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WHAT COMES NEXT: CENTRAL ASIAN VIOLENT EXTREMIST GROUPS AND DRUG TRAFFICKING AFTER THE FALL OF KABUL

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Abstract. The withdrawal of the international forces from Afghanistan will likely increase the role of Central Asian violent extremist groups in the production and transit of illicit goods to and from Afghanistan. While violent extremist groups will maintain the capacity to inspire and perhaps, even carry out limited attacks in Central Asian republics in the short to medium term, their capacity will be limited. Conversely, given the Taliban's control of the majority of Afghanistan, these same groups will play an increasingly important role in the multi-billion-dollar drug trade stemming from the country. The future of Afghanistan is still far from decided but Central Asian violent extremist organizations will likely play a role in whatever is to come.

Keywords: *Afghanistan, Central Asia, Drug-trafficking, Narcotics, Violent Extremism.*

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ЕРТЕҢ НЕ КҮТІП ТҰР: КАБУЛ ҚҰЛАҒАННАН KEЙІН ОРТААЗИЯЛЫҚ ӘСКЕРИ-ЭКСТРЕМИСТІК ТОПТАР МЕН ЕСІРТКІ ТРАФИГІ

Сьюзан Эллиот, Ричард Хогланд, Дэниел Леманн

Андатпа. Халықаралық күштердің Ауғанстаннан шығарылуы Орталық Азиядағы экстремистік топтардың Ауғанстанға және Ауғанстаннан заңсыз тауарлар шығару мен транзиттегі рөлін арттыруы мүмкін. Алайда, жауыққан экстремистік топтар Орталық Азия республикаларында қысқа және орта мерзімді перспективада шабыттандыру және тіпті шектеулі шабуылдар жасау қабілетін сақтап қалса да, олардың мүмкіндіктері шектеулі болады. Керісінше, Ауғанстанның көп бөлігін Талибан бақылауын ескере отырып, дәл осы топтар есірткінің көп миллиардтық саудасында маңызды рөл атқарады. Ауғанстанның болашағы әлі шешілген жоқ, бірақ Орталық Азиядан келген экстремистік ұйымдар рөл атқаруы мүмкін.

Түйін сөздер: Ауғанстан, Орталық Азия, есірткінің заңсыз айналымы, есірткі, зорлық-зомбылық экстремизмі.

ЧТО ПОСЛЕДУЕТ ПОСЛЕ: ЦЕНТРАЛЬНО-АЗИАТСКИЕ ВОИНСТВЕННО-ЭКСТРЕМИСТСКИЕ ГРУППЫ И НАРКОТРАФИК ПОСЛЕ ПАДЕНИЯ КАБУЛА

Сьюзан Эллиот, Ричард Хогланд, Дэниел Леманн

Аннотация. Вывод международных сил из Афганистана, вероятно, увеличит роль воинствующих экстремистских групп в Центральной Азии в производстве и транзите незаконных товаров в Афганистан и из Афганистана. Хотя воинствующие экстремистские группы сохраняют способность вдохновлять и, возможно, даже проводить ограниченные нападения в республиках Центральной Азии в краткосрочной и среднесрочной перспективе их возможности будут ограничены. И наоборот, учитывая контроль талибов над большей частью Афганистана, эти же группы будут играть все более важную роль в многомиллиардной торговле наркотиками. Будущее Афганистана еще далеко не решено, но воинствующие экстремистские организации из Центральной Азии, вероятно, сыграют в этом свою роль.

Ключевые слова: Афганистан, Центральная Азия, незаконный оборот наркотиков, наркотики, насильственный экстремизм.

Introduction

After the fall of Kabul, Central Asian governments, like many governments elsewhere, nervously prepare their security forces and hedge their relationships with the Taliban. Groups like the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), Islamic Jihad Union

(IJU), and Khatiba Imam al-Bukhari (KIB) number between a few dozen and several hundred members, including both fighters and families accompanying them [1]. In one of the most recent UN reports, due to the IMU and IJU's dependence on the Taliban, they were called "formerly relevant terror

groups.” [2] Despite this, Central Asian violent extremists’ influence on regional criminality is potentially significant. The importance of familial ties in Afghan drug smuggling means that cross-border connections can facilitate easier transit. Given that the UN Sanctions Monitoring Team reports that most of the Central Asian violent extremist groups in Afghanistan number in the hundreds or less, and are often working with relatives, their organizational structure seems more conducive to drug smuggling than waging a sustained conflict against a state. Now, the Taliban’s new role in Afghanistan poses a question for the future of these smaller groups. Given the size, funding, and goals of these organizations it is important to discuss how they are structured to respond to the seismic shift that occurred in Afghanistan in August 2021. This paper addresses how these organizations have functioned in the past, and the possible methods for combatting the serious illicit activity described.

The Taliban allegedly ordered a halt to all independent military operations of its subsidiary groups, which put a strain on the smaller organizations’ finances[3]. If the Taliban maintains its organizational integrity, then the subordinate Central Asian organizations will likely retain their current status as small groups restricted from operating too independently. In this case, some groups may look to other larger umbrella organizations, most notably the Islamic State Khorasan (IS-K), to support their agenda. However, the Taliban has responded brutally to defections in the past, allegedly executing members of the IMU after such an instance[4]. The IMU has since realigned itself with the Taliban, and the general consensus remains that IS-K and its affiliates are diminished in Afghanistan. [5] IS-K and the Taliban are competitors,

but the surge in IS-K attacks during 2021 while the Taliban gained ground against the Afghan government culminating in the attack against U.S. forces and Afghan civilians in Kabul on August 26, indicates that currently the Taliban are still not able to entirely suppress their rival or guarantee security in Afghanistan even after their victory against the government[6].

There are currently two major routes for smuggling through Tajikistan: the Khatlon Route and the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast route[7]. Because of security on the Tajikistan side of the GBAO border, drug runners cannot smuggle large quantities across the border. Taliban-controlled border posts will make large-scale transit easier, cheaper, and faster than the alternatives.

To the west, KIB allegedly has a presence throughout the districts in Afghanistan’s Faryab Province that borders Turkmenistan[8]. After the Taliban seized control of the border town of Aqina, northeastern smuggling routes could change as well[9]. KIB already allegedly creates income via smuggling food and fuel across the Turkmenistan border. Despite serious penalties for drug smuggling in Turkmenistan, these networks could be used to KIB’s advantage for further profits[10].

In the past, Iranians have been caught attempting to smuggle drugs into Turkmenistan, which highlights another potential link between the Taliban, the Islamic Jihad Union, and Iranian smugglers[11]. The United States previously placed a member of the IJU under sanctions for serving as a key smuggler between Afghanistan and Mashhad, Iran[12]. While the Iranian government harshly prosecutes drug use and routinely seizes large amounts of opiates, there are long-standing credible accusations that elements of the Islamic

Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) participate and profit from the drug trade originating in Afghanistan[13].

In this paper, the authors draw on Dr. Vanda Felbab-Brown's analysis on the situation in Afghanistan and its drug production, Dr. Mark Galeotti's description of Central Asian criminal networks, and Dr. Edward Lemon's explanation of the security and governance in Central Asia. Additionally, two of the authors spent extensive time in the region and have provided some of their insights on policy issues, though no information here reflects direct interviews or conversations with people in the region.

Research Methods

Given the changing and sensitive nature of the subject the research methodology was limited in scope. Research was done through a textual analysis of primary and secondary sources focused on the presence of drug traffickers and violent extremists in Afghanistan and its bordering states. Information on drug seizure data came from accessing the Central Asia Regional Information and Coordination Center's weekly reports. All information used in this article is open-source and publicly available. Further information came from looking through publicly available UN and U.S. sanction lists to identify possible connections between known violent extremists and drug trafficking organizations. Future research into this arena would benefit from field work if possible and consultation with policymakers in the region.

Results

It is estimated that the Taliban profit between \$300 million and \$1.6 billion through narcotrafficking[14]. However, this is just a fraction of the \$28 billion retail value

of heroin in western Europe originating from just one smuggling route in eastern and north-eastern Afghanistan[15]. While there has reportedly been a consolidation of drug trafficking organizations along the northern route that could concentrate profits to a few key groups, it is unclear what role the Taliban plays in this[16]. The lack of information surrounding the drug trade, the organizational nature of the Taliban, and its affiliates makes it difficult to pinpoint specific earnings, but the drug trade is undoubtedly an important aspect of terrorist financing in Afghanistan.

With the Taliban's newfound control of much of the country, it is likely that its involvement in the drug trade and its taxes on independent drug labs, traffickers, and poppy farmers will increase. The Taliban's lack of access to cash (given that the IMF, United States and others froze access to Afghanistan's international accounts) could also cause the group to rely increasingly on illicit trade. Although the Taliban announced that it banned further opium production in the country on August 18, questions remain about the enforceability of such a ban[17]. The previous Taliban ban on opium production in the 1990's proved politically costly, and the Taliban is far from a monolithic organization today [18]. Abandoning such a profitable business during a time of economic crisis might not be feasible.

The Northern Route through Central Asia is slightly less lucrative than other routes through Iran, Turkey and the Caucasus, but even so, the wholesale markets in Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Russia increase the value of Afghan heroin roughly seven-fold. Typically, after smuggling the drugs through Tajikistan, drug runners transfer opiates to networks of Central Asian kingpins who take the goods to Russia or the Caucasus. From there, the drugs are either

sold for consumption or moved into Europe [19].

The relative fragmentation of the northern route means that militant groups in Afghanistan make their profit quickly; in other words, they do not need much retail success to gain funds because they are generally not responsible for the retail sale of the drugs at their final destinations. The Tajikistan and Turkmenistan borders then become the most important points of transit along the northern route. The relationship between the Taliban and the drug traffickers in the region raises questions about the future of the area. However, given the role of Central Asian extremist groups in smuggling, their presence in northern Afghanistan, and the Taliban's territorial gains, much of the trafficking will likely continue to run through these violent extremist groups.

From the start of April until mid-July, the Central Asian Regional Information and Coordination Center (CARICC), a UNODC project to synchronize counter-narcotics policies and information sharing among Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Russia, reported that there was approximately 1520 kilograms of opiates, methamphetamine, and precursor chemicals seized by government officials in the Central Asian countries along the northern route (excluding Turkmenistan where no information was available).¹ CARICC reported another 527 kilograms seized in Armenia and Azerbaijan during that same time period, mostly along border crossings with Iran or near the port of Baku. Though informative, these seizure numbers are not definitive and should not be used to estimate the total amount of drug trafficked through the states. While none of the reports

speculate on the origin of the drugs seized, given the proximity of these countries to Afghanistan, it is likely many of the drugs came from there.

Despite the relatively small presence of these Central Asian violent extremist groups, they still have played important roles in terrorist finances. In the past, members of the IJU have been linked with a smuggling route along the Southern Opium Route through Iran, where they possibly collaborated with Iranian officials to exchange Afghan opiates for weapons[20]. Jamaat Ansurullah, a Tajik extremist group based in Kishim, Tashkan, and Warduj is responsible for smuggling through Tajikistan, which is the main point of entry into the Northern Route[21]. While the IMU has been largely absorbed into the Taliban and retains little individual autonomy, in the mid 2000's it turned to criminality to support itself, and it is possible that transnational criminal ties remain[22]. Many Central Asian violent extremist groups have taken up a presence in Northern Afghanistan along border areas. The proximity of these groups to Central Asia is undoubtedly worrying, but narcotrafficking and smuggling are the most significant threats these groups pose to the region.

The seizure of the Sher Khan border could change existing drug routes and make larger smuggling options more viable due to better infrastructure now available. This makes it possible that the Northern Route will see increased use, since the Taliban has focused on seizing control of Afghan drug routes in their most recent offensives[23]. Up until this point, the Sher Khan Border Crossing has been an important but not the main point of entry for opiates into Tajikistan[24]. It is too early to tell if the Taliban will be able

¹ Data from the weekly CARICC updates, only including seizures of 1 kilogram or more

to use the dry port to increase the amount of heroin and opium smuggled out of the country, but it would not be surprising, now that they control Afghanistan.

