months, there were also a lot of public discussions about the lack of information regarding Eurasian economic integration processes, necessitating the need for a better communications strategy in this area too.

The return of Karim Massimov, who is widely credited for helping steer Kazakhstan clear off recession during the 2007-09 global economic slowdown, can also be seen as a preventive measure in the face of the potential deterioration of the international situation in connection with recent events in and around Ukraine. It can also be viewed as a step into another stage of modernising its national economy and strengthening its social development.

Pundits in Kazakhstan and elsewhere seem to agree on key reasons for Akhmetov’s resignation and the ensuing reshuffle.

Kazakh political analyst Yerlan Karin said the weakness of Akhmetov’s management lay in the absence of a clear strategy to implement the President’s state-of-the-nation addresses and the goals set forth in the Kazakhstan 2050 Strategy. “It seems to me, the previous government of Akhmetov did not provide adequate pace and dynamism into the realisation of this strategy,” Karin said in comments to the media. “For example, during the crisis period of 2008-2009, the previous cabinet of Massimov developed a new programme for implementation of anti-crisis measures. Just as well, Akhmetov’s government had to develop its own plan, its concept of realisation of these objectives.”

Yuriy Solobozov of the Russian think tank Institute for the National Strategy echoed Karin, saying that Massimov, with his pronounced managerial skills and well-developed relations with leaders in Russia and China, is far better positioned for the prime minister’s role.

Experts also emphasised the importance of international factors, such as changes in the global market where new emerging risks had an effect on the change of the prime minister.

President Nazarbayev, speaking on the appointment of the new prime minister, also stressed the importance of cooperation with international institutions and foreign investors. In this respect, according to Karin, Massimov is better suited for the job, since he is widely known to foreign business leaders, representatives of international financial and economic institutions.

The speed of changes at the top also indicates President Nazarbayev maintains a clear vision of where he wants to take the country and which people are best suited for specific tasks. With a newly revamped cabinet, presidential administration and Mazhilis, and given the changes that took place last fall with the return of Kassym-Jomart Tokayev as Speaker of the Senate and the return of Kairat Mami as Chairman of the Supreme Court, the power structures in Kazakhstan seem well adjusted to meet the challenges the outside world is setting in front of the country and to reach the country’s socio-economic development goals, while ensuring the stability and effectiveness of the power.

Parliament Member Discusses Plans of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan

By Vladimir Osipov

The Assembly of People of Kazakhstan (APK) is a unique organisation that has been making a difference for the past 19 years. Recently, Yegor Kappel, a member of the Mazhilis and deputy head of the parliamentary group of The Assembly of People of Kazakhstan discussed the goals, objectives and tactics of the association in an interview with The Astana Times.



Yegor Kappel

lish regional parliamentary groups in the maslikhats (local representative bodies.) Regional parliamentary groups carry out their activities according to the law “On the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan” and according to the group’s working plan, which reflects the President’s orders and the APK development strategy. The parliamentary group, which includes parliament members from all parliamentary factions, is an interactive platform to discuss various topics and is actively involved in issues pertaining to interethnic concord.

How do you see the future of APK? Will its role change, for example, after 2020?

Over time, the citizens of Kazakhstan will become polyglots. We will learn to speak Kazakh, know the culture, customs and traditions of the Kazakh people, as well as the culture of all nationalities living in Kazakhstan. Our multinational unity has been forged by the centuries old friendships that cement Kazakhstan’s multi-ethnic society together and our state policy regarding public consent, which will remain a priority.

We have a common history and common future. Currently, moods about migration are changing, from what we can tell at least. This is a sign of stability and reflects positively upon our national policy and on our developing economy. The culture of our society, the core of which is Kazakh culture, continues to develop. Everyone born in Kazakhstan is interested in the history, customs and traditions of their native country as any citizen should be.

Unity in diversity is today the main theme behind our civil society. I want to stress again that our model of social harmony is unique and special. We do not impose our experience, but seek to make it of interest to others around the world.

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.

THE ASTANA TIMES

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Geological Exploration Reforms Seek Increased Investment

By Kulpash Konyrova

ASTANA – Kazakhstan has begun work to improve legislation governing geological exploration and to revive the domestic exploration industry to make Kazakhstan more attractive to investors. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Industry and New Technologies Asset Issekeshiev recently discussed changes and new challenges in the industry.

After the sphere of geology and mineral resources was transferred to the Ministry of Industry and New Technologies several years ago, you said the industry needed serious reform. What has been done since then and what are the results?

The complicated situation in domestic geology that emerged in the 1990s led to a situation in which the country extracted significant volumes of minerals but largely did not explore and develop new fields. For example, stocks of non-ferrous metals, which are one of our main export products, would last for 12-15 years. But, fortunately, the potential of our subsoil is huge. Only a strong and developed geological survey can provide effective exploration and growth of new reserves.

The goals assigned by the President to revive exploration today cannot be met without a strong industrial infrastructure, i.e. without specialised schools, domestic science, research and competent professionals.



Asset Issekeshiev

What have you started with?

Primarily with the development of the strategy, defining its goals and objectives with economic priorities. We studied the best international practices in the field of geology and mineral resources.

Then, several priorities were identified: strengthening the state geological survey, supporting applied science, modernising existing and creating new, modern infrastructure. The fact is that the once-powerful state geological service had turned into a bureaucratic apparatus, which had neither production nor scientific organisations. Most private enterprises in the geological ore industry were not competitive in today's realities. Some of these companies are historically supported by our Ministry's Committee of Geology at the expense of public contracts. On one hand, it allows them to stay afloat, but on the other, the quality of their work seriously lagged behind international standards.

Further analysis showed an acute

shortage of qualified professionals. In this regard, the question arose about the need to train our own world-class specialists. The problem could be solved only through close collaboration between the geological industry and technical universities of the country.

Now such contact has been established, and training on a variety of geological specialties has resumed in a number of schools and universities.

All these findings and suggestions were covered in the basis of the Concept and Programme for Industrial Development until 2030. In 2015-2019, over 160 billion tenge (US\$878.9 million) is planned to be used in the implementation of the sectoral programme.

However, the volumes of growth, as I have noted, are insufficient. We have started exploration work to strengthen the resource base of mono-towns.

By the way, this will be one of the priorities in the field of geology in the second five-year plan of industrialisation. In the future, the emphasis will be on the development of geological infrastructure and strengthening the material and technical base, including the introduction of new technologies in exploration.

What is being done at the legislative level?

We prepared more than 185 amendments to the existing legislation during the period of the moratorium on issuing contracts for subsoil

use, which was in force from 2007 to 2013.

Actually, the development of all new amendments was a collective work. It involved not only experts from our ministry, but also the National Chamber of Entrepreneurs and representatives of mining and oil and gas companies. In addition, we attracted consulting firms. However, the main initiators of changes in the existing law were subsoil users who pointed to the challenges they face in reality.

First of all, most complaints were caused by the number of examinations to be passed by investors in obtaining a contract for exploration. In the new bill, mandatory examinations were reduced by 60 percent, which in turn will significantly decrease the time of contracting and administrative barriers.

Secondly, the so-called model or base contract, which repeated 98 percent of the rules spelled out in the existing laws and primarily in the law "On Subsoil and Subsoil Use," was seriously amended. We eliminated the duplication, thereby making the contract itself lighter. Earlier, there were 28 items in it; now it contains only eight positions.

Third, we provided investors with free access to geological information. Investors, especially junior companies specialising in exploration and willing to come to Kazakhstan, must be aware of the risks that await them during search operations. And we reduced the time needed to obtain geological information and excluded feasibility

studies from the list of mandatory design documents.

Another awkward point of the current law in the sphere of subsoil is that it treats exploration and mining equally, when exploration and production require completely different approaches and conditions. There are many risks in geological exploration. And only a small part of explored subsoil may be commercially effective. But investors engaged in exploration are forced to pay taxes on par with those who are already involved in mining. We plan to correct this imbalance. All necessary amendments to the existing law will be prepared by the middle of this year.

We also intend to introduce competitive bidding (auctions) aimed at facilitating procedures in the sphere of subsoil management. Prior to such auctions, the cost of infrastructural development in the region will be established by competent authorities in the form of fixed interest rates. Potential investors will be informed about their size before the start of competitive bidding. The right for subsoil use will be given to those who offer the state the biggest signature bonus during the auction. This will ensure the transparency of competition and eliminate possible corruption.

To summarise the above, I want to indicate that the first stage of our work has been completed. It was a sort of preparatory period, as it included the moratorium, the cleansing of unscrupulous subsoil users and development of amendments to the existing law. This year we begin the

second stage of development of geological exploration and the full introduction of our amendments. And open competitions for granting rights to subsoil use on 105 fields will be conducted under the new rules.

What are some landmark activities coming in the next three years?

First of all, the launch of construction of the Centre for Geological Research in Astana. This is the anchor project of the Innovative Intellectual Cluster at Nazarbayev University, which will also include the School of Mining and Institute of Earth Sciences in collaboration with the Colorado School of Mines. We are creating world-class infrastructure with research laboratories and storerooms, and an education centre for training a new generation of specialists in geology.

The second momentous event is that Kazgeologiya Joint Stock Company, together with the company Rio Tinto, will conduct exploration work on an area of 20,000 square kilometres with the latest air-geophysical and geochemical innovative search techniques.

In addition, in 2014 we will start exploration work on 39 prospective sites at state expense. By the way, the financing of the industry has doubled and this year alone will reach more than 3 billion tenge (US\$16.48 million).

Finally, we will continue to improve the legal framework to facilitate the transition of Kazakhstan to modern international standards in the field of geology and mineral resources.

Kazakhstan Advances Plans for Peaceful Nuclear Power

By Bakhytzhан Dzhaqsaliyev

Efficient management of nuclear energy will lead to further industrial and scientific development in Kazakhstan, greatly enhance the country's competitiveness in the global economy and help it become one of the 30 most-developed countries of the world.



This year, the first in the world Obninsk nuclear power plant marks its 60th anniversary. Over those decades, nuclear energy has changed significantly: reactors have become much more powerful than the first five-megawatt plant and the power of the atomic unit now exceeds fifteen hundred megawatts. Their economic performance and safety have also tangibly improved.

Today, there are 435 reactors with a total installed capacity of 372 GW in the world and 72 nuclear power units are under construction. Of those, the majority of nuclear power plants are on the territories of industrialised countries. But in the last few years, a number of states have started developing their own atomic energy programmes and construction of nuclear power plants (NPP), for example the United Arab Emirates, Belarus, Turkey and Vietnam. More countries have also announced their intention to develop nuclear energy and have begun to implement their plans.

The construction of atomic power stations not only satisfies the growing demand for energy, but leads to the improvement of the ecological situation because the companies that produce energy from fossil fuels account for about half of the anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases.

Burning fuel at thermal power plants leads to the formation of combustion products containing fly ash, particles of pulverized fuel, sulfur and sulfur trioxide, ni-

trogen oxides and gaseous products of incomplete combustion. The amount of waste generated by nuclear power plants is far less. Moreover, as a result of a 60-year experience in the development of nuclear energy, the world has reached a high level of technological safety in the management of radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel and has solved the problems of their negative impact on the environment.

Like any industry, nuclear power had problems as it evolved. The first serious accident at the American nuclear power station Three Mile Island and then at Chernobyl showed the danger of such a powerful source of energy when used carelessly. Since that time, however, the industry's approach to the security of nuclear reactors and control and responsibility for their reliability have fundamentally changed. The main cause of all accidents was human error. That's why special attention has been paid to the openness of issues of safety at nuclear installations for professionals and the public.

