

Regional Instability in Kazakhstan

Joint Crisis Committee



приветствовать.
bienvenidos.
bienvenue.
welcome.

سلام.
欢迎.

About Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan is the strongest country in Central Asia with a great wealth of natural resources. It is one of the top ten global oil and gas producers, is ranked 19th in global literacy rates (UK: 23rd, China: 106th), and has a rapidly growing economy. President Nursultan Nazarbayev, the first and incumbent, President of Kazakhstan has been in power since the country was founded in 1991 after the fall of the Soviet Republic, and was re-elected in 2011 for another five year term.

The strategic location of Kazakhstan coupled with its wealth make the country's foreign policy a difficult balance to maintain, especially balancing relations with Russia and the USA. This has historically been done by supplying resources to Russia at greatly subsidised rates, and providing anti-terrorist assistance to the US. At times, Kazakhstani-Russian relations have been strained as Kazakhstan cooperates militarily and economically with the US in its continuing War on Terror in the region, and also in regards to the on-going dispute with Russia surrounding the Baikonur cosmodrome (Russia's first and largest space launch facility, located in Kazakhstan). This precarious situation in appeasing both Russia and the US has prevented all parties from making the most out of their partnerships, and so Kazakhstan has sought other regional allies to treat with.

China has been a long term ally of Kazakhstan and the two countries have had a number of high level official visits. Both countries were co-founders of the Shanghai-Cooperation Organisation (SCO) along with Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. This has boosted regional relations for China who, with their rapidly growing domestic energy needs, seek stable sources of energy and resources. This came to a head with Astana and Beijing announcing the Kazakhstan-China oil pipeline in addition to a new regional strategic alliance. Kazakhstan has made a large number of statements to reassure that the new strategic alliance is not directed at any third parties. This strategic partnership is a clear sign that Kazakhstan is becoming increasingly able to defend its own national interests, but is also emblematic of China's growing influence in the region.

The situation changes dramatically when President Nazarbayev is assassinated in Astana during a visit to a mosque renovation project, two weeks before the final signing of the Sino-Kazakhstani strategic partnership. The assassin has not been found. Since Nazarbayev abolished the office of the Vice President in 1996, the next in the presidential line of succession is the Chairman of the Senate of Kazakhstan, Kayrat Mami. Acting-President Mami has ties with Moscow that go back to the Soviet era, and is constitutionally obliged to hold presidential elections after the death of Nazarbayev, but has now postponed them and has made no move to reschedule. Since being established in power, he has decided to cancel the oil pipeline deal and has summarily dismissed the Chinese ambassador to Kazakhstan.

In addition to the increasingly tense diplomatic situation with China, the people of Kazakhstan have held several large rallies, protesting the lack of open elections. Incidents of targeted violence against ethnic Chinese Kazakhstani (of whom there are over 300,000 in the country) have been reported by international news agencies, and there is growing civil instability along the China-Kazakhstani border.

If China decides to take action, Russia will almost certainly move to defend Kazakhstan, which will put two nuclear powers at loggerheads. Few countries or bodies could broker an accord between the two states if an escalation occurs, and time is rapidly running out.

Kazakhstan Committees

Russia - Security Council of the Russian Federation (SCRF)

Chair: President Vladimir Putin

Committee Members:

1. Prime Minister, Dmitry Medvedev
2. Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sergey Lavrov
3. Minister of Internal Affairs, Vladimir Kolokoltsev
4. Minister of Defence, General of the Army Sergei Shoygu
5. Chief of the General Staff, General of the Army Valery Gerasimov
6. Director of the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation (FSB), Aleksandr Bortnikov
7. Director of the Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR), Mikhail Fradkov
8. Minister of Emergency Situations, Vladimir Puchkov
9. Minister of Communications and Mass Media, Nikolai Nikiforov
10. (Minister of Industry and Trade, Denis Manturov)

China

Central Military Commission (CMC)

Chair: President Xi Jinping

Committee Members:

1. Vice Chairman, Air Force General Xu Qiliang
2. Minister of National Defence, General Chang Wanquan
3. Director of the General Staff Department, General Fang Fenghui
4. Director of the General Political Department, General Zhang Yang
5. Director of the General Logistics Department, General Zhao Keshi
6. Minister of State Security (MSS), Geng Huichang
7. Minister of Foreign Affairs, Wang Yi
8. Director of the Propaganda Department of the Communist Party of China, Liu Qibao
9. Minister of Commerce, Chen Deming
10. (Minister of Civil Affairs, Li Liguo)

USA - National Security Council (NSC)

Chair: President Barack Obama

Committee Members:

1. Secretary of State, John Kerry
2. Secretary of Defence, Chuck Hagel
3. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Martin Dempsey
4. Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), John O. Brennan
5. Director of National Intelligence, Lieutenant General (Ret.) James R. Clapper
6. National Security Advisor, Tom Donilon
7. Secretary of Commerce, Rebecca Blank
8. (Vice President of the United States, Joe Biden)

General Research Links

<http://unic.un.org/imucms/almaty/4/413/un-in-kazakhstan.aspx>

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/country_profiles/1298071.stm

<http://www3.ambest.com/ratings/cr/reports/Kazakhstan.pdf>

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/kz.html>

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/kazakhstan>

Economic and Social issues

<http://eurodialogue.org/Kazakhstan-Strategic-Significance>

<http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/survey/so/2011/int081611a.htm>

<http://www.eia.gov/countries/cab.cfm?fips=KZ>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-22026702>

[Human rights in Kazakhstan - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia](#)

[Kazakhstan - Human Rights Watch](#)

<http://www.caluniv.ac.in/academic/China%20Study%20Final/Relations%20between%20China%20and%20Kazakhstan.html>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/China%E2%80%93Kazakhstan_relations

<http://en.tengrinews.kz/markets/Kazakhstan-to-increase-oil-exports-to-China-18328/>

<http://en.tengrinews.kz/markets/Chinese-companies-to-control-over-40-of-Kazakhstans-oil-shortly-15796/>

http://www.jamestown.org/programs/chinabrief/single/?tx_ttnews%5Btt_news%5D=4131&tx_ttnews%5BbackPid%5D=197&no_cache=1

Research questions

How can countries ensure human rights are monitored and upheld?

How significant are disputes involving water, oil and foreign investment?

What are the essential features of an effective government and how can they be cultivated in Kazakhstan?

What are the root causes to this conflict and how can they be addressed to ensure a long-term, sustainable peace? What is your country's position on a potential regional conflict?

What can the international community do to help the progress of a peaceful resolution and end to conflict in this region?