Jamaat Ansarullah, an offshoot of the IMU, has clashed with Tajikistan's border guard in the past while smuggling drugs. Further incursions by the Taliban or other extremist groups into Tajikistan could serve to harden the normally porous border between the two countries, which would jeopardize lucrative drug routes. Corruption in the Tajikistan Border Guard service has been a problem in the past and could continue to be a problem in the future. However, if there were concerns that the Taliban or Taliban-affiliated terrorist groups smuggling fighters into the country, there might be genuine efforts by Moscow and Dushanbe to tighten border controls.

The seizure of Aqina in Faryab, combined with KIB's Central Asian connections could make drug trafficking a more prominent challenge there too. The extent of drug smuggling through Turkmenistan remains unclear, but there are likely several routes that cross through the country. Opium and heroin entering Turkmenistan are likely destined for transfer through the Caucasus then further into Europe and Russia via Turkmenbashi port[25]. Increasingly, Azerbaijan has been used as a country of transit to bring drugs from Afghanistan to Georgia and then onward in Europe. Azerbaijan receives drugs smuggled from Iran, Turkmenbashi Port in Turkmenistan, and Atyrau in Kazakhstan.

Throughout the conflict in Afghanistan, drug trafficking consistently remained a driver of cross-border violence with Afghanistan's neighbors[26]. In northern Afghanistan, traditionally drug trafficking organizations aligned themselves with local militias and warlords as opposed to

the Taliban directly, but with the Taliban now controlling Afghanistan, this could change[27].

Discussion of the Results

The Taliban has made overtures countries in the region to assuage concerns. The Taliban's political leader responsible for negotiations with the United States, Mullah Abdul Baradar, offered assurances to Uzbekistan[28]. Additionally, Baradar travelled to Turkmenistan to discuss potential investment opportunities. Most countries remain relatively quiet about the specifics of their conversations with the Taliban, but the Taliban's declaration banning opium production can be viewed as a gesture by the group to the international community to gain legitimacy. Given questions about the Taliban's control over its sub-groups and regional commanders, and the Taliban's history of overpromising and under-delivering, such assurances can be viewed with some skepticism[29]. But, as several experts have pointed out, at its core the Taliban is primarily concerned with internal Afghan affairs[30].

Uzbekistan's border with Afghanistan is heavily guarded, and the Uzbekistan government has generally refused to shelter fleeing anti-Taliban fighters, although immediately after the collapse of Mazar-e-Sharif and Kabul there were conflicting reports of Afghans crossing into Uzbekistan. Tashkent's tight-lipped approach towards accepting Afghan refugees perhaps signals their commitment to non-interference with the Taliban. Conversely, Tajikistan has sheltered Afghanistan government soldiers fleeing the Taliban and has warned that upwards of 10,000 refugees might cross over the border[31]. The mass movement of refugees will create new challenges in the region that might intersect with existing

problems, but Russia has pledged to support Tajikistan and maintain its border integrity, which could mitigate some of these effects[32]. To that end, Russia has recently conducted several military exercises with Tajikistan and Uzbekistan along the countries respective Afghan borders. The Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) and the Chinese-led Shanghai Cooperation Organization have both carried out numerous military exercises in Central Asia in response to the situation in Afghanistan and will likely continue such exercises if the Taliban appears unable to guarantee internal security in Afghanistan [33]. Additionally, preplanned exercises like the SCO's "Peace-Mission-2021" on September 11, have now taken on an extra importance in light of security concerns[34].

These groups remain a very real point of concern for the Central Asian Republics, but as the United States reassesses its security priorities in the region, it should focus on border security, good governance, and law-enforcement collaboration. Central Asian violent extremist groups will find it exceedingly difficult to mount a large-scale campaign against a country without explicit Taliban approval and support. Instead, these groups will likely seek to recruit small cells or lone terrorists to attack soft targets, as has been the case in the past. At the same time, they might seek to increase their role in narcotrafficking. From 2019 to 2020, several provinces in which Central Asian extremist groups were present experienced a marked increase in poppy production.

There are several avenues that governments in the region and abroad can take to combat drug trafficking and mitigate the harms of it. First, the governments can build civil society capacity for treating addiction. Reducing demand along the Northern Route can restrict the ability of

traffickers to turn a quick profit. The further drugs need to transport to market, the higher likelihood there is that they will be intercepted. In Afghanistan, drug treatment programs have proven to be impactful; greater services rendered to addicts elsewhere could help address the demand side of this challenge[35]. Cooperation with the Agha Khan Development Network, an international development agency already active in Tajikistan, especially in Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast, to build economic support systems with Tajikistan could tap into existing networks of civil society organizations and increase the human security necessary for national security.

Second there needs to be increased support for border posts: The United States already works with Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan on issues of border security, and this cooperation should be increased and improved. The State Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs previously assisted in creating border outposts for Tajikistan and worked with the UNODC to refurbish Kyrgyzstan's existing outposts[36]. Continuing to provide better technology, especially at major crossings, could hinder the flow of drugs. The United States-funded Sher Khan Bandar border crossing was equipped with scanners and technology to combat drug trafficking, and this did seem to prevent large-scale smuggling, despite a high level of traffic, as evinced by major trafficking routes avoiding Sher Khan Bandar to this point. The relative success of the controls at this border crossing could be replicated on either side of the Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan border, and on Tajikistan's side of the border with Afghanistan. While this would not prevent drug smuggling, it would raise the cost and difficulty.

In addition to high-tech scanners and methods of detection for border posts, the United States can also ensure that border posts are equipped with basic necessities like running water, heat, and places for the border guards to rest in Tajikistan. Many border crossing posts are extremely remote, and necessities will help border guards to stay at their posts for longer periods of time.

Finally, states should expand the frequency and scope of border patrol workshops. The OSCE in Dushanbe already has a mandate to work with states to improve their border security. U.S. funding dedicated to training courses via the OSCE Center on preventing cross-border smuggling, combined with funding to bring Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan Border Security personnel to Dushanbe to participate, could increase regional collaboration and strengthen cross-border efforts to combat transnational criminality.

Conclusion

The nexus between criminal activity and violent insurgency will remain strong in Afghanistan and neighboring areas of the world. The presence and participation of violent Central Asian extremist organizations in trafficking and smuggling provides them with a source of funding and expands networks beyond the borders of Afghanistan. Narcotrafficking will likely emerge as a particularly troubling security threat for the Central Asian states and the United States.

The full effects of the events in August will not be known for some time. But while the ruling faction in Kabul has changed, the conditions in Afghanistan and neighboring countries that foster drug smuggling have

not. The Taliban have achieved victory, but that triumph leaves many affiliated groups, like violent Central Asian extremist groups with an uncertain path forward. The groups' transnational intentions, historical actions, and need for funding make them ideal conduits for new drug traffickers in Central Asia.

Any initiatives to prevent further narcotrafficking along the Northern Route must be spearheaded by the Central Asian Republics themselves, with support from the highest levels of their governments. By supporting legitimate efforts to curb narcotrafficking, the United States would be combatting a key source of terrorist financing that could otherwise endanger American investments and personnel in the region or be exported to other regions. Additionally, the United States would undermine a pattern of criminality in the post-Soviet world that has repeatedly hindered U.S. goals and its ability to work with partner governments[37]. The United States cannot solve the issue of drug trafficking, but it can give Central Asian governments the tools and information necessary to do it themselves while emphasizing the importance of good governance in long-term problem avoidance. A multi-vector approach, including cooperating with the UNODC and OSCE to increase the scope of existing initiatives, will enable the United States to work with partner governments to prevent narcotrafficking from undermining national and international security.

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POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR INCREASING SECURITY CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN CICA MEMBER STATES

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Abstract. Nowadays, achieving real progress in addressing global and regional security problems without confidence-building and cooperation measures is a practically impossible task. In this regard, an effective security architecture in Asia can only show its effectiveness if all stakeholders work together. This article looks in detail at CICA's activities in each region and examines how interconnectivity between CICA members can be strengthened. In order to further institutionalize and transform CICA into a full-fledged organization, the article also provides a number of ideas and proposals that would give it new impetus and relevance in the international arena.

Keywords: *CICA, Regional Security, Cooperation, Institutionalization.*

АӨСШК МҮШЕ МЕМЛЕКЕТТЕР АРАСЫНДАҒЫ ҚАУІПСІЗДІК БАЙЛАНЫСЫН АРТТЫРУДЫҢ ӘЛЕУЕТТІ МҮМКІНДІКТЕРІ

Алишер Абдрешев

Аңдатпа. Заманауи жағдайларда сенім шаралары мен ынтымақтастықсыз жаһандық және аймақтық қауіпсіздік проблемаларын шешуде нақты прогреске қол жеткізу іс жүзінде мүмкін емес міндет болып табылады. Осыған байланысты Азиядағы қауіпсіздіктің тиімді архитектурасы барлық мүдделі тараптардың бірлескен күш-жігерімен ғана өзінің тиімділігін көрсете алады. Мақалада АӨСШК-нің әрбір жеке аймақтағы қызметі егжей-тегжейлі қарастырылған, сондай-ақ Форум мүшелері арасындағы өзара байланысты нығайту мүмкіндіктері талданған. Сондай-ақ, АӨСШК-

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ті одан әрі институттандыру және толыққанды ұйымға айналдыру мақсатында оған халықаралық аренада жаңа серпін мен өзектілік беретін бірқатар идеялар мен ұсыныстар ұсынылды.

Түйін сөздер: АӨСШК, аймақтық қауіпсіздік, ынтымақтастық, институттандыру.

ПОТЕНЦИАЛЬНЫЕ ВОЗМОЖНОСТИ УВЕЛИЧЕНИЯ ВЗАИМОСВЯЗАННОСТИ МЕЖДУ ГОСУДАРСТВАМИ-ЧЛЕНАМИ СВМДА В СФЕРЕ БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ

Алишер Абдрешев

Аннотация. В современных условиях достижение реального прогресса в решении глобальных и региональных проблем безопасности без мер доверия и сотрудничества является практически неосуществимой задачей. В этой связи, эффективная архитектура безопасности в Азии может показать свою эффективность только лишь при совместных усилиях всех заинтересованных сторон. В статье подробно рассматривается деятельность СВМДА в каждом отдельном регионе, а также анализируются возможности укрепления взаимосвязанности между членами Форума. Также, с целью дальнейшей институализации и трансформации СВМДА в полноценную организацию, приводится ряд идей и предложений, которые придадут ей новый импульс и востребованность на международной арене.

Ключевые слова: СВМДА, региональная безопасность, сотрудничество, институционализация.

Introduction

The current state of international relations and world politics is characterized by the growth of old and the emergence of new, non-traditional challenges and threats to security. Strategic rivalry between world and regional powers, aggravation of the military and political situation in Afghanistan and the Middle East, growth of threats of information, cyber and bioterrorism, drug trafficking, transnational crime, etc. are threats negatively affecting the military and political situation in the CICA area.

In addition, the current trend in political cooperation is such that bilateral cooperation often prevails on certain issues. This fact is largely due to the

unwillingness of most countries to interact institutionally, within the framework of existing organizations. This, in turn, significantly devalues the role of international and regional organizations and reduces their political weight on the world stage.

In this context, an important issue for CICA in the current context is the future "political survivability" and the possible prospect of transformation into a full-fledged organization capable of uniting the politically diverse Asian countries [1].

The Republic of Kazakhstan, during its chairmanship, should demonstrate a strategic role in defining CICA priorities, through institutional transformation, enhancing regional security measures,

and assisting in capacity building. To achieve these goals, Kazakhstan should not only cooperate more closely with the core CICA members, but also strengthen its interaction with world powers in building a regional security architecture.

Research methods

The article uses general scientific research methods. In particular, methods of political analysis, such as content analysis, the method of expert evaluation, analysis of statistical data and documents.