After events at the Fukushima plant in 2011, the international community is taking all necessary measures to further enhance the level of nuclear safety. The work is being carried out in several main areas: improving the self-protection of reactor systems, increasing the availability of multiple safety barriers and multiplying overlapping safety channels. The exteriors of modern nuclear reactors are also designed to withstand extreme incidents, such as the impact of a plane crash, natural catastrophes or directed explosions.

In organisational terms, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) came to the conclusion that one of the main causes of events at Fukushima was the lack of an independent oversight body in the country to monitor the security of nuclear energy and to bear responsibility for it. This opinion of the authoritative international organisation was taken into account and a separate state agency that regulates the safety of nuclear energy use was established in Japan.

Also, we must bear in mind that such energy sources as coal, gas and oil are consumed more rapidly and, according to various forecasts, may be depleted in the second half of the 21st century. This makes the development of a new energy strategy with the lat-

est technologies relevant as never before.

The economics of nuclear power allows the state to build an energy strategy, which provides the most efficient use of available resources. Even countries with a rich base of raw materials, such as the United Arab Emirates and Iran, give priority to nuclear energy, taking into account decreasing hydrocarbon resources and their price on the world market. It is much more profitable to export hydrocarbons or use them in other industries than just burn them in the boilers of power plants.

At present, the Republic of Kazakhstan accounts for about 19 percent of the world's known uranium reserves. The country's resources on the whole are estimated at about 1.7 million tons. Expert evaluation shows that the proportion of uranium calculated as energy resources of conventional fuel is more than 40 percent. In 2009, Kazakhstan produced 14 tons of uranium, and as a result, our country became the world's largest producer of natural uranium. Uranium production in 2013 amounted to 22,500 tons.

We also should not forget about such factors as the development of high-tech industries associated with nuclear power, the creation of skilled manpower and a modern scientific and technological base. All this is particularly important for Kazakhstan, which is now an undisputed leader in global uranium production, but which has no nuclear power plants. This is particularly illogical taking into account the fact that the world's first nuclear power station with a fast neutron reactor was launched on the territory of our republic. By the way, this technology allows more efficient use of nuclear fuel, by hundreds of times and is considered promising in the nuclear industry of the 21st century.

In Kazakhstan, production of electricity in 2013 reached 91.9 billion kW/h with consumption at 89.6 billion kW/h. Of that, the share of coal generators was 74 percent, gas 17 percent, hydro-power stations 8.4 percent and renewable energy sources less than 1 percent.

Kazakhstan has all the prerequisites for the development of nuclear energy: significant reserves of uranium; a developed processing industry, nuclear science and qualified human resources.

Construction of nuclear power plants in Kazakhstan will be the main link in the nuclear fuel cy-

cle. It will engage in the energy industry of the republic significant reserves of uranium and thereby diversify generation capacities and optimise the use of available hydrocarbon resources. The development of nuclear energy will lead to further progress in uranium mining and processing and related industries, create new jobs, considerably enhance the country's competitiveness in the global economy and help it become one of the 30 most-developed countries.

No less important is the fact that the construction of nuclear power plants will raise the level of the intellectual and technological development of the Republic of Kazakhstan due to the introduction of high technologies and knowledge-intensive industries, which are the foundation of the accelerated and sustainable development of the economy as a whole. A personnel reserve for the nuclear industry is one of the key issues of its sustainable development. Several universities in Kazakhstan over a dozen years have accumulated experience in training atomic industry specialists. There are a number of other

unique opportunities in the country for the acquisition of practical skills, such as heavy ion accelerator in Astana.

In his recent state-of-the-nation address, Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev instructed the government to resolve in the first quarter of this year the issues of a location and the timing of construction of a nuclear power plant. Earlier in 2013, a commission and a working group, which included representatives of state agencies and organisations were established to develop proposals for the placement and configuration of an NPP on the territory of Kazakhstan. Three potential areas were chosen: Aktau (Mangistau atomic energy complex), a settlement in Ulken in the Almaty region (the site of the South Kazakhstan GRES) and the Kurchatov district of the East Kazakhstan oblast.

It's worth noting that the choice of the plant's location is a multifactorial task and is being decided on the basis of long-term plans for the consumption and production of electricity, characteristics of electric networks and plans to build new grids. Also, it is important to take into account other

conditions when determining the location for an NPP, including seismic, geological, climatic and anthropogenic factors, infrastructure development and the possible impact on the environment.

As international experience shows, the construction of a nuclear power plant requires about 10 years, including selection of a suitable site, development of a feasibility study and conducting an international tender for the construction.

Thereby, we can say that today Kazakhstan is conducting the first phase, which is selecting a location, which requires thorough analysis on the basis of a feasibility study.

Today, we are on the threshold of an important decision on the construction of an atomic power station in Kazakhstan. Efficient management of nuclear energy in the country will allow us to develop high-tech and promising industries, use our uranium stocks for own needs and ensure energy security in the long term.

The author is Vice Minister of Industry and New Technologies of Kazakhstan.

THE ASTANA TIMES

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EURASIA&WORLD

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9, 2014

UN Special Rapporteur Gives Recommendations on Religious Affairs in Kazakhstan

By Rufiya Ospanova

ASTANA – United Nations Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Religion and Belief Heiner Bielefeldt, who was invited by the Kazakh government to observe the status of religious issues in the country, shared his opinions and recommendations at an April 4 press conference.

“During the process of preparing the official report, I realised that what I have begun to learn here in Kazakhstan will certainly stay with me and continue to enrich me down the road. I trust that the consultations with representatives of governmental and non-governmental institutions will also continue. The official report, which includes a list of recommendations, will be available at the website of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (www.ohchr.org), probably by the end of this year. It will be formally presented to the UN Human Rights Council in its March session in 2015,” said Bielefeldt.

Bielefeldt addressed seven issues during his press conference. The first was religious pluralism.

“Kazakhstan is a pluralistic country, and no one can say how many religions are practiced here with certainty. Interreligious relations have been very peaceful in this country. There have been no violent pressures to this day, which is an accomplishment achieved by the people of Kazakhstan. Some attributed this to their ‘nomadic’ traditions of hospitality and openness towards others. The government takes efforts to promote interreligious cooperation and peace. A special role is played by the Agency for Religious Affairs (ARA) represented here by [ARA Deputy Chairman] Mr. [Galym] Shoikin,” Bielefeldt said.

He also said that according to a survey conducted by the ARA, the population displays varying degrees of acceptance towards traditional and nontraditional religious communities. Members of communities perceived as nontradi-

tional confirmed that they sometimes face societal skepticism, suspicion and discrimination.

Although Bielefeldt found that government representatives mostly avoid the terms ‘traditional’ and ‘nontraditional’ religions when discussing this topic, no one among his interlocutors denied that negative attitudes towards religious groups perceived as standing outside of the country’s traditional mosaic exist. He also found widespread fear of religious extremism often associated with certain strains of Islam and worries that the influence of sects generally associated with small nontraditional groups may pose challenges in the future to the climate of religious tolerance that characterises Kazakhstan’s society.

“My second point is secularism. Secularism is one of the defining characteristics of the state listed in Article 1 of the Constitution. According to opinion polls, it is widely accepted amongst the population. Calls to turn Kazakhstan into a religious state, mostly a Sharia-based state, are very rare,” he said.

“An open discussion of the meaning and implications of secularism might also help to overcome restrictive attitudes within the administration and within law-enforcement agencies,” he said.

The third point Bielefeldt addressed was freedom and its limitations. According to him, in discussions with government representatives, they agreed that freedom of religion and beliefs is not without limitations. Bielefeldt said he believes freedom can be limited but also limitations on freedom must be limited. Furthermore, for limitations to be legitimate, they must cumulatively meet the criteria set out in Article 18, paragraph 3 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Accordingly, limitations must be legally prescribed; they must be clearly needed to pursue a legitimate aim. They must also remain within the realm of proportionality, which means they

must be confined to the minimum degree of interference needed to reach their aim. In addition, limitations should not have any discriminatory intentions against individuals or communities.

The fourth issue was the 2011 Law on Religious Associations that required all religious communities to re-register in order to obtain the status of a registered religious association at the national, regional or local level. Registration procedures, Bielefeldt said, should always be based on the clear understanding that freedom of religion or belief, due to its nature as a human right, applies to all human beings and can never be rendered dependent on any specific act of state approval or administrative registration.

“My main recommendation in this field is that registration must be offered, not mandated. The groups which have not registered are very small. This is a matter of principle. This contradicts the purpose of the law in general,” he said.

A related issue Bielefeldt discussed is that after three copies of any piece of religious literature are imported into Kazakhstan, they must be registered, as this is the threshold between personal and pastoral use. According to the ARA, in the vast majority of cases, such approval is given without further issue. The main reason for state interference in this field is the prevention of religious extremism and hatred. Bielefeldt said he shares the view that religious extremism and religious hatred are serious problems which require state monitoring, but said he is unsure if the measures taken in Kazakhstan satisfy the criteria set out in Articles 18 and 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Having heard a number of examples from different religious communities, he said he believes the restrictions imposed on the import of literature in Kazakhstan are disproportionate.

His fifth point was on combating religious extremism and hatred.

“It is a serious problem in Cen-

tral Asia. As already mentioned, I fully appreciate the government’s efforts to counter religious hatred, intolerance and extremism. Indeed, the stability of Kazakhstan, in particular, when compared to the volatile situations in neighbouring countries suffering from violent religious conflicts, is a precious asset that needs to be upheld and further developed and defended. Criminal law should play a role. It is necessary to broaden article 164 of the current Criminal Code. This article combines hatred with a number of other phenomena like religious strife, religious discord, religious antagonism, etc. Even exclusivity or superiority claims made on behalf of certain religions might fall within the remit of this law. As a result of broadly circumscribed offences, all sorts of unwelcome religious claims deemed offensive to parts of society or the government could be penalised with imprisonment. This leads to legal insecurity and adverse repercussions on freedom of expression and freedom of religion and belief. These issues need a more detailed analysis. The serious nature of the allegations made motivates me to at least flag these existing problems as important issues needing further follow up,” he said.

The sixth topic was the differentiation between religious instruction and information about religion. Bielefeldt mentioned the Toledo Guiding Principles on Teaching about Religion and Beliefs in Public Schools (Toledo Guiding Principles), elaborated by the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe on Nov. 27, 2007. According to Bielefeldt, the Toledo Guiding Principles insist on a clear differentiation between education that acquaints students with their own religious traditions and education for the purpose of broadening general knowledge about different religions. While the first type of education can be called “religious instruction,” the second can be called “information about religion.” Whereas religious instruction is based on the tenets of a particular faith, information

should be given in the spirit of neutrality and impartiality. Mixing or conflating both forms of education can lead to infringements on freedom of religion or belief, particularly in the context of mandatory school education, he said.

“The situation in Kazakhstan is very clear in this regard. Due to the secular nature of public schools, the curriculum merely provides information about religions, not for religious instruction on the tenets of a particular faith. Familiarising the younger generations with their specific religious traditions is thus entirely left to the religious communities themselves,” said Bielefeldt.

The seventh issue Bielefeldt mentioned was religious information as part of the school curriculum. The Ministry of Education and Science introduced religious studies for educational purposes only a few years ago. Currently, this subject is taught over the course of one year at the ninth grade level. The text book used for teaching ninth grade students covers different world religions with neutrality. Bielefeldt recommended teaching this subject beyond grade nine.

