

Central Asia-Caucasus Institute Organised a webinar on 8th July 2020 with the distinguished speakers -Mr. Yerzhan Ashikbayev, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan and Ambassador Bolat Nurgaliyev, Deputy Chairman of Foreign Policy Research Institute.

The highlight of the webinar was **Kazakhstan Beyond Headlines: one year of Mr Tokayev's Presidency** which according to the Deputy Minister was a success but with emerging competition between superpowers of the world in Central Asia and Kazakhstan believing it is time for the [U.S. to change its policy towards it](#).

Last year was a milestone in the contemporary history of Kazakhstan when President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev was elected by a clear majority of the people. It's been since then Kazakhstan has demonstrated self-evolutionary succession to power and is continuing the path of development. Despite global lockdown, the country is not slowing down when it comes to implementation of the political decision process and to meet domestic demands.

According to Mr Ashikbayev, Domestic policy issues also marked several milestones in social partnerships of allowing labour union to join a senior association, to build the institution of the parliamentary opposition, organising peaceful rallies, decriminalise the 130th article of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan on defamation, to introduce a quota in the party lists 30% for women and youth. President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev called these reforms the first wave of reforms.

The Foreign Policy of the country for 2020-2030 was introduced by the President himself with certain changes into the final draft submitted to him by the agency. With the new culture of protest, it has become difficult to process in such a difficult time. Growth of tensions between leading powerful countries — China, Russia, U.S. and EU with the competition between them is making it tough for Kazakhstan's wide scope of investment. Kazakhstan is a key contributor to the system of geopolitical and geoeconomics coordinates of Eurasian continents and leading states in the Central Asian region.



The Hierarchy in regional and multilateral relations will help Kazakhstan in maintaining further developments in diplomacy with Russia, comprehensive strategic partnership with China and expanded strategic partnership with the U.S., strategic relations with central Asian states, expanded partnership and cooperation with EU.

Living in a connected world, superpowers affects the country both directly and indirectly but can only be dealt with balanced foreign policy and bilateral relations. Mr Ashikbayev said, Kazakhstan very much values its relations with the United States and believes any major document that has political commitment increasing economic partnership will balance the geopolitics and political ties. It's on the ground that the relations between the support of business and humanitarian will be very much welcome. Kazakhstan strategy with the U.S. is simple.

The U.S. is one of the partners' trends of the country's full-fledged participants in the global process. Kazakhstan wants any project shouldn't be affected in any Central Asian countries by the U.S. if something happens in Afghanistan. Kazakhstan believes that the U.S.

stakeholders should keep in mind that Central Asia is a landlocked region and it is tough for them to reach out for economic help while taking decisions on imposing sanctions on other neighbouring countries, said the Deputy Minister.

Mr Ashikbayev highlighted that Kazakhstan has a fair distribution of different stakeholders in the economy and wants to see its visible presence with Russia, China, EU and other countries like India, Pakistan and Turkey.

Mr Ashikbayev further highlighted Kazakhstan is a nation which always acted as an advocate of regional cooperation between the heads of Central Asian countries. Not only political but regional cooperation between the landlocked countries is also needed and other regional neighbours of Kazakhstan and outside powers and stakeholders support the idea.

Kazakhstan is a nation that shares strong economic ties with other nations and shares strong bilateral trade with Uzbekistan which doubles every year. Country's transition has been remarkable though every government faces challenges to keep up with the pace of social reformation. Government is making efforts towards moderation and economic significant transformation, concluded Deputy Minister Ashikbayev

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