The peer review method was used in the study of foreign research papers on the formation and development of CICA since its inception, which helped to form a view of foreign experts on the role of CICA in today's world.

Content analysis has been widely used to analyses the current status of relations between the different CICA member states. This method identified the most problematic issues as well as prospects for strengthening cooperation.

The method of analysis of statistical data and documents was used in determining the current level of economic cooperation between CICA member states, data on the current distribution of water resources in CA, the state of ethnic composition of the population in CA enclaves, etc. was also demonstrated.

CICA and South-East Asia

Security models in Southeast Asia. In Southeast Asia to date, experts identify three security-related models (see Table 1).

Table 1. Security models in South-East Asia



The first model is represented by the ASEAN Security Forum. Over the past five years, the Forum has initiated more than a dozen international conferences and meetings to discuss regional security issues. There have been several general declarations in favor of deepening openness, stability and confidence in the security sphere. However, to date the project has not been very effective or influential. To a large extent, the forum has been consultative in nature, making recommendations, but not capable of taking concrete decisions and being accountable for them.

The second model is based on Russian and Chinese political initiatives to preserve security and stability in the region. It is partly implemented through the interaction of the two powers in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), joint statements, the Anti-Terrorist Centre and the organization's military exercises.

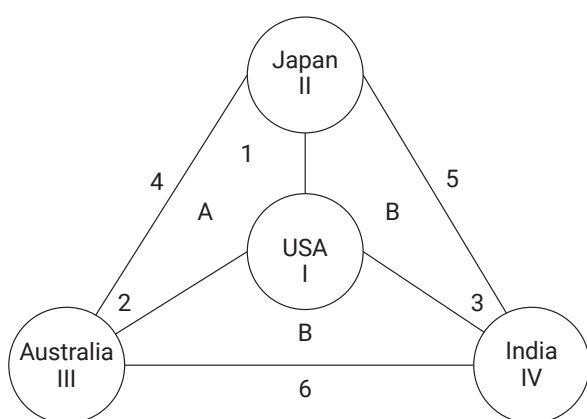
The third model is the system of bilateral military-political alliances formed during the Cold War with Japan, South Korea, Australia and others. It is partly based on the national interests of the US and its allies. At the same time, they are gradually shifting from a purely bilateral relationship to a triangular relationship and a security quartet proper [2] (see Figure 1), which is an example of club diplomacy (some experts talk of a certain analogy with BRICS) or the so-called mini-lateral

format, which is implemented through the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad).

The first and second models are quite transparent, open and not oriented towards the development of politico-military alliances. As a rule, these are either dialogue forms and security meetings or comprehensive organizations (like the SCO) that are not military alliances or blocs. The third model, on the contrary, is focused on politico-military partnerships aimed at protecting the interests of the United States and its allies in the East Asian region [3].

The last decade in Southeast Asia has given the traditional historical and cultural phenomenon of migration a negative and criminal dimension. Illegal inter-regional labour migration has increased tenfold, cases of human trafficking are in the thousands, and the number of refugees has increased. This is particularly true of the least developed countries of South-East Asia.

Figure 1. Triangular interaction



Source: <https://doi.org/10.17976/jpps/2020.03.03>

The economic factor also has a direct or indirect impact on the security system. A country's development effectiveness is related to internal indicators such as quality

of life, inflation, unemployment, budget deficit, foreign exchange reserves, share of shadow economy, level of corruption, etc. In East Asia, there are groups of states with high (Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Brunei), medium (Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia) and low (PRC, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam, DPRK) per capita income. However, when GDP at purchasing power parity (PPP) is used as the criterion, the picture changes significantly. From outsiders, China immediately rises to first place in the region and to second place in the world after the USA (\$20.9 trillion), overtaking Japan (\$5.3 trillion).

The environmental challenge in East Asia has become large-scale and systemic, with the aftermath of the 2010 tsunami in Thailand and Indonesia and the earthquake in Japan, which led to man-made disasters. In fact, these disasters have presented a number of countries (especially Japan) with a survival challenge, which has required substantial material and human resources to deal with.

Geopolitical (regional) confrontations to a large extent add to the vulnerability of the East Asian security system. The Sino-American tensions are at the heart of this case, which is certainly a deterrent in the context of CICA strengthening and potential interaction with the Quad.

To date, this bilateral model is characterized by a high degree of "mutual intransigence". Divergence between the powers is present in a number of issues, including human rights, the Taiwan issue, Tibet, economic contradictions, etc. In addition, the potential for conflict remains between the US and China in their views on international developments (on Iran, North

Korea, UN reform, NATO expansion, etc.) [4].

On the other hand, a number of interdependencies are also increasing, especially in the financial and economic sphere. For China, the American market for technology and the sale of its goods is still important. Large US companies are also interested in Chinese markets. Lobbying systems for Chinese interests in the US and US interests in China have developed. 65% of China's foreign currency reserves still exist in dollars. In this context, the prospects for resolving the Sino-US contradictions look difficult to predict at the moment.

Traditional tensions continue to be on the agenda in Japan-China relations. Unlike Sino-US relations, they are more regional (concentrated in the South China Sea region) and more historical in nature. To date, a mechanism for mutually beneficial economic cooperation is emerging between the two countries. However, the presence of an American military base in Japan, as well as the "rising sun" country's integration trends within the quadrilateral security dialogue, are factors that negatively affect the state of bilateral dialogue [5].

The Sino-Indian "misunderstanding" is also tied to the history of relations between the two countries in the 1950s and 1960s and is complicated by the existence of border problems. Thus, the most sensitive factor is India's increased military buildup in the disputed areas. New Delhi is currently taking steps towards rapprochement with the US, Japan and Australia, which may also limit its activities within the CICA in the long term.

The situation on the Korean peninsula continues to have a negative impact on the state of affairs in South Asia, having long gone beyond the scope of a regional problem. As of today, the 'six countries' on the settlement of the North Korean nuclear problem (the US, Russia, China, Japan, the ROK and DPRK) do not see the usefulness of continuing dialogue in this format. In this regard, the issue of normalisation of the situation should be addressed through a new approach.

In general, a regional security system that encompasses all actors in the international process and benefits all states in the region is virtually non-existent. On the other hand, with the support of the US and its East Asian allies, new projects are actively taking shape that could play a more practical role in the future. For example, in addition to the common Quad structure, bilateral projects between Japan and Australia and the US and New Zealand in the field of military cooperation are actively pursued. According to experts, the activities of the new structures with active U.S. involvement are largely related to the rise of China, thus more oriented towards containing Beijing and its foreign policy.

In the current reality, it is important for CICA to continue to build its capacity in Southeast Asia and to respond actively to trends in the region. As a practical measure, closer cooperation within the CICA+ASEAN+SCO model can be seen to jointly address traditional and non-traditional challenges and threats.

However, the most significant factor that may constrain the effectiveness of CICA in the region is the growing US presence in Southeast Asia. In case of increased anti-Chinese rhetoric, this could have a

negative impact on the dialogue between member states within the forum, which should also be taken into account during Kazakhstan's current CICA chairmanship.

CICA and Central Asia

Given the current political configuration, ensuring security in the Central Asian region is of particular relevance. The CSTO is the main structure represented in the region and its activities in the field of security arena.

Despite a number of existing grievances against the organisation, often related to the need for institutional development and reform [6], the CSTO continues to play a key role, setting common standards for member states in military assistance, exercises and training in higher education institutions, etc.

Also, the role of the SCO, which combines the aforementioned areas and is an important link to stability in Central Asia, should not be overlooked. The relevance of the SCO is even greater today: it was chosen to link the two global programmes involving Central Asia - the Silk Road Economic Belt and the EAEU - in order to form a common economic space across the Eurasian continent.

Despite the many existing challenges and threats in the region, the following are of interest for the continued effectiveness of CICA where it can leverage its potential:

- terrorism and extremism;
- border issues and the problem of enclaves;
- water problems.

Terrorism and extremism. Given past experiences, the special services of Central Asian countries have begun to pay closer attention to possible destructive

forces. However, the threat of terrorism and extremism in the region remains. The security situation continues to be influenced by those who have returned to Central Asia after their involvement in the conflicts in Afghanistan and Syria.

Meanwhile, although the pandemic has blocked global flows, terrorist activities in Central Asia continue. Extremists have begun to use other channels and methods to do so.

To date, Central Asian state authorities have tried to act in a preventive manner, attempting to mitigate any risk factors as much as possible. First, the special services increasingly rely on soft measures, using civil society institutions as a channel to strengthen citizens' resistance to extremism.

Secondly, the Central Asian states are increasingly seeking international cooperation in the fight against terrorism. Counter-terrorism is always on the agenda of SCO and CSTO meetings. In addition, the Central Asian countries regularly hold roundtables and conferences to discuss regional joint actions to combat terrorism. These plans reflect the desire of the countries of the region to continue to work against violent extremism.

Last year's terrorist incidents averted in Europe show that the threat landscape is rapidly evolving and expanding. In addition, the situation is exacerbated by the current situation in Afghanistan. Due to the lack of intelligence and data on terrorist organizations, combined with the impact of the pandemic, Central Asian economies face serious challenges that could exacerbate existing threats of terrorism and extremism.

Border and enclave issues also continue to be a major focus in Central Asia. As

we know, after the collapse of the USSR, the region was left with a set of problems related to the borders between states and ethnic groups.

The most significant factor here is the problem of enclaves in the Ferghana Valley. In the Fergana basin, the borders and territories of Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are intertwined. Three major enclaves stand out among them:

- Soh and Chongar. These two enclaves are currently home to 75,000 people, 99% of whom are Tajiks.

- Shakhimardan and Jangail. It is home to about 5100 inhabitants, 91 per cent Uzbek and 9 per cent Kyrgyz.

- Vorukh. It is an "enclave" of Tajikistan included in the Batken oblast of Kyrgyzstan. The enclave has a population of 50,000, 99% of the population is Tajik [7].

A new impetus is needed on this issue, both bilaterally and multilaterally, in order to resolve border issues. Despite the declared stability and security of regional organizations, no effective mechanisms have been proposed to resolve the existing contradictions. Recent events between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan demonstrate the seriousness of the problem, which could be a trigger for destabilization in the region.

The water issue in Central Asia is now a source of regular crises, affecting all countries in the region without exception. According to the UN, the world has entered an era of resource wars. The main goal of many terrorist and extremist groups is not to overthrow central governments or gain civil rights, but to establish and maintain control over resources, of which water is an important part.

Moreover, water is known to be an indispensable source that determines the sustainability of any nation's economy. In Central Asia, however, water is extremely unevenly distributed and its scarcity is becoming more acute every day. Excluding Tajikistan, the region's reserves of fresh water amount to 293 billion cubic meters per year and per capita water consumption is 6,100 cubic metres per year. Water consumption doubles every decade and this trend will continue.

The topic of water is also highly topical because water is a resource that falls into three categories: social, environmental and economic, and in the arid zones to which the region belongs, also political, because it is closely linked to national interests.

The process of establishing a unified water policy is not yet complete and the current agreements do not eliminate the problem, which creates uncertainty and hampers effective decision-making.

Currently, in the context of the changing geopolitical situation in Central Asia and the growth of risks and threats, the importance of regional organisations' involvement in these processes is increasing. In this regard, it is important to involve CICA more deeply in the current processes. Thus, against the backdrop of the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan, the member states should adopt a number of comprehensive anti-terrorist measures, strengthen cooperation in the politico-military sphere, etc.

In addition, the intensification of the forum of think tanks on existing problems in the region would greatly enhance CICA's role as a deliberative body on security and bring a number of issues to a higher level.

CICA and the Middle East

The Middle East is today a highly diverse region, and as such a politically complex one. Over the past decade, a number of attempts have been made by various mediators to overcome inter-state and intra-country conflicts and to create a sustainable security architecture. Nevertheless, the region continues to be a hotbed of instability. The dividing lines have been preserved and even deepened by new contradictions and crises.