“I met with a number of organisations dedicated to the promotion of ‘religious literacy’ in society. Some of these organisations closely collaborate with the ARA. They pursue different purposes: familiarising people with the wealth of religious traditions, promoting a better understanding of religious diversity, encouraging interreligious dialogue and building resilience against religious extremism. These purposes obviously overlap. One basic assumption explained by experts in this field was that religious extremists, while typically claiming to present a ‘pure’ version of their faith, often show a very narrow-minded interpretation of religious messages. Spreading knowledge and deeper understanding could thus help people to build resilience against such simplistic dogma. The need for promoting ‘religious literacy’ was by some associated with the Soviet past which saw a

sharp decline in religious practice and knowledge in society,” Bielefeldt commented.

After Bielefeldt shared his opinions and provided his recommendations to the public, Galym Shoikin took the floor.

“It was very important for us to invite Mr. Bielefeldt to Kazakhstan. We did everything possible in organizing this visit and his meetings with representatives from NGOs,” he said.

“Over the course of two weeks, it’s hard to evaluate all phenomena taking place in Kazakhstan,” Shoikin said. “I would like to note the constructiveness of the Special Rapporteur and his recommendations. All recommendations in the report will be discussed and we will also provide our opinion on them. We have almost more than half a year and we will do this with our partners at the UN. Kazakhstan does everything possible to improve its legislation, in particular legislation regarding freedom and religion.”

According to Shoikin, Kazakhstan’s laws do not differentiate between traditional and nontraditional religions. Religion exists in Kazakhstan society and people have the right to express their convictions.

“Secularism is clearly prescribed in Kazakhstan’s Constitution and now we are discussing the prospects of secularism in our country,” he continued. “We have created equal registration standards for religious organisations and made the process understandable to all. The ARA is open to consultations and cooperation with all religious associations on registration issues.”

“Society requires that organisations carry out their work openly and transparently. Those who didn’t pass registration didn’t comply with legal requirements,” Shoikin said.

In conclusion, he mentioned that President Nazarbayev has spoken about preserving peace and harmony in the country and said that the fight against religious extremism should not become a fight against religion.

Kazakhstan, US Discuss Expanding Trade, Nuclear Security Cooperation

By Altair Nurbekov

THE HAGUE – President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan met with President Barack Obama of the United States on March 25 on the sidelines of the third Nuclear Security Summit here to discuss bilateral relations and international issues, paying particular attention to nuclear security.

Speaking about bilateral cooperation, the two leaders considered further strengthening and developing relations in trade and economic cooperation.

President Nazarbayev noted that nearly 300 joint ventures involving U.S. business enterprises are operating in Kazakhstan, demonstrating the dynamic cooperation.

As the U.S. is one of the largest investors in Kazakhstan, the Kazakh president stressed that Astana is interested in more active participation by U.S. companies in the State Programme of Accelerated Industrial and Innovative Development (SPAIID).

The agenda of the talks, which took place at the U.S. embassy in The Hague in the presence of top political and trade officials from both countries, also included Kazakhstan’s accession to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and other topical international issues.

Addressing nuclear security, President Obama emphasised Kazakhstan’s invaluable contribution to nuclear disarmament and stressed that the country is an example for all states in this sphere. He also thanked Kazakhstan for its assistance in stabilising the situation in Afghanistan.

According to the Joint Statement on Cooperation in the Sphere of Nonproliferation and Strengthening Nuclear Security issued following the meeting, Kazakhstan and the U.S. have once again confirmed a shared commitment to nonproliferation and strengthening nuclear security.

The document states that the two countries note with satisfaction the successful efforts of the U.S. Defence Department’s Cooperative Threat Reduction Programme, which supports nonproliferation activities in the former Soviet Union, and will continue to strengthen physical security at the former Semipalatinsk Test Site.

In order to prevent illicit trafficking in nuclear and radiological materials, the U.S. will continue to partner with Kazakhstan in developing a Nuclear Security Training Centre (NSTC). Both countries will construct and equip the NSTC as well as develop curricula for physical protection and material control and accounting specialists. The project is expected to be completed before the end of 2015, the statement says.

Since 2006, the U.S. has been working closely with the Kazakhstan Customs Control Committee (KCCC) to install radiation detection equipment at ports, land border crossings, airports and other international points of exit and entry. To date, radiation detection systems have been installed at 29 sites.

The statement also expresses support and gratitude for Kazakhstan’s recent measures to elimi-

nate its highly enriched uranium (HEU), particularly at its VVR-K research reactor at the Institute of Nuclear Physics (INP). HEU there was downblended to low enriched uranium (LEU) fuel and HEU spent fuel was removed from the reactor. The countries will continue to work together to convert Kazakhstan’s remaining HEU reactors to LEU fuel as soon as technically feasible, the statement says.

Thirty-three kilograms of HEU have recently been downblended in Kazakhstan, and the two countries have cooperated to remove and ship approximately 600 kilograms of HEU from Kazakhstan to the U.S. Almost 75 kg of HEU spent fuel have been returned to Russia in recent years. The next shipment will take place in late 2014 from the Institute of Nuclear Physics in Alatau.

The U.S. has also worked with Kazakhstan to complete the transportation of 10 metric tons of HEU and three metric tons of plutonium, enough to make 775 nuclear weapons, to the northeast of the country.

Taking into account Kazakhstan’s vast experience in handling such materials, the U.S. voiced support for the country’s endeavour to host the International Atomic Energy Agency’s LEU Bank, considered to be a nonproliferation effort to provide safe access to low-enriched uranium. During the summit in The Hague Kazakhstan announced that it was nearing completion of talks with IAEA over a relevant host country agreement.



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Art of Silk and Fire on Display in Astana

By Natalia Kurpyakova

ASTANA – An exhibition by Svetlana Karatayeva, a member of the Kazakh Artists' Union, is on display in the Russian Centre of Science and Culture in Astana.

Karatayeva (whose real family name is Burtseva) creates paintings and drawings and works with batik printing and felt, but she is most famous for her silk "paintings" made with a soldering iron. Examples of all types of her work are in the current exhibit.

Few artists in the world paint with soldering irons, and Karatayeva is the only artist in Kazakhstan working this way. She compares the technique to pointillism, a technique of creating images with separate strokes of dots or small lines, but using a soldering iron instead of a brush.

Making a picture this way takes several weeks and sometimes more than a month of work in a respirator, with teary eyes from the acrid smoke. The end result is a seemingly weightless, breathable painting with astonishing textures and colours from the melted silk. Karatayeva is a master of nuances



A silk painting made with a soldering iron by Svetlana Karatayeva, a member of the Kazakh Artists' Union and the only artist in Kazakhstan working this way.

of colour, a quality manifested in all her works. Her subjects are also diverse: decorative still-life paint-

ings, abstract compositions, realistic landscapes and romantic fantasies with Kazakh national motifs

and styles, like the pieces "Signs of Ancestors," and "Petroglyphs."

Continued on Page B3

Kazakhstan Shows Character, But Loses Davis Cup Quarter Finals to Switzerland

By Ilyas Omarov and Jan Furst

Kazakhstan faced off against Switzerland in the Davis Cup quarter finals on April 4-6 in hopes to repeat its successful run in 2010 when the Kazakhs beat the Swiss 5:0 in the World Group playoffs. However, with the ATP-ranked No. 3 and No. 4 players on their roster, this time the Swiss team ousted Kazakhstan 3:2.

Swiss captain Severin Luthi assembled a dream team this time around with Stanislas Wawrinka (currently No. 3) and Roger Federer (currently No. 4). Wawrinka is the winner of 2014 Australian

Open and Federer is considered a living tennis legend in today's tennis world having won all Grand Slam titles several times around and having ranked No. 1 for 286 weeks, just as long as another legend Pete Sampras.

The names on paper looked menacing for Kazakhstan. Before the match, Federer underscored, however, that Kazakhstan is "a well balanced team. They can easily substitute both in single and double matches. That is really good when a team can easily swap the players." According to Federer, he knew almost nothing about Kazakhstan and the match against that

country would be an opportunity to expand his horizons in this region of the world.

Kazakhstan's Andrey Golubev, ranked No. 59, managed to beat Wawrinka in game one. The first set already went through a tough struggle resulting in a tie-break where Golubev got past Wawrinka. In the second set, Golubev continued to surprise the Swiss fans showing a complete domination, 6:2. Wawrinka came back to win the third set 6:3, but in the fourth set in a deciding tie-breaker Golubev took the match 3:1 and the first point for the Kazakh team.

In the next match, Federer didn't give leave chances to Mikhail Kukushkin, ranked No. 56, - 6:4, 6:4, 6:2.

The away team had high hopes for the doubles match. Kazakh team captain Dias Doskarayev let the triumphant of the first game Golubev out on the court along with Alexander Nedovyesov, ranked No. 77, who at the time had the highest doubles ranking of the match among all players. The strategy worked out fine and Team Kazakhstan beat Team Switzerland 3:1 to take the lead after the first three games 2:1.

Continued on Page B7

Kazakh Scientists Develop New Treatment of Multi-Drug-Resistant Tuberculosis

By Raushan Shulembayeva

ALMATY – Kazakh scientists have developed a new pharmacological agent (FS-1) for the treatment of multi-drug-resistant tuberculosis.

Microbial resistance to drugs has long been of concern to scientists. Nevertheless, over the last 50 years, no new anti-tuberculosis drugs have been made. Therefore, the new agent developed by Kazakh scientists is important. Its importance is confirmed by the fact that the pharmaceutical industry in the former Soviet Union produces mainly generics, while original products are imported from abroad.

The agent was developed under a programme called, Development of New Anti-Infective Drugs, which is done under the auspices of the Scientific Centre of the Ministry of Industry and New Technologies. Professor and doctor Murat Kulmanov leads the project and says that FS-1 is an original anti-tuberculosis drug and that they had been working on it for many years.

"The first preclinical test was held with laboratory animals and the result was a 100-percent recovery. The second phase was conducted with human volunteers and also yielded excellent results. The Ministry of Healthcare granted us two clini-



A new pharmacological agent (FS-1) for the treatment of multi-drug-resistant tuberculosis was developed under Development of New Anti-Infective Drugs programme.

cal bases in Almaty and Karaganda where we began direct treatment of patients and found the most effective therapeutic dose. The main thing is that treatment with our drug is short and does not cause relapse," Kulmanov said.

Upon completion of each phase of clinical trials that confirmed the alleged properties of FS-1, namely its low toxicity and high efficacy in the treatment of multi-drug-resistant tuberculosis of the lungs, the scientists prepared a detailed report for the health department. Moreover, preliminary calculations, according to

Kulmanov, showed the use of FS-1 in the treatment of tuberculosis can reduce costs up to one million tenge (US\$5,494) per person.

After successful completion of phase two, the scientists applied to the Ministry of Healthcare for accelerated registration of the new drug following the third stage of testing. It should be noted that there is a worldwide practice of allowing expedited registration of drugs after the third round of testing when the ailment is life threatening. However, the process has stalled. Despite the apparent success, the

Ministry of Healthcare has still not considered the issue, citing a lack of standards and practices for such cases.

In President Nursultan Nazarbayev's most recent state-of-the-nation address, he said increasing Kazakhstan's scientific capacity will help create a knowledge-based economy. "In this area, we should improve legislation on venture financing, protection of intellectual property and support for research and innovation, as well as the commercialisation of research," said the President.

According to scientists, Kazakhstan is at least one year behind the U.S., which already has started to introduce its new anti-tuberculosis drug Sirturo in American clinics, which U.S.-based, phase two clinical trials have shown to have side effects, including fatal heart failure. Nevertheless, the United States has registered the new drug.

Today, Kazakh experts are negotiating with various international manufacturers and are discussing the most favourable conditions for Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan must complete the third phase of clinical tests with its foreign partners in their countries and register FS-1. Only then will Kazakhstan be able to patent the drug as intellectual property abroad.