The defeat of ISIS has largely failed to solve the security problems and consequently the further stability and sustainable development of the region. Moreover, the post-Arab Spring Middle East needs a new security architecture, and regional actors will have to build it mainly on their own forces, which is a major challenge in itself.

The main challenges and threats to regional stability and development can be roughly divided into three groups: intercountry, interstate (intra-regional contradictions) and the problem of terrorism. The latter is included in a separate group due to its location outside the field of state actors [8].

The Middle East is currently the main focus of the world's major players, as well as numerous non-state actors through which so-called hybrid wars are conducted. In this context, the solutions to these or other conflicts appear to be complex.

The prospect of establishing a local version of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in the Persian Gulf is regularly discussed by many international relations experts. However, due to the complexity and chaotic configuration of the region itself, the process of forming a

mechanism has been constantly postponed.

In this regard, CICA's role in initiating multilateral consultations would serve as an emergency channel of communication in the event of a deteriorating situation. Non-politicized areas such as the fight against drug trafficking and organized crime, and maritime security could be used to build mutual trust. Cooperation on these issues would provide the necessary experience of constructive interaction. It is also important to persuade the opposing sides to stop securitizing each other and not to use the religious factor to artificially create enmity.

Existing inter-state disputes continue to be factors significantly limiting CICA's activities in the region. One illustrative case in point is the conflict between Israel and Palestine (CICA members), where in 2019 Israel objected to three points in the final declaration at the summit of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia in Dushanbe. At that time, it recalled, the country objected to "any unilateral decision that could lead to a change in the status quo of the holy city of Jerusalem," the declaration point on the nuclear deal with Iran was not recognized, and the country also objected to the point on establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

Conclusion

Over the past decade, the Central Asian, Middle Eastern and South-Eastern Asian regions have sought to actively increase integration ties through trade, finance, manufacturing and technology, which is reflected in economic dynamism and a growing ambition to be at the forefront of

the international arena. However, with this, security issues are becoming increasingly important.

Despite the large number of different dialogue platforms and regional organizations, there has not yet been identified a successful single association that would cover the entire field of Asian security in its entirety. On the contrary, similar organizations are operating successfully on other continents. Examples include the European Union (EU) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Organization of American States (OAS) in the Americas and the African Union (AU) in Africa.

Given this reality, CICA, which currently brings together 27 countries, can play an important role as an engine for Asian integration. The CICA has successfully completed the process of drafting basic documents, structure, working principles, and established mechanisms of interaction, such as the summit of leaders of member states and the meeting of foreign ministers.

Nevertheless, its international impact to date remains limited, whether in terms of building regional security capacity or reducing the risk of emerging challenges and threats.

Among the factors that currently complicate the transformation of CICA in the area of regional security are:

- Territorial disputes between some member states. This problem poses a threat to all Asian countries without exception, given the presence of different religious, ethnic and cultural groups in virtually every state, which, if the situation develops negatively, introduces additional tension into inter-state relations. Examples include the tensions between Pakistan and India,

Israel and Palestine, some Central Asian states, and so on;

- Problems in the field of disarmament and arms control. The lack of trust between states leads to an accumulation of weapons, including weapons of mass destruction, causing a backlash. Elements of an arms race can be witnessed in some regions of Asia, which pushes its participants towards armed confrontation. The result is a vicious cycle that is disastrous for the countries directly involved in the conflict and for the region as a whole. In this context, it is disappointing that many Asian countries have not yet acceded to major international agreements on disarmament and arms control;

- Different development paths and historical stage of formation of the CICA member countries. Among them, there is a wide range of understanding and advocacy of their national interests and their own vision of solving regional and global policy problems.

However, on the other hand, it is important to recognize the inclusive role and distinction of CICA from other structures in Asia, which are based on the following key elements:

- the expansion of the sphere of common interests among states with different foreign policy concepts;

- addressing issues affecting all states in the Asian region.

These factors largely determine the core purpose of CICA today, thereby creating a fertile ground for further successful transformation.

In order to deepen interconnectivity among CICA member states as well as to establish the forum as the dominant

framework for pan-Asian security, the following tasks are proposed:

- Closer cooperation between the South, Central Asian and Middle Eastern regions to develop common countermeasures against traditional and non-traditional challenges and threats;

- The desire to regulate relations between the member states themselves. CICA comprises most of the major Asian states. The establishment of relations of peace, friendship, understanding, good neighborliness and cooperation within

the framework of this association is a prerequisite for peace and stability throughout the continent.

- Coordination of joint efforts in the CICA+SCO+ASEAN format to strengthen cooperation and mutual trust. The convening of regular meetings of Asian leaders could make an important contribution to finding effective solutions to today's pressing problems and to strengthening trust and mutual understanding among the many peoples of Asia.

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ANALYSIS OF REGULATORY AND LEGAL ASPECTS OF THE DELIMITATION OF THE KAZAKH- RUSSIAN BORDER

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Abstract. The world community of states is built on a territorial basis. In international law, the territory of a State is recognized as one of its main features. The peculiarity of the state territory is that it is under the sovereignty of the state, the manifestation of state sovereignty is the jurisdiction of the state. Borders are of great importance for determining the limits of the territory, ensuring the security of the state. On the basis of international treaties and domestic national legislation, the State establishes the legal regime of the Territory. The purpose of the article is to consider the key aspects of the legal registration of the Kazakh-Russian border. The article discusses the main milestones of legal support for the delimitation and demarcation of the borders of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation.

Keywords: *Border Delimitation, Border Demarcation, Territorial Delimitation of States, Legal Status, Legal Registration of the Border, Border Regime, Territorial Integrity.*

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ҚАЗАҚСТАН-РЕСЕЙ ШЕКАРАСЫН ДЕЛИМИТАЦИЯЛАУДЫҢ НОРМАТИВТІК-ҚҰҚЫҚТЫҚ АСПЕКТІЛЕРІН ТАЛДАУ

Айгүл Ибраева, Айжан Сатбаева

Аңдатпа. Мемлекеттердің әлемдік қауымдастығы аумақтық негізде құрылған. Халықаралық құқықта мемлекет аумағы оның басты белгілерінің бірі деп танылды. Мемлекеттік аумақтың ерекшелігі – ол мемлекеттің егемендігінде, мемлекеттік егемендіктің көрінісі-мемлекеттің юрисдикциясы. Шекаралар аумақтың шегін анықтау, мемлекеттің қауіпсіздігін қамтамасыз ету үшін үлкен маңызға ие. Халықаралық шарттар мен ішкі ұлттық заңнама негізінде мемлекет аумақтың құқықтық режимін белгілейді. Мақаланың мақсаты – Қазақстан-Ресей шекарасын заңды рәсімдеудің негізгі аспектілерін қарастыру. Мақалада Қазақстан Республикасы мен Ресей Федерациясының шекараларын делимитациялау мен демаркациялауды құқықтық қамтамасыз етудің негізгі кезеңдері қарастырылады.

Түйінді сөздер: шекараны делимитациялау, шекараны демаркациялау, мемлекеттердің аумақтық межеленуі, құқықтық мәртебесі, шекараны заңды рәсімдеу, шекара режимі, аумақтық тұтастығы.

АНАЛИЗ НОРМАТИВНО-ПРАВОВЫХ АСПЕКТОВ ДЕЛИМИТАЦИИ КАЗАХСТАНСКО-РОССИЙСКОЙ ГРАНИЦЫ

Айгуль Ибраева, Айжан Сатбаева

Аннотация. Мировое сообщество государств построено по территориальному признаку. В международном праве территория государства признана одним из главных его признаков. Особенностью государственной территории является то, что она находится под суверенитетом государства, проявлением государственного суверенитета является юрисдикция государства. Границы имеют большое значение для определения пределов территории, обеспечения безопасности государства. На основании международных договоров и внутреннего национального законодательства государство устанавливает правовой режим территории. Цель статьи – рассмотреть ключевые аспекты юридического оформления казахстанско-российской границы. В статье рассматриваются основные вехи правового обеспечения делимитации и демаркации границ Республики Казахстан и Российской Федерации.

Ключевые слова: делимитация границы, демаркация границы, территориальное разграничение государств, правовой статус, юридическое оформление границы, пограничный режим, территориальная целостность.

Introduction

The activity of States in the field of delimitation and demarcation of State borders is one of the topical issues of

modern world politics and law. The presence of the state territory and the state border still remains one of the main signs of the sovereignty of the state.

The topic of border issues is complex and includes many different aspects. Sometimes they may relate to disputes concerning territorial sovereignty, and may also relate to the delimitation of territorial seas, continental shelves and exclusive economic zones. Border regions are often located in remote areas, far from their capitals, and benefit from trade with the other side of the border. Managing cross-border flows of people, goods, services, capital and information; and how to economically and socially support these local regions or isolated islands near the borders can be considered within the framework of border issues.

Research methods

When studying the existing practice of Russian-Kazakh cross-border cooperation, an institutional approach, historical, comparative methods and a method of descriptive-inductive analysis of formal legal institutions were used.

The study of the current state of cross-border cooperation institutions and the development of specific recommendations for their improvement were carried out with an emphasis on an integrated approach.

Results

The issue of borders is of great importance for every State. The range of interests of States is concentrated on the borders, many of which are vital and form the basis of the national security of each of them. The establishment of fair and strong State borders and their proper registration are an important factor in ensuring international security and the

development of friendly relations between States. The clarity of the definition of the state border in the treaty of neighboring States and its establishment on the ground contributes to the implementation in practice of such fundamental principles of modern international law as the territorial integrity of States and the inviolability of State borders.

The preservation and consolidation of international peace and security, in turn, largely depends on the observance of these principles, since territorial disputes, claims of one State to the territory of another very often led to conflicts, armed clashes and wars between them.

If there are indeed grounds for territorial claims, then any change in the ownership of the state territory is possible only by peaceful means, on the basis of an agreement of the States concerned. On the basis of such an agreement, new State borders can be established and legally formalized.

The delimitation and demarcation of borders acquired special political significance during the period of the termination of the existence of the unified socialist camp and its main political actor - the Soviet Union. As for the borders of Kazakhstan with the Russian Federation, if we proceed from modern political realities, they should be recognized as external borders, although in Soviet times they were of an administrative and territorial nature.

Of all the Central Asian republics, only Kazakhstan had a common border with Russia with a length of more than 7.5 thousand km – the longest land border in the world; difficult work was to be done on its international legal registration. Taking into account the fact that the collapse of the USSR led the former Union republics

to the need to resolve the territorial issue, Kazakhstan actively joined the negotiation process on the registration of the border.

The development Strategy of Kazakhstan until 2030 set a political task – to ensure the national security of the Republic of Kazakhstan [1]. The realization of this task meant a guarantee of the State's sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of borders.

The Alma-Ata Declaration of December 21, 1991 [2], the Declaration on Compliance with the Principles of Cooperation within the Framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States of February 14, 1992 [3], the Declaration on Respect for Sovereignty, Territorial Integrity and Inviolability of the Borders of the member States of the Commonwealth of Independent States of April 15, 1994 [4], various bilateral treaties, legislative acts of the Supreme Soviets of the Union and Republican level became general legal documents that consolidated the principles of recognition of the administrative-territorial delimitation of the former USSR. In accordance with these documents, the Parties recognized the administrative-territorial delimitation of the Union republics as the basis for border negotiations.

A common characteristic feature of the administrative borders between the former Soviet republics was that the actual established border line in some sections did not comply with the provisions of existing legal acts. In such cases, the parties made mutually acceptable decisions taking into account national and economic interests, making a parity division and exchange of areas.

The border line is described in detail

in the contract and mapped. This stage is called delimitation. After that, the border is determined on the ground, border signs are installed, appropriate documents are drawn up. This is the stage of border demarcation. The practice of States is also known as redemarkation, which means the restoration or renewal of a previously established border.

The Kazakh side carried out work on the delimitation of the state border in accordance with the Decree of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated September 1, 1999 No. 1283 "On the Government Commission of the Republic of Kazakhstan on the delimitation of the State Border of the Republic of Kazakhstan with the Kyrgyz Republic, the Russian Federation, Turkmenistan and the Republic of Uzbekistan" [5].

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs formed relevant Government delegations from the Commission, including representatives of interested ministries and departments, regional, district and aul akimats, experts from various institutions were involved as experts, working groups were formed from among surveyors, cartographers, land surveyors, hydrologists.

Negotiations on the delimitation of the Kazakh-Russian state border continued from September 1999 to January 2005.

On January 18, 2005 in Moscow during the official visit of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.Nazarbayev to the Russian Federation, the heads of state signed an agreement between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation on the Kazakh-Russian state border [6].

By signing the Agreement on the Kazakh-Russian State Border, Kazakhstan has completed the legal registration of its

land border along the entire perimeter. The Agreement entered into force on January 12, 2006.

The Joint Commission on the demarcation, marking on the ground of the line of passage, the Kazakh-Russian state border began its work in July 2007.

In May 2009, the parties started installing border signs on the border between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation.

Treaties on border issues are particularly stable. Other agreements may terminate due to the expiration of the term for which they were concluded, the occurrence of a cancellation condition, the outbreak of war, the termination of the existence of the subject of the contract, denunciation, cancellation of the contract, its novation and cancellation. The effect of the border agreements cannot be terminated in this way. Border agreements do not contain provisions on denunciation and, therefore, cannot be denounced, they usually do not specify the validity period.

Even the outbreak of war between neighboring States does not terminate the agreement on the border between them. Border agreements cannot be cancelled unilaterally (annulled), any action to change the position of the border (novation of the border agreement) is possible only by mutual agreement of the parties. The clause "rebus sic stantibus" — on a fundamental change in circumstances (clause 2 of art. 62 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties of 1969), the boundaries established by the treaty and their regime are not affected by succession, and each successor State is obliged to comply with these treaties, etc.[7].

Such stability of border treaties

contributes to the implementation of the principles of inviolability of State borders and territorial integrity of States that have received universal recognition, enshrined in a number of fundamental international legal documents (for example, Article 2 of the UN Charter, the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation between States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations of October 24, 1970, the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe of August 1, 1975) [8].

The position of the Republic of Kazakhstan regarding borders is disclosed in detail in the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated January 16, 2013 No. 70-V On the State Border of the Republic of Kazakhstan [9].

The norms of the Law comply with international law, in particular, they confirm the principle of inviolability of borders. Border registration "is carried out on the basis of universal principles of international law." In accordance with international law, the issue of the border with the newly independent states formed on the territory of the USSR is being resolved. It "coincides with the former borders of the administrative-territorial division of the USSR" [10].

It should be noted that in order to determine the procedure for establishing and changing the passage of the state border and its designation, the procedure for establishing and maintaining the regime of the state border of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the border regime and the regime at checkpoints across the State border, regulating relations in the field of protection of the state border of

the Republic of Kazakhstan, on January 13, 1993, the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 1872-XII On the State Border of the Republic of Kazakhstan was adopted (expired by the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated January 16, 2013 No. 70-V.). The law worked until the adoption of the current Law on the State Border of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

In order to ensure the border regime in the Republic of Kazakhstan, a border strip with a width of up to 5 km is established, in which the border troops have special rights. To resolve issues related to the maintenance of the border regime, for the timely settlement of border incidents, the Concept of the Border Policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan was developed [11].

The need to develop the Concept of the Border Policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan is due to the implementation of the international agreements reached in the field of the coordinated border policy of the member states of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the implementation of the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, which defines a system of fundamental views on the purpose, basic principles, tasks and directions of implementation of the border policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, as well as the basis of interaction of the state exercising its powers through legislative bodies, executive and judicial branches of government (including central and local executive bodies), public organizations and citizens of the Republic of Kazakhstan in its implementation.

The document defines the basic principles of border policy. Thus, border policy is carried out on the basis of the

following principles: respect for the rights and freedoms of citizens; sovereign equality and territorial integrity of states, inviolability of state borders; peaceful resolution of border issues; compliance with international obligations of the Republic of Kazakhstan, legality in the implementation of border activities; priority of national interests of the Republic of Kazakhstan in building interstate border cooperation; unity of goals and objectives of border policy and sequence of actions for their implementation; adequacy of measures aimed at countering threats to national security in the border area; comprehensive cooperation in the protection and protection of the State Border.

The implementation of the set principles and approaches involves the following stages: 1st stage 2021 - 2025; 2nd stage 2026 - 2030. The Document notes that one of the directions of the border policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan is the implementation of the international legal registration of the State Border with neighboring states, the delimitation of the maritime space of the Caspian Sea and ensuring the functioning of sections of the State Border, in respect of which such registration has not been completed, in accordance with generally recognized principles and norms of international law.

With regard to the Caspian theme, this direction provides for the conclusion of international treaties on the delimitation of maritime space in the Caspian Sea. At the same time, the basis of activity on the delimitation of the Caspian Sea maritime space for the Kazakh leadership is: the priority of ensuring national interests; compliance with the principles

of sovereign equality and territorial integrity of neighboring states, as well as the prevention of any territorial claims; peaceful completion of the process of international legal registration of the State Border and delimitation of the Caspian Sea maritime space.

The international legal status of the Caspian Sea was determined by the treaties of 1921 and 1940 between the USSR and Iran, and maritime borders were established only between these states. Later, an agreement was signed between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation on the Delimitation of the Bottom of the northern part of the Caspian Sea in order to exercise sovereign rights to subsoil use (Moscow, July 6, 1998) and an Agreement between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of Azerbaijan on the Delimitation of the Bottom of the Caspian Sea (Moscow, November 29, 2001). These steps have created prerequisites for the adoption of a single act to determine the legal status of the Caspian Sea and the delimitation of the continental shelf of all Caspian littoral States.

After many years of negotiations (22 years), geopolitical battles and confrontations, finally, on August 12, 2018, the Caspian states managed to fully agree on all the provisions regarding the new legal status of the Caspian Sea. The key event was the signing by the heads of Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia and Turkmenistan of the Convention on the Legal Status of the Caspian Sea [12]. The Convention defines and regulates the rights and obligations of the Parties with respect to the use of the Caspian Sea, including its waters, bottom, subsoil, natural resources and airspace above the sea.

In this convention, the Caspian littoral States have developed a new charter for the Caspian Sea in 24 articles and agreed on a wide range of relationships regarding the situation on the Caspian Sea, in this case concerning the delimitation, the legal status of this water body, navigation, environmental protection, problems of ensuring the safety of the entire sea, the region [13].

The second article is devoted to the issue of establishing sovereignty in the Caspian Sea. The article states that "in accordance with this Convention, the Parties exercise sovereignty, sovereign and exclusive rights, as well as exercise jurisdiction in the Caspian Sea." In addition, paragraph 2 of this article "defines and regulates the rights and obligations of the Parties with respect to the use of the Caspian Sea, including its waters, bottom, subsoil, natural resources and airspace above the sea."

The external border of territorial waters is the State border. According to paragraph Z of article 7 of the Convention, the delimitation of internal and territorial waters between States with adjacent coasts is carried out by agreement between them, taking into account the principles and norms of international law.

The parties agreed under Article 8 that the delimitation of the seabed and subsoil of the Caspian Sea into sectors is carried out by agreement of neighboring and opposing states, taking into account generally recognized principles and norms of international law in order to exercise their sovereign rights to subsoil use and other legitimate economic activities related to the development of the resources of the seabed and subsoil (paragraph 1) [14].

Conclusion

At the present stage of globalization, borders still remain one of the foundations of the inviolability of the territory. Thus, Kazakhstan, whose independence was previously recognized by all world states, has completed the process of legal registration of its state border, presenting the legal argument of its territorial integrity to the world. The Kazakh-Russian section of the state border is fully decorated in international law. At the same time, it is one of the difficult areas that require reliable support and protection.

Summing up, it should be noted that the completion of the contractual process of securing the state border is evidence of the consistent and conflict-free completion

of the process of international legal registration of borders based on respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and the inviolability of existing borders. Treaties on border issues are particularly stable. From the point of view of the settlement of territorial and border issues between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation, we can talk about achieving stability across the entire spectrum of bilateral relations.

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CONNECTIVITY OF CHINESE BRI RAILWAYS IN CENTRAL ASIA AND ITS FUTURE

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Abstract. The article explores the current state and future scenario of the Chinese railway lines routes through Central Asia and Afghanistan taking into account the Taliban regime. Since ancient times, Central Asia has been a crossroad of trade routes, which in modern times largest geopolitical actors are trying to revive. The concept of the Silk Road, which a few decades ago lived only on the pages of history textbooks, firmly settled on the front pages of newspapers, in analytical reports and development strategies of the states of Central Asia. However, times have changed, and the countries of Central Asia are trying to work hard to get access to the seas. And the railways are of paramount importance in this process. Trading via railways is vital for landlocked Central Asian states and in its turn, the competition is high among them to negotiate with Beijing to invest in the project. Furthermore, China and Uzbekistan have a chance to deal with the railway extension to Pakistan and Iran through Afghanistan by negotiating with the Taliban administration.

Keywords: *China, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Railways, Afghanistan, Central Asia, Transafghan corridor*

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ОРТАЛЫҚ АЗИЯДАҒЫ ҚЫТАЙ ТЕМІР ЖОЛДАРЫНЫҢ ТҮЙІСУІ ЖӘНЕ ОНЫҢ БОЛАШАҒЫ

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Андатпа. Мақалада Талибан режимін ескере отырып, Орталық Азия мен Ауғанстан арқылы Қытай теміржол желілері маршруттарының қазіргі жағдайы мен болашақ сценарийі қарастырылған. Қазіргі таңда әлемдік геосаяси ойыншылар жандандыруға тырысып жатқан Орталық Азия ежелгі ғасырлардан сауда жолдарының түйіскен орталығы болып келеді. Осыдан оншақты жыл бұрын ғана тарих оқулықтарының беттерінде өмір сүрген Жібек жолы тұжырымдамасы газеттердің бірінші жолақтарында, талдамалық зерттеулерде және Орталық Азия мемлекеттерінің даму стратегияларында нық орнықты. Алайда уақыт өзгерді және Орталық Азия елдері теңіздерге шығу үшін бар күшін салуда. Бұл процесте темір жолдар өте маңызды. Темір жол саудасы теңізге шыға алмайтын Орталық Азия мемлекеттері үшін өте маңызды және өз кезегінде олардың арасында жобаға инвестиция салу туралы Бейжіңмен келіссөздер үшін жоғары бәсекелестік бар. Сонымен қатар, Қытай мен Өзбекстанның Талибан әкімшілігімен келіссөздер жүргізу арқылы Ауғанстан арқылы Пәкістан мен Иранға теміржолды ұзарту мәселесін шешуге мүмкіндігі бар.

Түйін сөздер: *Қытай, Қырғызстан, Өзбекстан, темір жолдар, Ауғанстан, Орталық Азия, Трансафган дәлізі.*

СОПРЯЖЕНИЕ КИТАЙСКИХ ЖЕЛЕЗНЫХ ДОРОГ В ЦЕНТРАЛЬНОЙ АЗИИ И ИХ БУДУЩЕЕ

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Аннотация. В статье исследуется текущее состояние и будущий сценарий маршрутов китайских железнодорожных линий через Центральную Азию и Афганистан с учетом режима Талибов. С древних времен Центральная Азия была перекрестком торговых путей, которые в наше время пытаются возродить крупнейшие геополитические субъекты. Концепция Шелкового пути, которая еще несколько десятилетий назад жила только на страницах учебников истории, прочно обосновалась на первых полосах газет, в аналитических отчетах и стратегиях развития государств Центральной Азии. Однако времена изменились, и страны Центральной Азии прилагают все усилия, чтобы получить доступ к морям. И железные дороги имеют первостепенное значение в этом процессе. Торговля по железным дорогам жизненно важна для государств Центральной Азии, не имеющих выхода к морю, и, в свою очередь, среди них высока конкуренция за переговоры с Пекином об инвестициях в проект. Кроме того, у Китая и Узбекистана есть шанс решить вопрос о продлении железной дороги в Пакистан и Иран через Афганистан путем переговоров с администрацией талибов.