Fundraising Campaign Seeks to Make Almaty Green Again

By Julia Rutz

A new fundraising effort was launched on April 4 in Almaty to help plant and maintain the city's trees, as well as to clean its rivers, install litter bins and fund landscape design.

The campaign is placing posters near cash registers in shops and gas stations around the city urging people to donate five tenge (US 3 cents) to the effort. Cashiers can swipe a barcode on the posters to add donations to a customer's charge. Monies raised will also be used to support animal shelters, purchase prosthetics for children and deliver food to the elderly.

"We give everyone the opportunity to take part in this charity event. Our slogan is, 'Five tenge for making the city green,'" said Anar Kaliyeva, creator and coordinator of the project.

The project is being initiated by the PosadiDerevo.kz (plant a tree) public association and a self-organised group of activists called group Alma-Qala. The project is being called "Life-Giving Drop for Alma-Qala" (the word "Qala" means city in Kazakh).

Earlier this year, Alma-Qala also launched an effort to restore Almaty's famous apple gardens,

which had been a symbol of the city during Soviet times.

During an April 2 press conference concerning the most recent effort, group member Beknur Kissikov reported that the first apple garden funded by the new campaign, including 1,000 transplanted apple trees, was planted in Almaty on March 29. Another garden is scheduled to be planted in the Turksib district. A larger planting is scheduled for April 12 and volunteers can sign up on the group's Facebook page, said Kissikov.

Eldani Charity Fund President Gulsira Amanturlina, who participated in the press conference, said the number of volunteers who have signed up to help with the April 12 planting has exceeded expectations.

"Right now, we have 2,000 volunteers willing to help us on April 12. However, we will be glad to see more people coming as any help will be very much appreciated," said Amanturlina. She also presented hand-made ceramic apples, which were created for sale in order to support the project.

Posadiderevo.kz is a domestic environmental organisation that seeks to raise ecological awareness and preserve trees.



THINGS TO WATCH APRIL

ASTANA OPERA

April 11, 13 at 19:00	La Boheme Opera
April 17 at 19:30	Masterpieces of Chamber Vocal Music
April 20 at 19:00	Virtuoso of Baroque and Italian BEL CANTO

KAZAKH NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF ARTS

April 10 at 19:30	Baroque Masterpieces concert
April 14 at 19:00	Evening of Chamber Music

CONGRESS HALL

April 12 at 19:00	Pesnyary ensemble and VIA Verasy concert
April 16 at 19:00	Concert of state string quartet
April 21 at 19:00	"Black and White" Sergey Trofimov's Concert

MAXIM GORKY STATE THEATRE

April 13 at 11:00	Little Red Riding Hood
April 18 at 18:30	"Mixed Emotions" drama

KORME EXHIBITION COMPLEX

April 17-19 at 10:00	"Fashion Expo Astana 2014" 15th Kazakhstan international exhibition
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Art Exhibiton Captures Nature’s Beauty

By Natalia Kurpyakova

ASTANA – Paintings by Yelena Te, a member of the Kazakh Artists’ Union, are being displayed in the Shezhire Gallery of Modern Art in Astana.

Te was born in Alma-Ata, attended Gogol Art School and graduated from the graphic arts department of Abay State University. Her works are displayed in national and international exhibitions and can be found in private collections in Kazakhstan, as well as other Commonwealth of Independent States countries, the United States, France, Japan, Turkey, Israel and Germany. In Astana, a Te solo exhibition was held in Shezhire in 2002.

This year’s exhibition is called “Awakening” and consists of more than 40 still life and landscape paintings that seem to hasten the arrival of the long-awaited spring, which in Astana, is only beginning to arrive.

The pictures show summer, as opposed to spring, with roses, irises, gladioli, lilacs, lilies, peonies, daisies, dandelions, chrysanthemums and asters. This floral feast of colours delights with soft, subtle shades and perfect shapes.

“There are such flowers. A lot of my inspiration comes from nature. Last year, my neighbour had really gorgeous irises in her garden! These are them and here are allegorical pictures of Silk Road pitchers. In them, through the arrangement of objects, I tell of people’s relationships,” the painter said.

The artist adds a touch of romance to her creations, which fills them with a deep sense of peace, harmony and joy for life.

Te’s still life pictures resem-



Yelena Te, a painter capturing seasons and nature’s beauty.

ble the lavishly set tables found in great Dutch artists’ paintings, the centerpieces of which are ripe fruits and flowers, gorgeous tableware, tablecloths and napkins. Every element is carefully drawn: each petal, each watermelon seed, each pomegranate grain accurately conveys the shades, sizes and texture of the depicted objects. The grapes look like they were recently picked and the tablecloth fabrics

look silky and cool to the touch. “Still life with a cornucopia” is the most conspicuous canvas, with its natural and luscious flora and man-made luxury goods placed together on one table.

Te’s paintings have transformed the foyer of the Ramada Plaza Hotel in Astana where the exhibition is taking place. They reflect things about the world that are beautiful at any time of the year.

Astana Opera Soloist Beketayeva to Perform in London and Budapest

By Rufiya Ospanova

ASTANA – Aigerim Beketayeva, leading soloist of the Astana Opera, will perform with People’s Artist of Russia Boris Eifman’s troupe on a tour that will take them to Budapest in early April and to London’s Coliseum Theatre from April 15-19.

Eifman, director of the St. Petersburg State Academic Ballet Theatre, was deeply struck by Beketayeva’s performance of the Dying Swan at St. Petersburg’s Mariinsky Theatre when the young Kazakh troupe went on tour there in early March. Prior to that, Eifman worked with the Astana Opera theatre troupe on the premiere of the ballet “Rodin,” in which Beketayeva gave a fragile, almost porcelain performance as Camille Claudel. Young Beketayeva will perform the same role during the European tour.

The role of Camille Claudel is not an easy one, as the choreography is different from standard ballet classics. The main character is the human body and its capabilities. This will be the London premiere of “Rodin” and the first time Eifman has invited a performer from another theatre to take a lead, making the role a double honour for Beketayeva.

Beketayeva graduated from the Seleznev Almaty Choreographic School. In 2012, she became a laureate of the International Ballet Competition in Varna, Bulgaria; a year later she won the Rudolf Nureyev International Ballet Competition and won a diploma at the 12th International Ballet Competition and Contest of Choreogra-



Aigerim Beketayeva, a leading soloist of the Astana Opera.

phers in Moscow. In her upcoming performance, the dancer said, her goal is perfection.

“I’ve read a lot of books, watched a movie about the character I’m going to perform, in order to better convey the feelings and emotions that she experienced. A lot has been done. Others who have gotten this role visited psychiatric hospitals to feel the atmosphere that should be conveyed

from the scene,” Beketayeva said.

She also mentioned that in a few years, her Camilla will be quite different; she will grow along with the dancer.

Tursynbek Nurkaliyev, artistic director of Astana Opera’s ballet, said that it was important for top soloists to go and perform in other countries so that Astana Opera enters the level of the world’s leading theatres.



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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9, 2014

Ayupova and Uzenbayeva Perform at Astana Opera



The Astana Opera hosted a Chamber Music concert with support from the International Foundation Congress of Spiritual Concord.

By Rufiya Ospanova

Kazakh violinist Aida Ayupova and pianist Gulzhan Uzenbayeva gave a concert titled “An Evening of Chamber Music” on April 5 at the Astana Opera Chamber

Hall. The concert was held with support from the International Foundation Congress of Spiritual Concord.

Violinist Ayupova and pianist Uzenbayeva performed together one of the most famous chamber

pieces of Ludwig van Beethoven, Kreutzer Sonata No. 9.

The event also featured jazz pieces, including 20th century Russian composer Igor Frolov’s works from George Gershwin’s opera “Porgy and Bess.” Contemporary

violinists frequently play Frolov because his music is popular.

Musicologist Marzhan Zhakenova noted that chamber music, unlike symphonic or opera music, is intended to be performed in a chamber setting.

“After all, chamber music is the art of friendly musical conversation. The origins of chamber music lie in home music making. Today, true chamber music is not just played, it is used as a form of communication and is capable of creating a special spiritual connection between people,” Zhakenova said.

Ayupova is honoured in Kazakhstan. She is the winner of the Chateau de Courcillon international violin competition in France and the Grand Prix and Gold Medal winner at the International Championship of Performing Arts (Los Angeles.) She is a member of the Ulytau ethnic rock group.

Uzenbayeva has been named a laureate at international competitions, is a member of the Composers’ Union of Kazakhstan, a soloist for the Zhambyl Kazakh State Philharmonic, the winner of a Kazakhstan state grant for the creation of socially significant works and an assistant professor of the piano department at Kurmangazy Kazakh National Conservatory.

First Kazakh-Language Horror Film to be Released in April

By Jane Rivers

ASTANA – The first Kazakh-language horror film, “M-Agent,” directed by Erkin Rakishev, will be released April 3.

Rakishev, who made his name with “My Name is Also Kozha,” said his main intention in the new film is to scare audiences.

“I saw people crying after watching my documentary, ‘The Hunger,’ so I decided to see whether I could create a film that would scare the audience or not. I guess I have succeeded,” he said.

The main characters in “M-Agent” are young, carefree students from good families. One night, returning from a party, they accidentally hit and kill a girl and dispose of her body. Soon after, young people begin to die, one by one, under mysterious circumstances. A journalist begins to investigate the crimes, which are thought to be the work of a serial killer who stalks his victims online.

“M-Agent” calls to mind the plot of “The Ring,” the Ameri-

can horror hit that was based on a Japanese film. In all three movies, a ghost girl with black hair comes looking for revenge. This time, she uses Internet chat instead of a videotape.

Rakishev does not deny that the 2002 film inspired him to create his own horror story. “I think Kazakhstan’s young people are too careless. They make friends with complete strangers online, which can have sometimes unpleasant consequences,” the director said.

Gulshara Zhandarbekova, known for her role in 2009’s “Kelin,” (“Daughter-in-Law”) stars in the movie. The movie’s soundtrack was composed by Bauyrzhan Kokenov, whose music, Rakishev said, will make audiences nervous.

“M-Agent” was made on a budget of \$250,000 with the cooperation of the KTK television channel. Before its public release, it was presented at the ninth Eurasia Film Festival as part of the Dynamic Kazakh Movie programme.

“Three Sisters” Takes Home Best Production, Best Director at National Theatre Awards



By Alina Usmanova

ASTANA – Kazakhstan’s best theatre actors and productions for this year were named at the Theatre Koktemi 2014 Festival (“Theatre Spring 2014”) held in Almaty’s Mukhtar Auezov State Academic Theatre of Drama on March 28.

Director Alma Kakisheva won best director for her production of

Anton Chekhov’s “Three Sisters,” which also won the festival’s biggest award, best theatre production.

Danagul Temirsultanova was recognised as the year’s best actress. Temirsultanova rose to fame in the Tamasha satirical theatre. Now she plays major roles in the Auezov State Theatre. Actor and TV presenter Azamat Satybaldy won best actor. Satybaldy is not only a theatre performer, but is also well known for films including “Beware of Cow,” “Brothers” and “Cocktail for a Star.”

Gulshat Tutova was named best supporting actress and Yerkebulan Daiyrov best supporting actor. Daiyrov recently performed the role of Bauyrzhan Momyshuly in Akan Satayev’s film of that name and won the Namys medal for his portrayal of the Hero of the Soviet Union. Singer and actress Saltanat Bakayeva of the Arnau group won best debut.