Ключевые слова: *Китай, Кыргызстан, Узбекистан, железные дороги, Афганистан, Центральная Азия, Трансафганский коридор.*

Introduction

The Central Asian region, once a part of the transport infrastructure of the Russian Empire and the USSR, has a fairly developed network of railways, which, nevertheless, is unevenly located. If Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan have long communication routes, then Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan are almost not covered by this thick network. The railway of Kyrgyzstan is only 424 km of scattered, unconnected lines in the north and south of the country. The Tajik railroad, also split in two parts, is only 680 km long. Once a single transport organism was divided into "sovereign" railways, which could not but affect their condition, modernization of rolling stock, since all this directly depended on the economic situation in the owner countries, political stability and the degree of remoteness from large markets. For example, not a kilometer of new railways have been built in Kyrgyzstan since independence. In Tajikistan, only two sections have been launched: Kurgan-Tyube - Kulyab and Vahdat - Yavan. At the same time, over the past 30 years, Kazakhstan has increased the length of its railway network by 2500 km, becoming one of the most important transit land corridors on the Eurasian continent. In 2014, Astana and Ashgabat launched the eastern branch of the North-South corridor, connecting their rail network with Iran. Uzbekistan also laid two and a half thousand kilometers of new tracks [1].

The states of the region understand the importance of the development of railway transport, which is extremely cost-effective. Each of the Central Asian states has adopted transport development

strategies that are linked to international projects of trans-Eurasian transport corridors, including those within the EAEU, the SCO, the Chinese Belt and Road project and the North-South corridor. Nevertheless, the problems of connectedness of communications, coverage of territories, the degree of coverage by the railway network, access to the largest international markets remain significant.

Inherited from the USSR, the main railway network of the region had limited capabilities, and practically did not meet the requirements of the modern world. The process of disintegration in the post-Soviet space has aggravated the deplorable state of the railway tracks, which had previously been a dead-end branch of the All-Union railway. Instability in Afghanistan and the isolationism of the Turkmen authorities have minimized the logistics potential of the railway.

According to the World Bank briefing "Transport Connectivity in Central Asia: Challenges and Opportunities", Central Asia is one of the least "connected" regions in the world. The connectivity indicator in the region averages less than 60% in terms of transport access ratio in relation to global GDP, which is the lowest on this scale [2].

This is confirmed by the study of the Uzbek Center for Development Strategy, according to which "the states of the region, not having direct access to seaports, bear significant transport and transit costs, which reach 70-80% of the value of exported products" [3].

Due to lack of transport infrastructure in the region, the states of CA region are trying to bite its portion of investment,

Map 1. Major international rail routes in Central Asia, electronic resource from the Briefing



Source: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/637891/EPRS_BRI\(2019\)637891_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2019/637891/EPRS_BRI(2019)637891_EN.pdf)

which were or will be provided by China, Russia and the US. All of the global actors have their own interests in the CA region to implement the projects with their own investment. Withdrawing the troops of the US, to some extent, means that the US is not going to pour his money to the railway connection in the CA region. Russia is eager to engage in transport connection development with the region but without China and other regional actors' activation.

However, Russia, invited to the project by ex-President Sooronbay Jeenbekov, once showed his agreement on the new lines from China to Uzbekistan via Kyrgyzstan while experts state that Russia's willingness is just to discourage the project, as it will

decrease the importance of the railways of Russia and Kazakhstan.

Overall, there is left only China with its power, investment and the most important, aspiration to connect East Asia with the Middle East, Africa and Europe through Central Asia. One of the closest and fastest routes would be China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan lines which would be converted into the shortest BRI route and have probability to extend to Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran.

Research methods

As for the research methodology, the authors are based on the principles developed by the school of political

neorealism, the fundamental postulate of which is the principle of inviolability of national interests, as well as the theory of economic interdependence.

Accordingly, the methods of scientific analysis, synthesis, political forecasting and modeling were applied in the study. The problems considered in this paper are analyzed in a temporal and dialectical connection in which we use a systematic approach that will allow us to approach the above problems exclusively on the basis of a balanced scientific analysis. Based on these principles, in the article we tried to use comparative-historical, analytical and interdisciplinary research methods that will allow us to consider the political, economic and other aspects of the policy of the Central Asian countries in a complex.

Discussion

The People's Republic of China is the most dynamic, influential and most important state for all players in the political area of international relations of the 21st century. The "fifth generation" of Chinese leaders, led by Xi Jinping, is taking bold steps in implementing global projects. The project "One belt and one road", originating from the "Great Silk Road", connecting more than 60 countries, attracts the attention of the whole world [4]. The problems of the countries of the region, as well as the issues of the geopolitical and geo-economic influence of external players on the processes taking place in Central Asia are quite widely sanctified in political science. In this paper, we will try to consider the issues in the context of recent processes in the region. The issue of regionalization and integration

in the region is the subject of study by Central Asian researchers. "However, the basis of the discussion is the assumption that a region is understood as a group of countries connected by closer economic ties than other countries of the world" [5].

The problem of the Central Asian countries is that, possessing sufficient resources, they remain in the rank of backward states, and to a greater extent this is due to the lack of direct access to the sea. In order to enter the world markets, the countries of the region need to act through neighboring countries with access to the sea. The construction of transport corridors and the development of land trade infrastructure would compensate for isolation from the sea. The advantageous geopolitical location between the "world factory" China and the huge consumer market represented by Europe, the countries of the region have not yet fully exploited this potential, primarily due to the lack of necessary financial capabilities.

Russia, which traditionally considers the region to be its sphere of influence, due to its weak financial capacity, cannot fully gain a foothold in the market of the countries of the region. According to experts, Russia has been losing its position in the region in almost all directions over the past 5-7 years. To a greater extent, this is due to the imposition of sanctions against Moscow in the light of its aggressive policy towards Ukraine. The sanctions imposed against Russia have severely undermined not only its economic opportunities, but also caused serious damage to Moscow's image in the region. Practically, the countries of the region, after the annexation of Crimea, are gradually trying to get out from under the influence of the Kremlin. This is not only

connected with the political sphere, first it is due to economic motivation. Since a strong dependence on a country under sanctions affects economic well-being. During the period of independence, the countries of the region have tried several times to create a semblance of a regional union, in political, economic, trade and other spheres. Practically all of this has not been implemented.

Although the ideas of the Central Asian Union have existed for more than 20 years, many experts were skeptical about the idea, justifying their opinion by saying that integration in the region is not possible without the participation of players from outside. China and Russia were considered external forces that could integrate the region into a single economic space. Since none of the countries in the region is able to realize on its own, not only because of the lack of economic opportunities, but it is not necessary to discount internal contradictions. Kazakhstan is traditionally considered the flagship of the region, as compared to other countries, Nur-Sultan has a number of advantages, primarily economic and image. The country, unlike its main competitor Uzbekistan, is more open to foreign investors, has established relations with China and Russia, has no territorial problems with its neighbors, and the important fact is that it does not border with countries where there is instability, meaning Afghanistan.

The situation has begun to change in recent years, the coming to power of the pragmatic politician Mirziyoyev contributed to this. The reforms carried out were able to change the situation in the region in favor of Uzbekistan. First, the new authorities were able to establish

relations with neighboring countries, primarily with Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic, recall that the former leader Islam Karimov once said that future wars in the region could occur because of water resources [4]. Karimov's statement at that time was addressed not only to Bishkek but also to Dushanbe.

Tashkent's strained relations with its neighbors created additional obstacles to Uzbekistan's transformation into a regional leader. Mirziyoyev's rise to power marked the beginning of a new era in Uzbekistan's foreign policy. The establishment of relations with neighboring states was supposed to promote closer integration of the Uzbek economy into the world. The program of internal modernization of Uzbekistan adopted by the new authorities of the country, understands the minimization of state control over business, the creation of a favorable environment for foreign investment, and the elimination of bureaucratic barriers, which, according to the authorities, should stimulate the economic development of the country. In addition to the above points, there is also a program of modernization of the village and remote settlements, and the start of this improvement program was started from the village of Manas on the border with Kyrgyzstan. The choice did not fall by chance, it was a kind of signal for Bishkek, demonstrating a change in Tashkent's foreign policy priorities. The problems that existed under the previous president, this rolling power outage has not been repeated recently.

After Mirziyoyev came to power, it should be noted that the number of negative incidents on the border

between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan has sharply decreased, and contacts between government commissions on the demarcation of the state border of Uzbekistan with neighboring states have intensified in the Ferghana Valley region.

With the arrival of Mirziyoyev, Uzbekistan began to play an important role in infrastructure projects in Central Asia. Official Tashkent aims to overtake its main competitor in the region by expanding the network of highways that will bypass Kazakhstan. If earlier the prospects of Uzbekistan looked vague in the context of instability in Afghanistan, then recent changes in this country open up new prospects.

Uzbekistan, unlike Tajikistan, expressed readiness to cooperate with the new Afghan authorities, and did not even raise the issue of the Taliban's commitments to an inclusive government. Although one of the first high-profile decisions of the Taliban government was the abolition of the status of the Uzbek language as the state language.

Taking into account the current situation in the region and the Taliban administration in Kabul, China and Uzbekistan are possessing some positive chances to negotiate with Taliban. Official Beijing has national interests of great importance in Afghanistan [5]. China's close-tie cooperation with Pakistan would be an advantageous step to establish exclusively economic relations with Kabul under the Taliban.

Uzbekistan, as one of the main players in the region, replaces Tajikistan's position along the railway routes through Afghanistan as Dushanbe and the Talibs' relations are tense.

Competitive psychology gives rise to such unrealistic projects as, for example, the connection of the territories of Turkmenistan and Tajikistan, bypassing Uzbekistan through Afghanistan. The idea was about to be realized during the hard relations of Uzbekistan with Tajikistan. Most revealingly, at first glance, unifying projects have generated a number of conflicts between the countries of the region. So, having begun as the product of a series of blockades of Tajikistan by Uzbekistan, a detour through Turkmenistan after the establishment of relations between Dushanbe and Tashkent with Shavkat Mirziyoyev's administration and, accordingly, the suspension of the project by the Tajik side, eventually led to the blocking of transport links with Tajikistan by Turkmenistan.

Regarding the route from China to Uzbekistan through the territory of Kyrgyzstan, not only disagreements arose over the gauge, but also disputes about the places of the route. It is critically important for Kyrgyzstan to connect the northern and southern regions of the country by rail, while Beijing and Tashkent are looking for the shortest route to the Middle East. Thus, each of the states in the region is striving to seize from its rivals the status of the main transport hub in Central Asia, which so far belongs to Kazakhstan.

For Kyrgyzstan, the implementation of the project to connect the railway with the Uzbek railway branch is also a priority, as this will avoid dependence on Kazakhstan and diversify its export opportunities.

Thus, the expansion of transport highways in Central Asia within the framework of the BRI project contributes to the transformation of Uzbekistan

into a major player in Central Asia, and the prospects of Nur-Sultan are not so convincing in light of the high dependence of Kazakhstan's economy on Russia suffering from sanctions.

Results

Given that Uzbekistan is the region's most populous country, strategically located between the remaining four states, efforts to build intra-regional links made little sense without its participation is something that Tashkent's isolationist policy made difficult [6].