Kazakhstan’s theatre awards are held every year on International Theatre Day. In 2014, the awards were dedicated to the 100th anniversary of People’s Artist Sabira Maikanova.



The Theatre Koktemi 2014 Festival’s award ceremony.

Art of Silk and Fire on Display in Astana

Continued from Page B1

The artist uses pieces of silk, satin, brocade, nylon and organza as her canvases. In the

1970s-80s, she said, dresses, scarves and belts had bright colours, while today there are no such colours. Her use of vintage fabrics is one of the secrets to

the colours she pulls out of her unique paintings.

Karatayeva lives in Lisakovsk, in the Kostanai region. Her creative career began in 1993 and her works



Dresses, scarves and belts of bright colours used in 1970s-80s appear in Karatayeva’s fabrics, which is one of the secrets to the colours she pulls out of her unique paintings.

are displayed in national exhibitions and can be found in museums and private collections in Kazakhstan, Russia, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, the United States, Germany, the Czech Republic and Holland.

Karatayeva’s cheerful, optimistic attitude pervades her work, which is sunny and colourful. Even the titles of her pieces are happy: “Swings,” “Angel of Dreams” and “Touch of Tenderness.”

The artist’s new hobby is felt. A handmade woollen plastic cloth is rich in colour and the exhibition presents the felt panel-pictures “Seasons of the Year” and decorative works “The Sun of Ancient People” and “Astana – The City of Dreams Come True.”

There are also works by her students at the exhibition. For more than 20 years, Karatayeva has been working at the art school for children in Lisakovsk.

“Svetlana Karatayeva is a wonderful woman, a devotee, and her students also love her devotedly,” said Gulnara Cullman-Kultassova, graduate of the art school and now a professional artist. “She talks about her work easily, with a smile, but in fact painting on silk in such a manner is hard work. Viewers see the result, and it is beautiful. We admire her works, they inspire us, because they convey the joy of life and the warmth of her heart.”

Motor-Roller Returns to Kazakhstan after European Tour

By Julia Rutz

ALMATY – The Kazakh musical group Motor-Roller, which celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2013, has returned home after a European tour.

The musicians performed in March in several German cities including Berlin, Cologne, Munich and Frankfurt. They also gave a concert in the Czech capital, Prague. According to frontman Ilyas Autov, group members were nervous before their first concert in Berlin because the city attracts many world class artists. Despite their fears and the language barrier, the group was well received.

Group members also said Berlin was the most memorable stop on their European tour, but that they were inspired in general by the cities, architecture and people

of Europe. They said they believe their trip will trigger ideas for new songs.

Autov observed some differences between concert goers in Kazakhstan and Europe. “It is really easy to identify foreigners, as they are not hesitant to show their emotions. While our people worry about what they look like and how other people are acting,” said Autov.

Motor-Roller’s latest CD also sold out quickly in Germany. It will be released on their website on April 1 and the band will hold an autograph session in Almaty on April 3.

The frontman also explained the meaning of the name they gave to one of their recent concerts, “I Love Baranina,” which means “I love lamb meat.”

“I love Baranina is our message.



Motor-Roller, a Kazakh musical group, performed in several German cities in March.

It means that we don’t want to see Kazakhstan’s people become zombies and behave like sheep,” Autov said.

According to the frontman, Mo-

tor-Roller does perform only one musical genre. “Our music is for everyone. We have a lot of heavy rock songs, as well as dance music. We also love ballads,” said Autov.

New Pig Farm Revives Rural Community



A recently opened pig farm is once again providing jobs for the local community.

By Maksut Irzhanov

WEST KAZAKHSTAN REGION – A recently opened pig farm has allowed many former residents of Shchapovo Village in the Zelenovski District to return after leaving in the 1990s due to economic decline following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Shchapovo Village was once a thriving community supported by the local industrial associa-

tion “Ural Poultry,” which provided jobs for local residents. But that association shut down in the 1990s, and many residents moved in search of work to the oblast centre Uralsk.

The new farm, however, is once again providing jobs for the local community.

“The matter is that the local sausage shop was idle for a lack of raw materials, and it was decided to build a pig farm,” said Valery

Kadraliyev, head of the Shchapovo Farming Partnership.

“In 2009, we received an investment loan and began construction of the farm on the land plot allocated near the village. By the end of 2011, the project was successfully put into operation, and in the spring, we brought seed stock, which already in October produced a pig crop,” said Kadraliyev.

“During construction of the facility, more than 80 jobs for the

local population were created as stipulated in the contract with the management of the pig complex,” said Aitkali Abzhan, akim (mayor) of the district. “Today, this complex employs 20 local residents. The villagers have stable and decent salaries, which they receive regularly. Moreover, in this partnership, we have a good and reliable social partner, which helps solve many problems in our district.”

Among those employed in the farming partnership is Oleg Sharafutdinov, who, like many of his fellow villagers in search of work, traveled for several years all over the western regions of the country. Now, thanks to this project, he has stable work.

“Our complex is a high-tech and automated enterprise. We constantly see the results of our labour. A good pig yield and solid weight gain are the factors of success and our salary and bonuses largely depend on them. We like our work,” said Sharafutdinov.

His colleagues, veterinarian Vladimir Yashkov and farm employees Vladimir Zherikhovsky, Akushtap Netaliyeva, Batyrbek Sariyev and Miram Bekkaliyev agree with him.

The farm is equipped with modern European technology installed by the Polish company Wesstron. And taking into account that last year 860 tonnes of meat was produced and the total stock reached 10,000 animals, it can be said that the company has already achieved its production capacity.

Corps A Civil Servants Study International Practice in Corporate Governance

By Ardaq Kalikhanuly

ASTANA – A seminar on corporate governance for Corps A civil servants is taking place at the Academy of Public Administration under the President of Kazakhstan from April 7 to April 11. The EU-funded project called “Civil Service Reform and Modernisation of the Government of Kazakhstan” supports the seminar.

Alikhan Baimenov, Chairman of the Agency for Civil Service Affairs of Kazakhstan and Bolatbek Abdrasilov, Rector of the Academy of Public Administration welcomed participants of the seminar at its opening.

Hervé Terlier, Ian Andrews and Stephen James Logan, three international experts in the field of corporate governance invited by the EU project, conduct interactive activities, familiarise participants with different models of corporate governance, including experience of some European countries and the U.S. Examples

of effective corporate governance practices applied not only within modern business entities, but also in various government bodies are also discussed at the seminar.

The seminar focuses on corporate governance issues in public sector, particularly on strategic planning, allocation and delineation of powers, avoiding duplication, risk management, transparency and internal audit. Representatives of the Samruk-Kazyna National Welfare Fund are also set to share their experience in implementing corporate governance principles in national companies with senior civil servants at the seminar.

Representatives of the Administration of the President of Kazakhstan, the Ministry of Economy and Budget Planning, the Agency for Civil Service Affairs, the Academy of Public Administration under the President of Kazakhstan, and executive secretaries of state bodies of the country attend the seminar.

Aerial Monitoring of Saiga Population to Help Determine Their Numbers

By Julia Rutz

ASTANA – An aerial census and monitoring of the saiga population in Betpakdala, Ustyurt and Ural regions is scheduled for April 7 and 10 as part of a programme to preserve and manage fauna resources, according to the press service for the Kazakh Ministry of Environment and Water Recourses.

The aerial counts are being conducted by the Okhotzoprom Association of the Ministry’s Committee of Forestry and Hunting. Members of scientific organisations, regional forestry and hunting inspectors, as well as representatives of natural parks and environmental organisations will participate in the campaign.

Two AN-2 planes will conduct the aerial census. One will monitor the saiga population in the Betpakdala and Ustyurt regions, and the other plane will monitor Uralsk.

In total, 230 flight hours have

been allocated to monitor saiga antelopes in 2014. According to the schedule, the Uralsk population is first on the list, followed by the Betpakdala and Usturt territories.

The total number of saiga species in Kazakhstan will be announced after the monitoring is completed and the data is analysed.

According to statistics, Kazakhstan had a saiga population of 187,000 in 2013. That number was up from only 21,000 antelopes in 2003.

Decades of illegal hunting have made the saiga an endangered species. These animals now inhabit territory in Russia and Kazakhstan. Despite the fact that saiga hunting is punishable in Kazakhstan by up to five years in prison, poachers continue to pursue these creatures whose horns fetch \$75 a pair on the black market in Kazakhstan and far more smuggled into China.

Another challenge that has faced the saiga is the lung disease pasteurellosis. In 2010, an outbreak of this disease killed approximately 12,000 antelopes.

To help save this once mil-

lion-strong population, Kazakhstan signed a memorandum of understanding on saiga conservation with Russia, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Mongolia in 2006.



Kazakhstan Culture Welcomed in Ottawa

By Gulnaz Kalikhanova

OTTAWA – Every year one of Canada’s leading and largest colleges – Algonquin College of Applied Arts and Technology – hosts a Celebration of Cultures festival, one of the most popular and anticipated events in the life of the college as well as of Ottawa.

Annually, the number of participants and guests is growing. This year’s 19th annual festival of “Celebration of Cultures” was successfully held on April 3, and the embassy of Kazakhstan in Canada took part in it.

A total of 22 embassies accredited in Ottawa participated in the event, including those from Armenia, Bulgaria, China, the Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Japan, Poland, Turkey, the U.S. and others.

Ottawa residents, diplomats and journalists joined students and Algonquin College’s faculty and leadership as guests at the festival.

The Kazakhstan booth draw atten-

tion thanks to its decoration and the traditional hospitality. It showcased books on Kazakh traditions, culture, the country’s economy, as well as travel literature and pictures. Traditional clothing and jewelry, cultural artefacts, souvenirs were also on display. Samples of national dishes were especially popular among the guests.

In addition, visitors were able to watch videos of great performances by Kazakhstan’s popular bands and honoured artists. Many were impressed with the pictures of Kazakhstan’s capital. Guests were interested in learning more about Astana’s highlights and the way it is preparing for the international specialised exhibition EXPO 2017.

The guests and participants of the Celebration of Cultures also learned about Kazakhstan’s ethnic diversity and its experience in nurturing interethnic and interreligious harmony, as well as the role and work of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan.

Professor Discusses Kazakh Contribution to Global Nuclear Non-Proliferation

By Raushan Shulembayeva

ALMATY – Kazakhstan occupies 15th place in Nuclear Threat Initiative’s nuclear material security index. The head of state, speaking at the third Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague on March 24 stressed that this position is strengthened by the country’s political and economic stability and effective anti-corruption legislation. Dean of the Faculty of International Relations of the Kazakh National Al-Farabi University, Doctor of Law, Professor Karimzhan Shakirov spoke about important non-proliferation measures taken by the country that contributed to this recognition.

The nuclear arms race continues and the number of nuclear weapon countries is increasing. In your opinion, does continued nuclear armament have the potential to reduce the number of conventional military conflicts?

First and foremost, it is important to note Kazakhstan’s example. The country has been working hard to prove that non-nuclear weapon states are capable of making a contribution in nuclear non-prolifera-

tion that matters and to demonstrate to leading powers that Kazakhstan is a major contributor to nuclear non-proliferation efforts. We are looking to show that using fear of a nuclear attack as a deterrent is a flawed concept. It is obvious that the existence of nuclear weapons has not eliminated the threat of military conflict in various parts of the world. Proving this requires more responsibility from nuclear powers in restructuring the traditional system of international security, starting with non-proliferation and ending with nuclear disarmament.

The absence of significant steps to reduce nuclear security and evidence of nuclear weapons proliferation in third countries and the risk of their use by terrorists is pushing the leaders of major global powers to seek ways to eliminate nuclear dangers. It must be admitted that this search is complicated by less than desirable relations between countries.

Kazakhstan’s determination in the early 1990s to abandon its powerful Soviet-era nuclear arsenal was an unprecedented step. This step was preceded by the creation of the “Nevada – Semey” movement and

the closure of the Semipalatinsk test site. Its closure, as the President noted, was and remains the first accomplished ban on nuclear weapons testing in the world.

According to the Kazakh leader, we rose above the global threat and made a fundamental choice in favour of a nuclear-weapons free history for our country and the world. This has become the core of our statehood. Nuclear disarmament has predestined our country to become a leader in the anti-nuclear movement, imposing a noble mission to promote nuclear disarmament worldwide.

Which of Kazakhstan’s initiatives most accurately describes this mission?

In December 1993, Kazakhstan, as a non-nuclear weapon state, ratified the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Later, Kazakhstan proposed the International Day against Nuclear Tests to the UN. President Nursultan Nazarbayev proposed the adoption at the UN of the Universal Declaration on the Achievement of a Nuclear-Weapons Free World. In August 2012, The ATOM Project was introduced

at the International Anti-Nuclear Conference in Astana.

In his speech at the Seoul Nuclear Security Summit, Nazarbayev said Kazakhstan continues to work on the creation of a regional training centre for nuclear security and, jointly with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), has introduced a unique automated system of accounting, control and physical protection of natural uranium. Kazakhstan joined the Global Partnership of the Group of Eight (G8) against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. In addition, Kazakhstan ratified the amendments to the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material.

Kazakhstan’s position on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons is reflected in many of President Nazarbayev’s speeches. Nazarbayev discussed the establishment of an independent nuclear arbitration under the IAEA or UN to identify violations of international rules on nuclear development in the American newspaper, The Washington Times. According to the President, this mechanism would be capable of solving the debate around Iran’s nuclear programme.

How do the scientists of the university, which is celebrating its 80th year, promote Kazakhstan’s non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament initiatives?

Our university, in collaboration with the Institute of Nuclear Physics of the National Nuclear Centre of Kazakhstan, the Japanese Atomic Energy Agency and Hokkaido University, has organised the training of specialists in theoretical and experimental nuclear physics, nuclear energy and technology, including in a double degree programme. In addition, our scientists are actively involved in research activities on nuclear non-proliferation. For example, last year, they participated in the first Issues of Peaceful Nuclear Energy international conference held at the Almaty Institute of Nuclear Physics.

KazNU is the only Central Asian university participating in the UN programme Academic Impact. Under its auspices, the university hosted the international conference The Changing Nature of Conflict in the 21st Century, dedicated to the 20th anniversary of Kazakhstan’s accession to the UN. Leading international and domestic

diplomats discussed the possibility of creating a conflict and nuclear weapons-free world. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon sent a letter to the participants of the international conference, giving his support to preventing armed conflict and thanked the university for organising the conference jointly with the UN.

There is also a unique course, “Introduction to Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction,” held jointly with the Faculty of International Relations, the Centre for the United Nations’ assistance to KazNU and the George C. Martin Centre for Non-Proliferation Studies at the Monterey Institute of International Studies (U.S.).

As part of the events, U.S. Congressman Eni Faleomavaega delivered a public lecture on non-proliferation. He deeply covered the topic of safety compliance, the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes and conflict resolution, highlighting the positive role of the Kazakhstan President.

In addition, the faculty of philosophy and political science gave a presentation of a book by honoured anti-nuclear veteran Nigmat Zhotabayev, “The Lasting Echo of Nuclear Tests,” dedicated to the 20th anniversary of the closure of the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site. Our university also held other scientific meetings on non-proliferation and the elimination of nuclear weapons.

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Research Project on Challenges of European Multilingualism Launches

Continued from Page A1

We were advised by the Swiss-based consultancy bureau SciProM, headed by Kirsten Leufgen, an expert in European tenders. We applied for the tender of the European Commission called “The multilingual challenge for the European citizen” in the beginning of 2013 and, to our surprise, won the competition.

We will have a budget of 5 million euros to spend on organisation and research by the consortium. The consortium will draft recommendations for fair and effective communication in Europe respecting linguistic human rights, the democratic equality of languages and developing a world free of conflicts caused by ethno-linguistic identities.

What is the time frame for MIME? When will its results be presented, and in how many languages?

The results of MIME will be presented in 2019. Of course, we take the issue of multilingualism very seriously in our consortium. Eighteen European countries are represented in it: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom and their languages. Although the lingua franca of our meetings is English, we are planning to publish in other European languages as well and our website will be multilingual. Our temporary website is www.mime-project.org but within a few weeks the official website will be operative and people will be able to follow our work there.

What is your view of the situation with multiculturalism in Europe generally? What about the grand idea of helping all Europeans learn to speak three languages? Is Europe moving toward this goal or not?

We have to study whether the European policy of 1+2 [the mother tongue plus two freely chosen languages] in education is a realistic objective. Most of the time, the first of the two “freely” chosen languages is English. But it takes a lot of time to reach an acceptable level in English and even then global English is not owned by anyone. So it will be hard to know what you can say precisely in global English. Anything goes is simply too liberal and will cause misunderstandings and miscommunication. Hence, I think Europe is moving toward this objective but the problems on the way to reaching it are immense.

How relevant do you think the MIME project could be for Kazakhstan?

It is highly relevant for Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan is heading towards becoming a multilingual country with three official languages: Kazakh, Russian and English. Furthermore a number of indigenous languages and immigrant languages are also spoken in your country. The setting up of the research programme of the MIME consortium is based on general scientific principles. It can be applied to all countries that are facing the challenges of linguistic diversity in today’s world.

Have you done studies on similar issues in Kazakhstan? What are your assessments of the situation and the policies in this field, especially of the policy to promote the studies of

three languages: Kazakh, Russian and English?

I am only setting the first steps into the domain of multilingualism in Kazakhstan. My first impression is that there is basically a 2+1 scheme. Kazakh and Russian are interwoven and display a functional distribution of domains. Russian is used in sciences and business; Kazakh in the informal domains. This can, of course, change. Both languages are joined by global English, whose status is debated. So, an interesting situation will develop and a language management policy will be unavoidable. But first we need to inventory the challenges. For example, an eventual changing of the script from Cyrillic into Latin for Kazakh will have a number of consequences that should be studied first before a rational decision can be taken.

Which institution would you partner with in Kazakhstan, if any?

What is needed is to form a Kazakh dream team consisting of top universities such as the Eurasian National University (ENU), Al-Farabi Kazakh National University (KazNU), Nazarbayev University (NU), etc. and researchers to take up this unique Kazakh multilingual challenge. The consortium could be coordinated by the Dean of the Philology Faculty of ENU, Professor Sholpan Zharkynbekova, who not only understands the challenges as a linguist but has excellent management qualities to steer such a group. I am sure myself and other colleagues of the MIME consortium will be glad to act as foreign partners of the Kazakh dream team.

French Cultural Festival Held in Astana



The opening ceremony of the French Cultural Festival in Astana mall.

By Jan Furst

ASTANA – The embassies of France, Canada, Switzerland, Belgium and Romania in collaboration with the Alliance Française in Kazakhstan organised a festival on March 29 at the Astana Mall to celebrate French culture and language.

The festival included wine, cheese and pastry tastings and trivia contests sponsored by French companies.

Belgian Ambassador Michel Peetermans noted the two meanings of the term Francophonie: one of the linguistic and cultural community of all those who speak French and the other of the l’Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie which brings together 57 member countries

and 20 countries as observers. Peetermans also noted the 2nd French Language World Forum will take place in July 2015 in Liege, Belgium.

Representative of the Canadian Embassy in Kazakhstan Catherine Ivkoff underlined that Canada and Kazakhstan are multiethnic and multi-religious countries that value respect and tolerance.

Deputy Head of Mission of the Swiss Embassy Suzanne Rosenkranz explained the importance of the French language in Switzerland, which is one of that country’s four official languages. It is spoken by 25 percent of the Swiss population, mainly in the southwest, including in and around Geneva.

French Embassy Cultural Ad-

visor Johann Uhres used the March 29 event to announce the start of the third, nationwide Francophone Festival.

French festivals are held around the country in early spring, including Francophone film festivals in Astana, Almaty, Karagandy, Kostanay, Shymkent and Ust-Kamenogorsk, which are home to Alliance Française offices. Celebrations are also held for French students in Kazakhstan. French speaking communities and schools also note the season.

This year’s celebrations also included the sixth National Francophone Song Contest held by the six Alliance Française offices in the country. Anyone aged 18-30 could participate.

Local School Helps Kazakhstan Go Green

By Rufiya Ospanova

ASTANA – The secondary school in Vyacheslavka Village in the Arshaly District in the Ak-mola Region supports Kazakhstan’s efforts for a green economy and has mobilised resources to demonstrate water sanitation and hygiene (WASH) practices in schools using renewable energy sources.

The school’s 120 students and 25 teachers have been working with the Akbota NGO since 2011 to advance green technologies to address social issues in rural schools and rural communities.

Akbota works with the Every Drop Matters (EDM) Global Programme, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Coca-Cola Company, the GEF Small Grants (GEF-SGP) Programme and UNDP in Kazakhstan to implement green technologies throughout Kazakhstan.

“While working in rural schools, I have faced several challenges to be addressed, especially WASH practices in rural communities, schools and clinics,” said Vyacheslavka Secondary School Director Tatyana Nemtsan.

These WASH issues are linked with the problems of energy sources: treating, pumping and heating the water. Rural communities use poor quality water and in some areas water sources are chemically contaminated.

Initial test samples of water quality in the Arshaly District show that water is contaminated with heavy metals, chlorides and sulphates. Threats to water quality are becoming a high risk to human health: 90 percent of the region’s adult population suffer multiple diseases caused by poor quality drinking water.

The heating systems at rural schools, clinics and houses also work insufficiently. During win-

ter, inside temperatures can drop to +8C, when outside temperatures reach -40C. In addition, poor heating systems influence the availability of hot water for sanitary and hygiene purposes at rural schools and clinics.

To address these issues, green technology advocates at Vyacheslavka Secondary School and Akbota decided to demonstrate a comprehensive approach for WASH practices.

Four community-based advanced technologies have been implemented in the region: water filters – treating and supplying clean drinking water; flat-plate solar collectors – renewable energy sources to supply warm water for public buildings; pyrolysis boiler – energy efficient and environmentally friendly heating systems for public buildings; greenhouse and low-cost drip irrigation – energy efficient community-level small greenhouses to increase food security in the northern part of the country.

These green technologies improve WASH practices. Using renewable energy sources, the initiative provided eight pilot territories, including six rural schools and two medical clinics, with clear drinking water, heating systems for buildings and water supply systems and energy efficient greenhouses with low-cost drip irrigation.

The project installed water filters to provide better quality drinking water, decrease diseases and ensure that water standards comply with basic hygiene practices for rural people in the Ak-mola region. Energy-free flat-plate solar collectors were installed to supply hot water in school cafeterias and clinic rooms. Today, these facilities have regular access to +40C warm water, even when the temperature outside is -30C.



Demonstration of water sanitation and hygiene practices at the Vyacheslavka school.

Energy efficient pyrolysis boilers were also installed in rural schools, clinics and houses to heat buildings efficiently. This domestically manufactured heating system has the capacity to reduce coal consumption by 25 percent and electricity use by 30 percent.

Another part of the project is energy-efficient greenhouses with low-cost drip irrigation systems. They have allowed schools to produce vegetables, such as tomatoes, cucumbers and cabbage early in the spring when temperatures are still low in the northern part of the country and to provide local schools with fresh vegetables. The greenhouses have also reduced water use up to 40 percent and have saved nearly 134,000 cubic metres of water.