During a visit to the Surkhandarya region, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev said that the Mazar-i-Sharif-Kabul-Peshawar railway would become one of the largest projects in the history of Uzbekistan [7]. According to him, the World Bank has already agreed to allocate \$35 million for design work. "I call this the project of the century," the president said and added that Russia would soon join in its implementation. The head of state noted that for Uzbekistan one of the most important tasks has always been access to seaports, despite the borders being closed for many years.

If the project is realized, transportation of one Uzbek container through Iran or Pakistan will become 3-4 times cheaper, the time will be reduced 4-5 times. When the road becomes short and cheap, stable economic development will be ensured, this will benefit entrepreneurs. They will not go to Tashkent, on the contrary, Tashkent residents will come here so that the Afghan people would buy Uzbek products not through intermediaries, but first-hand.

In early February 2021, Uzbekistan,

Afghanistan and Pakistan signed in Tashkent a roadmap for the construction of the Mazar-i-Sharif-Kabul-Peshawar railway. The project was planned to be prepared in May, and to begin construction of the road in September this year, however the situation in Afghanistan is a barrier to realize it.

The railway project is estimated at \$5 billion. It involves the construction of a highway with a length of 573 km and a transit potential of up to 20 million tons of cargo per year. The new transport corridor should connect the European Union, Russia, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and further the states of Southeast Asia.

The frequent visits of the head of Uzbekistan to the countries of Central Asia have demonstrated Uzbekistan's readiness to conduct a more open policy towards the countries of the region, the way out of the self-isolation of the potential leader of the region is fundamentally beginning to change the situation in the region. Uzbekistan is a country with huge human and economic potential and, unlike its main competitor, has a common border with all countries in the region.

Positive shifts in foreign policy are also planned in Kazakhstan. In light of the successful transit of power in the country, qualitative changes have taken place, although foreign policy priorities have not changed much since Tokayev came to power, qualitative shifts are noticeable in foreign policy, in particular, ties with the countries of the region have intensified, and within the framework of the Turkic Council. The pragmatic policy pursued by the two states contributes to the improvement of the political and

economic situation between not only Tashkent and Nur-Sultan, but it also has a positive impact on the situation in the region.

The Belt and Road Initiative gives a new impetus to the structural modernization of the transport infrastructure of the countries of the region and contributes to its closer integration within the region. The countries of the region also intend to eliminate existing internal barriers. However, despite the efforts of the countries of the region, such problems as poor quality of infrastructure, limited digital communication and bureaucratic obstacles remain unresolved. The development of the railway network will allow the countries of the region to get out of the state of "isolation" and develop new markets in South Asia and the Middle East.

Conclusion

Summing up this work, I would like to note the following that the Central Asian region, despite its isolation from the world ocean, is integrating into the system of world trade and communication. The complex processes associated with the unstable geopolitical situation in Afghanistan, with the arrival of the new Taliban administration, inspires hope for positive changes. The strengthening of Beijing's official positions in the region causes some concerns among

the population of the countries of the region, where anti-Chinese sentiments are traditionally strong. The situation is also aggravated by the active propaganda about the facts of the "genocide" of the Muslim population in Xinjiang. Today we clearly understand that apart from the PRC, almost no country has sufficient investment potential. The countries of the region are actively using the BRI initiative to develop internal communications, as well as a way to enter foreign markets. Practically, the strengthening of the PRC's position in the region has re-actualized the issue of leadership in the region. Kazakhstan, traditionally considered the cornerstone of Central Asia, received Uzbekistan as a competitor. The intensification of Uzbek foreign policy in the region and the ongoing reforms of the new leadership of the country contribute to the formation of a new geopolitical situation in the region.

Through the Central Asian region, China has the opportunity to enter the oil and gas market of the countries of the South Caucasus, and at the same time gets the opportunity to directly access the hydrocarbon-rich countries of the Middle East, excluding Russia from the struggle, and given the fact that the Americans have left Afghanistan, the region practically remains under the influence of the PRC.

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ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM: TRENDS AND PROSPECTS

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Abstract. Environmental activism, or environmentalism, is a social environmental movement that spread in the twentieth century in European countries, aiming to strengthen environmental protection measures.

Environmental activism today plays an important role in overcoming misunderstandings between scientists, politicians, the media and the public on environmental issues.

Key words: *Environmental Activism, Civic Engagement, Environmental Protection, Ecology, Green Economy.*

ЭКОЛОГИЯЛЫҚ АКТИВИЗМ: ҮРДІСТЕРІ МЕН БОЛАШАҒЫ

Мадина Бектенова, Айдана Акесина

Аңдатпа. Экологиялық активизм немесе энвайронментализм – ол XX ғасырда Еуропа елдерінде кең тарала бастаған, қоршаған ортаны қорғау бойынша шараларды күшейтуге бағытталған әлеуметтік экологиялық қозғалыс.

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саясаткерлер, бұқаралық ақпараттар құралдары мен қоғамдастық арасындағы түсініспеушілікті еңсеруде маңызды рөл атқарады.

Түйін сөздер: *экологиялық активизм, азаматтық белсенділік, қоршаған ортаны қорғау, экология, жасыл экономика.*

ЭКОЛОГИЧЕСКИЙ АКТИВИЗМ: ТЕНДЕНЦИИ И ПЕРСПЕКТИВЫ

Мадина Бектенова, Айдана Акесина

Аннотация. Экологический активизм или энвайронментализм – социальное экологическое движение, распространившееся в XX веке в европейских странах, направленное на усиление мер по защите окружающей среды.

Экологический активизм сегодня играет важную роль в преодолении непонимания между учеными, политиками, средствами массовой информации и общественностью по экологическим вопросам.

Ключевые слова: *экологический активизм, гражданская активность, защита окружающей среды, экология, зеленая экономика.*

Introduction

In 2019, the media began to write about environmental issues much more frequently. The Guardian released an environmental manifesto. International environmental projects and NGOs are being recognised at the highest level, and the movement itself has a bright public face. These triggers suggest that more activists and environmentalists will look deeper into the issue and put pressure on the financial institutions and governments that support fossil fuel extraction.

The internet and social media have given a new impetus to the global trend towards environmental activism. However, the possibilities of digital forms of environmental participation are ambiguous. On the one hand, there is a paradigm shift in the interaction of actors, in which they become not only consumers of information, but also its active producers; accordingly, channels for civil society to influence decision-making processes are expanding.

On the other hand, digital practices alienate users from real action.

The purpose of this study is to identify the most relevant trends in the environmental movement globally and in Kazakhstan, and the barriers and obstacles faced by environmental movements and activists in Kazakhstan.

Research methods

This article is mainly based on descriptive and comparative research methods.








As part of this study, an expert survey was also conducted, in a semi-structured interview format, with the participation of 8 environmentalists, eco-activists, eco-bloggers, representatives of state structures and non-governmental organisations. The expert survey made it possible to identify the current state of development of eco-activism, the main problems and possible ways of solving them.

Global trends in environmental activism

Recognition of environmental challenges

In 2015, the UN member states adopted 17 goals for the period up to 2030 - the sustainable development of the future. The goals aim to optimise the allocation of scarce resources, introduce environmentally friendly technologies into production, and create better living conditions for future generations. They are considered to be key indicators of a green economy. These goals will have to be achieved by the member states of the United Nations through their own strategies[1]. Of the 17 goals, 7 are directly related to environmental protection and conservation, while 10 are indirectly related (Table 1):

Table 1. UN Sustainable Development Goals

	Eradicate hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
	Ensuring availability and efficient use of water resources and sanitation for all
	Ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
	Ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns
	Taking urgent action to combat climate change and its effects
	Conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
	Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

Environmental activism as a value

According to the 2019 European Barometer study, in Europe, more than nine out of ten respondents (94%) say that environmental protection is important to them personally, and among them, more than half (56%) believe it is extremely important[2].

Climate communications researchers at George Mason University in the US say data from a long-running survey of US adults, conducted almost every year since 2008, shows that audiences are becoming increasingly receptive to eco-activist messages: "Adults are becoming increasingly concerned about environmental issues, and this has been the case since 2015."

A 2016 survey of 1,860 people in the UK found that 61% were willing to pay up to £20 a month to prevent climate change-related deaths in 2050, 2080 and 2115[3].

Participants in a 2017 study in Portugal and Australia were willing to spend as much money on preventing the negative impacts of climate change on future generations as they were on protecting themselves[4].

Experts also note that for many, fighting climate change has become a global justice issue - an approach that is more rational than a purely environmentalist message.

The growing role of environmental NGOs

Environment and animal welfare groups are among the fastest growing sectors of the non-profit world, increasing by 15% from 2005 to 2015 - during the same period there was a decline in the number of arts and health non-profit organisations. In the US alone, there are around 15,000 registered environment and animal welfare non-profits[5].

At the same time as the number of environmental NGOs and activists is increasing, they are taking on a more assertive position as political actors in international organisations. The UN explicitly recognised the

need for cooperation with NGOs at the Conference on the Environment (1992): "The United Nations system, including international financial and development agencies, as well as all intergovernmental organisations and forums, should, in cooperation with non-governmental organisations, take steps to ... strengthen existing mechanisms and procedures for involving non-governmental organisations in policy-making and environmental programme design, implementation and evaluation.

NGOs can also be formally represented in negotiations at semi-public international conferences. For example, the International Union for Conservation of Nature includes 669 NGOs as well as states and governments. Environmental NGOs can now also be members of international commissions (e.g. the International Commission for the Scientific Exploration of the Mediterranean Sea)[6].

Non-governmental organisations around the world have helped to promote ecological values by raising awareness of environmental issues. Their methods include both direct lobbying and specially designed public information campaigns, the distribution of educational materials, and social media campaigns. NGOs also organise citizen science groups and projects to engage the public in the fight against environmental change[7].

The new faces of global environmental activism

For many years, the main recognisable public environmentalists have been foreign stars who have drawn attention to pollution, climate change, etc. For example, actor Leonardo DiCaprio and

his Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation (LDF). The foundation funds research and development in the field of renewable energy. It actively supports the distribution of green technology to private companies and non-profit organisations. The actor himself is on the board of directors of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF).

Today, however, we can say that global youth environmental activism has become personified in the image of environmental leader Greta Thunberg.

Sociologists at the University of Maryland in the US who study activism note that the latest generation of eco-activists is much "louder" and better coordinated than its predecessors. The movement's visibility on social media and in the press has attracted more young people to the environmental movement. In addition, sociologists note a generational feature of the high level of involvement: "There is no generation that puts so much at stake when it comes to the negative effects of climate change as Generation Z. Their future is tied to the planet, and they are capable of protecting it.[8]"

Greta Thunberg's speeches have inspired many young people all over the world and brought environmental issues to the attention of politicians, businessmen and the public.

A new way of life

In recent years, the 'ecological approach' to life has been gaining popularity as a response to the negative effects of the technological revolution and pollution problems.

Ecological approach to life, calls for living in harmony with nature and fostering an ecological mindset to solve specific

environmental problems. Ecologisation of consciousness, means ecologisation of the needs, motives of behaviour and the behaviour of the modern man himself.

Eco-lifestyles include living a healthy lifestyle, using natural materials and raw materials, sorting and recycling waste, supporting eco-friendly brands, boycotting companies that do not go green and other such activities.

Digital environmental activism

Modern information technology offers the public fundamentally new possibilities for civic expression and collective mobilisation by creating decentralised, networked structures without visible organisational hierarchy. Internet activism is generally characterised by anonymity, heterogeneity, dynamism and freedom, and is more scalable and adaptable. New technologies have also become an innovative source of citizens' self-development, mastering the skills of environmental monitoring and self-reflection in relation to the information received, increasing environmental knowledge and awareness; and the networking of digital activists is a source of various offline resources, facilitating collective civic action. The main forms are:

Clicktivism (from the word 'click'), clicktivist actions include signing online petitions, copying and using statuses or messages from social media, and changing personal details or avatars on social media to express a particular civic position. Clicktivism is mainly engaged in individual groups on social media to accumulate civic engagement.

Digital petitions are seen as a form of activity that requires a guaranteed response from the government.