The project has also mobilised rural communities, schools and

public organisations to reconstruct water supply and heating systems to improve health, sanitation and hygiene practices. More than 30,000 people, including 5,300 school children, are involved in the greening of their districts.

Green initiatives have been supported by rural communities because they introduce best practices with simple methods and create a sense of ownership within communities. In addition, Akbota has mobilised more than 100 young volunteers to promote new practices in other rural communities.

Today, local communities, including teachers and school children, clinic personnel, farmers, agricultural producers, as well as local authorities from regions, are a part of the green movement. With the support of the UNDP project, an opportunity also appeared

to present ideas to other regions of Kazakhstan, including in East Kazakhstan, Kyzylorda and Kostanay.

The success of the green approach gained attention from the central government. Members of the Kazakh Parliament and akims (governors) of the Kostanay and Ak-mola regions visited the pilot territories and acknowledged the effectiveness of the projects. After high-level visits, officials recommended scaling up green initiatives in 24 more rural communities countrywide. The Integrated Green Technologies action plan is now being developed to make it happen.

A small project started by a school in Vyacheslavka has evolved into a countrywide greening initiative benefiting people and the environment.



Kazakhstan Hopes to Draw Space Tourism to Once-Secret Star City



Baikonur was born as a top secret space centre: a great Soviet head start in its race against the U.S. for technological supremacy.

By Michelle Witte

Once one of the most secret 5,000 square miles in the world, Kazakhstan’s Baikonur Space Complex is now actively seeking more visitors. The oldest and now most active space port in the world has been open, to some extent, to the public for some time now, but not many foreign tourists have made the trek to the small city in Kazakhstan’s Kyzylorda oblast. Now, with a \$1 million investment from Kazakh company Diamond Technology, the country is hoping to draw crowds to a new “Space Harbor” being built in Baikonur, a visitor’s complex with a platform for visitors to watch launches from and other tourist infrastructure.

A Cold War Boom

Baikonur was born as a top secret space centre: a great Soviet head start in its race against the U.S. for technological supremacy. In those early days of the Cold War, it took two years for the U.S. to discover the massive space centre on the steppe, which was first captured by a U2 spy plane in 1957.

By then, the Soviets were well on their way to the stars. Baikonur was the site of many firsts in the space race: it launched Sputnik, the first artificial satellite to reach orbit, in 1957; Yuri Gagarin, the first man to orbit the Earth, began his pioneering trip there in 1961, as did Valentina Tereshkova, the first woman to reach space, in 1963. In 1965, Alexei Leonov took off from Baikonur to become the first person to take a spacewalk.

The town was built around the expanding space centre, and grew to include apartments, kindergartens, schools, markets and all the other infrastructure of a small city—and indeed, was named “Star City” for a time. As the Cold War rolled on without losing steam, the town and the centre grew, reaching nearly 100,000 people in its mid-1980s heyday.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, however, the town of Baikonur has been on something of a long decline. Once a mini-Russian city in Kazakh territory, the town is now mostly Kazakh. Russia rents the Baikonur Cosmodrome for \$115 million a year through a lease that runs through 2050. It puts about \$27.6 million from its federal budget into the town every year, according to Astrowatch.net. Despite this, however, even President Vladimir Putin of Russia once called Baikonur “physically aged.” Industry and development is still catching up after the early 1990s collapse all of Kazakhstan faced, and with little industry outside the space centre, it’s still foreign engineers who tend to have the best jobs.

A Space Life Line

The space centre, at least, is bustling. Dozens of launches occur each year, and only about half

of 2013’s scheduled launches were Russian. The U.S., Canada, Japan and the EU all use Baikonur to launch their manned space flights, as it’s one of the few places on Earth to do so. A three-man team of one American and two Russians landed in Kazakhstan in March 2014 after nearly six months in the International Space Station. They launched from Baikonur on Sept. 25, 2013, in a Soyuz spacecraft.

Now, however, Russia, is in the process of building a new space complex on its own territory, in Vostochny, which is contributing to some tension about Baikonur’s future. The two countries don’t always see eye to eye on managing their shared resource, and Russia has recently threatened to simply pull out of the port in 2018, when its new space complex is ready. Now, representatives on both sides say this won’t happen.

“Neither I nor any sane person in Kazakhstan wants Russia to leave Baikonur. We are partners and allies and at this level of international cooperation it’s normal to have joint strategic projects,” Talgat Mussabayev, chairman of Kazcosmos, the Kazakh Space Agency, said in an interview published on Jan. 9 by the Izvestia newspaper.

Russia has no plans to abandon Baikonur, First Deputy Director General Vladimir Nesterov of Khrunichev State Research and Production Space Centre, a Moscow-based producer of spacecraft, said in an interview with radio channel Ekho Moskvy. The new launch site at Vostochny will simply offer Russia more freedom to do different things, he said. The two countries recently signed a three year roadmap for joint use of the Baikonur site.

Still, diversifying the uses of Baikonur Cosmodrome would seem to be a wise choice—just in case.

Cosmic Tourism

While Kazakhstan continues expanding its role in Baikonur Cosmodrome—it’s building its own Baiterek launch pad, which it says will be more environmentally friendly than existing ones—and plans to launch a record three spacecraft of its own this year—it’s also focusing on the potential of the town. Tourism is something Kazakhstan wants more of, and with the global economy settling down, the country is starting to invest in attracting visitors.

The Tourism Industry Committee of Kazakhstan’s Ministry of Industry and New Technologies recently drafted a concept for developing tourism around the nation, based on five regional tourism clusters. Baikonur, along with the Silk Road towns of Otrar and Turkestan, among others, is included in the South Kazakhstan cluster.

There are some tours available at Baikonur now, to be sure. A three-day package contains a

visit to the launch complex Gagarin took off from, huts where he and other significant figures lived, and a visit to the current Cosmonautics Museum. Visits to Proton and Soyuz missile launch pads and the Proton assembly plant can also be arranged. Applications must be submitted about two months in advance and the tours cost \$3,000-\$3,500 each. They’re only scheduled sporadically.

But the town and the space complex have a wealth of historical sites and objects to visit. Yuri Gagarin’s house and the bed he

slept in before his historic launch are open to visitors. (When asked how he could sleep before such an event, Gagarin apparently responded “Would it be right to take off if I were not rested? It was my duty to sleep, so I slept.”) The town is full of public art celebrating spaceflight and cosmonaut heroes in paintings and statues; full-sized, restored rockets are on display. The Cosmonaut Hotel features doorways signed by astronauts before takeoff. Space junkies won’t lack for space junk to see.

Seeing Stars—and Star Chasers

And seeing is the focus of the new tourism venture. The focal point for Baikonur’s new Space Harbor is a huge, transparent dome through which visitors can watch the stars, the sky, and rocket launches. Hotels, a planetarium, a space museum, a cinema, a flight control display centre, restaurants and more are part of the larger scheme.

The Diamond Technology website says an area of 1.2 hectares is under construction now and is planned to increase to 2.5 hectares. In the future, it is hoped, Space Harbor will grow to 100 hectares and include, among other amenities, a water park and a bowling alley. “Hopefully, crossing the threshold of the cosmic harbor will be like actually leaving the Earth’s surface and arriving at another man-made planet: Planet Space Harbor,” the website reads.

Diamond Technology and its Space Harbor project have received support from Kazakh government agencies developing tour-

ism, and the Russians have agreed to the plan.

“The Russian side expressed readiness to develop cooperation in the area of tourism. The Baikonur administration said it was ready to develop tour itineraries to the space pad and is looking at the possibility of organising a viewing point,” said Marat Igaliyev, chairman of Kazakhstan’s Committee of Tourism Industry within the Ministry of Industry and New Technologies, after meeting with Oleg Ostapenko, head of Federal Space Agency of Russian Federation, Roscosmos, on Dec. 26, 2013.

Yevgeny Samotoi, director of the town’s Baikonur Hotel, told Edge Magazine, “Yes I have heard [about the new complex] that will be built outside the city.” However, the hotel he runs works only with Roscosmos (Russia’s space agency) and an increase in other tourists wouldn’t affect his business much. “But in any case the city would prosper,” he said.

A Long-Awaited Project

Getting tourists to Baikonur has been a dream of the country’s for some time. Back in 2009, President Nazarbayev himself, addressing the 18th session of the General Assembly of the UN’s World Tourism Organisation, said he wanted to promote the development of space tourism. “We are paying attention to (developing) space tourism,” he said. “Currently, there are three dozen launch sites in the world, but the Baikonur space launch site is of particular importance. I believe it will be promising to organise visiting spacecraft launches from the Baikonur space centre and to



arrange visits to this great space harbor by tourists from different countries of the world.”

Even space tourism has been suggested as a possibility for Baikonur’s future. French astronaut Jean-Pierre Haigneré recently told Nazarbayev University students that he expected commercial, civilian spacecraft to be operational by 2020 and that Kazakhstan could be a center for global space tourism.

With Astana set to host the international exhibition EXPO 2017, the capital is getting ready for unprecedented numbers of foreign travelers. The country is also applying for World Heritage status for a number of its ancient Silk Road sites. Baikonur, it’s hoped, will become another destination for visitors to the country’s south, as well as a site of pilgrimage for space history buffs.

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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9, 2014

UEFA Holds Congress in Astana, Establishes New Tournament

By Jan Furst

ASTANA – Fifty-four representatives of national football associations and members of the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) voted during the March 27 XXXVIII UEFA Congress in Astana to establish a UEFA Nations League tournament.

A four-point resolution establishing the new tournament called, “National men’s A-team competitions 2018-2022,” was unanimously adopted. The tournament will be held for the first time in 2018.

“We accept and respect that all UEFA member associations have agreed to create a new competition,” said Wolfgang Niersbach, chairman of the National Teams Competition Committee. “This is a big step for national teams in Europe and we hope that fans will support the new format.”

Former Kazakh Prime Minister Serik Akhmetov noted during the congress the important role football plays in peace, friendship and harmony.

“We are pleased to welcome

you in Kazakhstan, in our capital Astana. For us, it is an honour that Kazakhstan is the first CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) country to host a UEFA Congress. This decision was taken despite the little experience Kazakhstan had under the jurisdiction of FIFA (Fédération Internationale de Football Association),” said Akhmetov in his opening remarks to the UEFA and FIFA representatives.

Akhmetov also noted that young Kazakh players are training at the Brazilian Academy in Botafogo under an initiative of Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev, who is also the Honorary President of the Kazakh Football Federation.

According to the prime minister, hosting the UEFA Congress in Astana will take its rightful place in the history of European football and encourage the development of football in Kazakhstan.

The annual congress is the supreme governing body of UEFA. It holds meetings of all UEFA committees. The high-ranking representatives of FIFA, including FIFA



The then Prime Minister of Kazakhstan Serik Akhmetov (l) and UEFA President Michel Platini at the opening ceremony of the XXXVIII UEFA Congress.

President Sepp Blatter and the heads of other continental confed-

erations, were among the delegates of the congress.

Kazakhstan Athletes Prepare for 2016 Olympics

By Rufiya Ospanova

ASTANA – Timur Kulibayev, chairman of the Confederation of Combat and Power Sports, tasked sports authorities at a recent working meeting with paying special attention to the training of Kazakhstan’s athletes for the upcoming 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro.

The meeting was attended by leaders and coaches of the country’s wrestling, judo, taekwondo and weightlifting associations.

“Two years remain to the main start of the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, and the time we have you need to spend most fruitfully in terms of preparing the athletes for the Olympic Games,” Kulibayev said.

At the meeting, head coaches of national teams reported on their activity and shared their future plans. Presidents of fed-

erations reported on preparations for the Asian Wrestling Championship that will take place on April 23-27, the license world championship in weightlifting on November 4-16, the World Grand Prix of Taekwondo on August 29-31 and the World Grand Prix of Judo in October. All of the events will take place in Kazakhstan this year.

Meeting participants also considered issues in the competitive and training processes of national teams.

The federations were told to pay special attention to the development of mass sport and high-performance sport in the regions by assisting in strengthening the material and technical bases of specialised boarding schools and colleges and improving skills of the coaching and teaching staff at these institutions.

Almaty Prepares for 28th Winter Universiade



By Julia Rutz

ALMATY – Construction of an ice dome and ice arena will be finished by August 2016, said Almaty Mayor Ahmetzhan Yesimov during a March 27 meeting on municipal development issues chaired by Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev.

“The city is actively preparing for the 2017 Winter Universiade. This year, we are going to start building an ice dome suitable for 12,000 spectators, an ice arena with 3,000 seats and also an athletic village. The plan is to finish all construction by August 2016. We have also bid to

host the 2022 Winter Olympics. I believe that our city, thanks to state’s economic development, has a real chance of holding those games” Yessimov said.

After visiting Almaty in the middle of March, International Olympic Committee (IOC) experts called the city a strong contender to host the 2022 games. Other Olympic contenders are Krakow (Poland), Oslo (Norway), Lviv (Ukraine) and Beijing (China).

Yessimov believes a successful Universiade 2017 will significantly enhance Almaty’s chances of hosting the 2022 Winter Olympics. He also noted that teams from more than 50 countries, as well as fans, staff and volunteers totaling 5,000 are expected for the event. This is the first time Almaty will host such a significant sporting event. Hence, the Universiade requires a systematic and comprehensive preparation, the mayor said.

In a recent interview with Interfax.kz, Universiade 2017 Executive Director Ilya Urazakov said a 500-person capacity hotel will be built. After the Univer-

siade, the hotel will become part of a local university.

“Facilities like Baluan Sholak Sport Palace, Sunkar Ski jump, Shymbulak Ski Resort and Medeo High Mountain Ice Rink will be repaired. The games are a high priority. Before hosting the Universiade, several sports competitions are going to be organised in Almaty and one of them is the Second International Student Ice Skating Championship, which will take place in November this year. These ‘test events,’ as we call them, will demonstrate our level of preparedness,” explained Urazakov.

Urazakov mentioned 13 sports that will be represented during the Universiade, including ice hockey, skiing, short track, figure skating, snowboarding, biathlon, ski racing and curling.

Urazakov also said that during the opening ceremony, students will perform a famous Universiade anthem called “Gaudeamus,” which means “Let us celebrate.” The composition was chosen for its beautiful organ music that represents the spirit of youth.

Kazakhstan Shows Character, But Loses Davis Cup Quarter Finals to Switzerland

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In the fourth game, Kukushkin faced the Australian Open winner Wawrinka and showed a real character. Both players realised what was at stake, as had Kazakhstan won this match, it would have advanced and Switzerland would have gotten knocked out. Hence both took the first game points in struggling first games at 40-15.

Wawrinka then won three games back to back without giving Kukushkin a chance to play and lost only one ball, showing his serving domination. Kukushkin only had to win his own serves and battle the Swiss in tie-breaks. Wawrinka focused on the games and eventually played a close to perfect mid- and end games. Eventually the Swiss managed to even out the match to 2:2 (6:7 (4), 6:4, 6:4, 6:4).

“Stan gave me the chance to play again today. It was a pleasure,” Federer said in French in a

courtside interview in front of the 15,000-plus crowd at the Palexpo indoor arena after his own match against Golubev.

Federer - Golubev was the decisive match that would allow one team to the semis, had Golubev won, he would have had good chances to become the best Kazakh athlete in 2014, but alas, the Kazakh spectators were only delighted in the first set, in the next two sets the Great One – as Federer is often referred to – cruised to an easy victory - 7:6, 6:2, 6:3.

“We’re very relieved and very happy,” said the 32-year-old Federer, who has never won a Davis Cup title. “It was a long weekend with a lot of tennis. The Kazakh team did really good and we had a tough time [playing them].”

The Swiss star also praised Golubev for his high class game. According to Federer, Golubev should be in top 25 with his ability to play.

“It was a fantastic weekend and I’m very proud of our team and everyone involved in the team, not just the players,” said captain of the Kazakh team Dias Doskarayev. “Overall it was fantastic no matter how the result went. We ended up losing but the score doesn’t matter, the fact that we hung in and gave a battle. This weekend will have a lasting effect.”

“Even though we lost, we accomplished something huge. Of course, it will take time to sink in but we found out that we can develop tennis more. We can get our guys on TV and in interviews and people will find out more about tennis and that’s what we’re trying to do.”

Despite the loss, Kazakhstan earned many new fans in Switzerland, showed a real character and drew attention to the sport back home. As for Switzerland it will now shift its efforts to beating Team Italy on home court on Sept. 12-14 in the semifinals in the hope to win their first Davis Cup.



Astana Arlans Boxers Beat German Eagles 3:2 and 5:0

By Almir Iskakov



The Astana Arlans boxing team started the World Series of Boxing (WSB) playoff round with a win over German boxers in the German town of Hanau-am-Main on March 30.

The bouts were delayed one hour due to technical difficulties and were eventually held in front of few spectators.

In the 49 kilogramme category, 2013 Asian Champion Temirtas Zhussupov beat Ovidi Bertseyan by unanimous decision. In the 56 kilogramme category, Meirbolat Toitov lost to Michael Conlan. Askhat Ualikhanov also lost to Artyom Kharoutyunyan in the category up to 64 kilogrammes, recording his first defeat in the WSB. Sergey Derevyanchenko tied the team competition in the 75 kilogramme category by beating Denis Robert Radovan. And with the score tied at two bouts each, Vasily Levit gave the Kazakh team the final victory with a win over Artur Mann in the category up to 91 kilogrammes.

The return match took place on April 5 in Almaty. The Arlans won that match 5:0. They will now fight in the WSB semifinals against Azerbaijan Baku Fires on April 26 in Almaty.

Tulip Charity Ball Held at Radisson Hotel



By Ainur Kembayeva

ASTANA – The Radisson Hotel in Astana recently held the first “Tulip” charity ball in Astana on March 29 titled “In the Heart of Eurasia.”

“Tulip” balls are charity events held in various cities in Kazakhstan, Russia, Ukraine and other countries to raise money for numerous causes at once, such as healthy lifestyles, youth development and the development of Astana as the cultural capital of Eurasia.

This event was supported by the Astana akimat (city administration) and the Youth Committee of the Ministry of Education and Science.

Prominent cultural and political figures, business people, artists and active city youth were invited to the ball that was patterned after a classic Viennese Ball.

The ball opened with a waltz that featured 48 pairs of young people aged 18 to 29 years who performed the classic ballroom dance, along with other dances. Other ball guests danced as well. A two-day master class was organised for participants before the event.

The ball made everyone feel like noble knights and elegant ladies, plunging them into the world of waltz, demanding exquisite precision and sense of rhythm. The symphony orchestra and soloists from Astana’s Opera and Ballet Theatre performed.

One of the ball organisers, Aida Alzhanova, said tulips are a

symbol of spring and the awakening of nature and beauty. She said she was pleased that the event is popular among youth, judging by the 700 youth who applied and the 96 that were selected for the event. The selection criteria were age, physical characteristics, knowledge of world culture and comprehensive knowledge.

“Initially, we had hoped to have about 200 guests at the ball. About a third of those invited were prominent figures in politics, culture, art, business representatives, partners and friends of ball among youth activists. The remainder of tickets went on sale. The ball, which in the end attracted 350 people, surpassed our expectations in terms of both the variety and number



Anti-Counterfeiting Forum to be Held Within Astana Economic Forum



By Ruliy Ospanova

ASTANA – Kazakhstan’s Ministry of Justice is planning to organise an International Anti-Counterfeiting Forum to discuss intellectual property rights and information piracy. The forum will be held on May 21 at the Palace of Independence as part of the Seventh Astana Economic Forum (AEF).

The forum is intended to offer an international platform for constructive dialogue on the protection of intellectual property rights and the establishment of a civilised goods and services market between representatives of government, business, science, rights holders, producers, writers and public representatives. Delegates will also examine possible counteractions against counterfeiting and the problem of falsified and defective products.

The forum will comprise five sessions. The first will be dedicated to issues of harmonisation of intellectual property protection rights legislation within the Customs Union of Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia.

The second session will discuss food, pharmaceuticals and the safety of children’s products.

One of the negative phenomena of the Internet age – information piracy – has become a

widespread problem, particularly in the music and film industries. This will be the topic of the third session, “Enforcement of Intellectual Property on the Internet.”

The necessity of creating a strategy for cooperation among the member countries of the Customs Union against the production and distribution of counterfeit and falsified products within Eurasian Economic Community territory will be the centre of discussion of the fourth session. Experts will discuss the enforcement of intellectual property rights and questions of protection against unfair competition at the fifth session.

Speakers and delegates at the forum will include representatives of the governments of Kazakhstan, Russia, Belarus and other countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and elsewhere; the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO); the Eurasian Economic Commission; the World Customs Organisation (WCO); the World Health Organisation (WHO); Interpol; the International Trademark Association (INTA); the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI); the African Intellectual Property Organisation; other nongovernmental organisations; rights holders; universities and other interested parties.

Astana Forum Celebrates Young Journalists

Azamat Syzdykbaev

ASTANA – The Zhuldyz union of children’s organisations, along with faculty from the journalism and political science departments of Lev Gumilev Eurasian National University held a forum to celebrate youth journalists March 25-28.



The 10th annual forum was held under the theme, “Under a lucky star,” and brought together young correspondents and photographers from public, child and youth publications, television journalists and the heads of Kazakhstan’s child and youth media.

The purpose of the event was to explain to the young journalists the

main points of the recent state-of-the-nation address by President Nursultan Nazarbayev and to discuss expanding the influence of youth media on the formation of moral and spiritual values, high culture, civic awareness and tolerance among the younger generation.

The young journalists presented their work to the forum’s audience and received certificates of participation and other awards. Young journalist Diana Saparbekova from the Yessil District in the Akmola Region won the “2014 Young Correspondent of the Year” award. The NOMINA press centre of the Aubakirova Gymnasium (Temirtau) was nominated for an award in the “Super star-Pro” category and the Bolashak-FBC TV press-centre of boarding school No. 4 (Stepnogorsk) received a Grand Prix award in the “Best Children’s Press Centre” category.

Another organisation from Temirtau, Second Happiness, won the “Best Youth Newspaper.” Other winners included the GDYUO Tansholpan (Stepnogorsk) press centre, the Aktan Times press centre of boarding house No. 1 (Akkol), Kokshetau Myrzakhmetov University and others.

The forum also included the participation of media representatives from Cuba who sent photographs under the theme, “Our ideals are motherland, goodness and justice.”

Addressing the forum’s participants, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Cuba to Kazakhstan Carlos Valdés de la Concepción wished the young journalists success in their careers.

Easter Brunch at L’Olivo Ristorante

20th of April, from 12:30 - 16:00

Easter brunch buffet
Welcome glass of Veuve Cliquot
Easter eggs and chocolates
Mineral water & juices
Coffee & tea
Children room
Live music
10000 KZT per person, VAT incl.
Children 0-8 years are free
Children 8-12 years - 50% off

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