E-financing includes online cash transactions: donations, cryptocurrency mining, online fundraising auctions, etc.

'Data activism' is the organisation of voluntary work with different types of data (open governmental and non-governmental sources, scientific data, etc.).

'Hacktivism' is hacking (obtaining data without official access to a system) to achieve individual or collective social, environmental or political goals. The potential impact of this kind of digital activism is large and can affect government, citizens and industry.

Kazakhstan trends

In Kazakhstan, eco-activism is on the rise. Today, public attention to environmental issues is more than justified and will only increase under the influence of *the global trend of environmental protection*. Climate change, desertification of land, air and water pollution, loss of biodiversity, unauthorised landfills, and industrial waste disposal are only some of the main environmental problems on the global agenda.

Kazakhstan faces the same environmental challenges as the rest of the world. However, there is a difference in the way and speed with which they are solved and in the development of the environmental sphere as a whole. Against the background of all these problems, society is asking questions and demanding solutions, hence the predictably increasing environmental activism. This is the expected and right reaction of society.

Transformation of eco-movements in Kazakhstan

In general, the situation with environmental activism can be assessed as rapidly developing; as it develops, it will transform and form into an institution of interaction between society and the authorities. All the more so since environmental problems cannot be solved with government involvement alone. Active action is required from the civil sector, NGOs, businesses, concerned citizens and volunteers.

The environmental movement in Kazakhstan dates back to Soviet times. Suffice it to recall the anti-nuclear movement Nevada-Semipalatinsk, founded by writer Olzhas Suleimenov in 1989. The initiative proved successful - the nuclear test site was soon closed, and the process of conserving the nuclear reactor in Mangistau began. Then the public turned its attention to the tragedy of the Aral Sea.

In the 1990s and 2000s, several eco-NGOs emerged and became quite active in politics. Mels Yeleusizov, Chairman of the Ecological Union of Associations and Enterprises of Kazakhstan "Tabigat", MP and presidential candidate, stood out against the general background.

Today, thanks to the global agenda and social media, there are an increasing number of environmental movements in Kazakhstan, volunteers and eco-activists who are actively working and encouraging people to join their initiatives.

Digital eco-activism and new faces

On the expanses of Facebook, Instagram and YouTube, under various hashtags reflecting environmental

issues (*#ecologykazakhstan*, *#birge*, *#tazaqazaqstan*, *#sokhranimkokzhailau*, etc.), one can find a noticeable number of popular pages of ecological organisations and movements. Particularly active and productive initiatives have their own popular faces. Among them are Yevgeny Mukhamedjanov, founder of the *EcoNetwork* project; Pakizat Saylaubekova, an environmental activist and founder of the Recycle Birge project; Mikhail Belyakov; Daniyar Bakimov; Timur Yeleusizov, Chairman of the Eco Fund Tabigat; Kirill Osin, Director of the Eco Mangistau NGO; and others. Kazakhstani bloggers also raise the topic of environmental problems in their broadcasts.

The effectiveness of Kazakh eco-activism could be observed in the examples of cancellation of construction of the resort at Kok-Zhailau, revision of development of Bozzyr tract, illegal felling of trees and development in the cities of the country. Meanwhile, eco-activists periodically assemble various marathons, rallies, monitorings, seminars, eco-subbotniks and other events in support of ecology in the country.

Atmospheric air quality and low levels of solid waste recycling are high on the environmental agenda of Kazakhstan's eco-activists.

For example, according to the Pollution Index Rankings for 2020, Kazakhstan is the 26th dirtiest country in the world out of 110 (our country's pollution index is 75.15)[9].

In Kazakhstan, the Environmental Ministry plans to recycle 40% of waste by 2030 and 50% by 2050. According to the Ministry of Energy, 3.2m tonnes

of solid waste accumulated in August 2019, in addition to unregistered landfills, which no one keeps track of. Every year, 5-6m tonnes more solid waste is added. Kazakhstan recycled 9% of MSW in 2017 and increased its recycling rate to 11.5 in 2018.

Kazakhstan has 130 waste sorting and recycling organisations, several of which subsequently produce new products from recycled materials. Raw materials suitable for recycling account for 46%, but the problems faced by both recycling companies and recyclers cannot be solved without help from the state.

State environmental initiatives

State environmental initiatives in the country are also intensifying, as are the activities of green companies and NGOs. The Ministry of Ecology, Geology and Natural Resources of Kazakhstan, the International Centre for Green Technologies and Investment Projects, and the Association of Environmental Organisations of Kazakhstan (AEOC) have been established. A radical reform of environmental legislation is taking place.

Kazakhstan has always been progressively pro-environmental policy; it has signed a number of important conventions, international treaties, joined the Kyoto Protocol, the Sustainable Development Goals, developed the concept of transition to a green economy, and established a Council under the President for the transition of Kazakhstan to a green economy.

The adoption of a new Environmental Code and the approval of roadmaps for each region are also considered to be effective instruments for tackling environmental

issues. Above all, the "polluter pays and corrects" principle is implemented through the code. This means both increasing the fines for polluters many times over and for them to take the necessary measures to repair the damage caused. In addition, the National Project "Zhasyl-Kazakhstan for 2021-2025" is being developed.

As part of the Year of the Volunteer, the first national eco-meeting was held in February 2020, attended by activists, volunteers, representatives of government agencies and international organisations from all regions of the country. A roadmap was developed at the rally, which included the environmental initiatives of activists and volunteers in Kazakhstan, confirming the support of the eco-activist movement at the state level in Kazakhstan.

In the opinion of the representatives of Kazakhstani eco-activism themselves, what is more important in this matter is the position taken by the people themselves. We are talking about ecological consciousness.

The trend towards environmental consciousness

Among the main trends in supporting ecology, ecological consciousness, ecological behaviour or reducing the ecological footprint in the environment are highlighted. Recently, more and more people in Kazakhstan are abandoning plastic, unhealthy food and harmful household chemicals, and are switching to sensible consumption. Increasingly, people are shifting to a more comfortable environment for the planet.

Meanwhile, many people are no longer choosing the position of a bystander. They come up with their own projects and solve

environmental problems at their own level. This is how the website Airkaz.org appeared, showing measurements and key indicators of air pollution. Or the EcoNetwork project, which independently implements Green Office and Green School projects. In 2020, the Tazastan project was launched on The Village.kz, reflecting current topics on human impact on pollution.

An important trend is also the greening of public events and the eco-friendly orientation of the event sector[10].

The trend towards a scientific component of eco-activism

The development of eco-activism also implies the development of a scientific component, qualified expert support, explanation and mainstreaming of environmental issues. This is also a good factor to prevent eco-activism from turning into a hype or groundless couch activism. Today in Kazakhstan there is a tendency to increase expert assessment of the situation, and new names in science and applied scientific research are appearing.

Problems and prospects for the development of eco-activism in Kazakhstan

Experts' assessment of the current situation in the field of environmental activism in Kazakhstan.

Along with the global trend, the environmental movement in Kazakhstan is gaining momentum every year. Experts note that eco-activism in Kazakhstan is developing rapidly. And the concept of the Hearing State, initiated by President Tokayev, plays an important role in this. Civic initiatives are developing well

mainly in large cities. But there are also sporadic examples of eco-activism in the regions of the country.

Environmental activism involves young and ambitious citizens. Young people are not indifferent to environmental issues and information and opinions are exchanged through all existing information channels. Environmental activists take part in events at all levels and their position can be heard and taken into account when crucial political decisions are made.

The role of social networks in the dissemination of information and the opportunity to unite is high. In general, experts believe that anxiety about the environment is felt throughout the world and is necessarily reflected in Kazakhstan's reality. Eco-activism in the world is no longer just a trend, but a concern confirmed by real scientific research. The Kazakhstani public is just starting to become active in this regard, but the process has been launched and its relevance will grow day by day.

According to experts, eco-activists in the country are divided into two main groups: some deal with air pollution and others with waste. A small number of eco-activists are focused on greening. However, water and biodiversity issues are occasionally raised.

The main problems of environmental activism according to experts are

- There is a lack of venues for eco-activists to gather to discuss problems and solutions.

- A high level of distrust of eco-activists towards the executive authorities. Difficulties include lack of understanding, inaction on the part of officials, the emergence of "barbaric laws", promotion

of harmful technologies (incineration, for example), etc.

- Little awareness of ongoing projects in the RoK;

- Fragmented views of the activists themselves on the topic. Environmental organisations themselves are reluctant to join partner networks and coalitions;

- The division of resources among active NGOs, i.e. low state material support for eco-activists. Often, eco-activists have to turn to foreign grants or use the crowdfunding system;

- Low accessibility to data and sources of specialised bodies (meaning statistical data, financial reports, research reports, etc.)

- The development of excessive (radical, unprofessional, aggressive) eco-activism is also cited as a problem, which, in turn, can have a negative impact on the development of the economy, business and generally cause destabilisation processes in society. This is often due to the fact that there is no clear understanding of what eco-activism is, its essence, principles and ultimate goals. Many eco-activists interpret their ideas as the only correct ones. At the same time, both business and the state do not seek compromises, each pursuing its own interests. The issue of interaction between the state, business and the public in this context is being brought up to date.

In this connection, some experts have voiced the position that it is the state that should direct and regulate the field of ecology. Eco-movements, especially if they are founded spontaneously, without a scientific and qualified component, can do tangible harm to the development of proper eco-activism. According to Kamshat

Tusupova, PhD in Water Resources Engineering at Lund University (Sweden), there are five areas that should be regulated exclusively by the state - education, health care, social welfare, defence and ecology. Therefore, any ecological education, people's training, ecological ideology presuppose the state to have a written, clear program-plan. And we should not wait for results in 3-4 years, everything that concerns change of consciousness requires long time and continuous work in this direction.

- Low level of environmental awareness and education in the country. The majority of the population lacks environmental education and culture in relation to the environment, animals, consumption, and solid waste management. The problem is to change the consciousness of the citizens themselves. The more people in Kazakhstan begin to change their values, the measure of consumption, live ecologically and reduce their ecological footprint, the more chances the country has to improve the ecological picture and to develop quality eco-activism in general.

- Lack of expertise and qualified knowledge among the eco-activists themselves. Like any process, eco-activism needs to develop. This is possible through continuous training, the development of eco-movement representatives, scientific research, and the training of qualified personnel in this field. All this requires a systematic, science-based approach.

- "Clicktivism" that does not translate into active action. Citizens are not ready to spend their own time and effort on proactive action to protect the environment;

- Citizens, on the one hand, wish to improve environmental conditions, but are

not prepared to pay for the environment, for environmental levies and increased tariffs.

- In Kazakhstan, volunteerism and philanthropy are not as well developed as in Western countries: the population is extremely reluctant to donate money to non-profit environmental organisations (which is one of the main reasons for environmental NGOs to seek funding from other countries).

The effectiveness of interaction and communication between the state and civil society on environmental issues:

- Experts note that there is often a quick response from state authorities to minor issues, but a lack of systematic communication and resolution of serious environmental problems.

- There are some perspectives, for example the Council under the Ministry of Environment and the ambassadors for this topic are a really working mechanism, but at the same time there is not a sufficiently effective scheme of interaction or awareness of the civil sector on this activity.

Conclusions

One of the main current trends in eco-activism is the emergence of many independent grassroots initiative groups, indicating a significant growth of the environmental movement in quantitative terms. On the other hand, eco-movements are gaining an impressive presence on the international stage, which indicates their qualitative and authoritative growth. A global shift in social consciousness is taking place, in which the right to a healthy environment is a defining value. The environmental agenda is becoming an independent political agenda for

international organisations, political parties and community leaders.

Institutional recommendations

The first priority for the state should be sustainable economic development, which would then allow both citizens and the state to increase spending on the green economy.

The state needs to support the really working environmental movements and projects (informationally and financially). Raise awareness, provide training on how to obtain material support from the government. Many environmental movements find it easier to apply for grants from foreign countries, as they have simple schemes for communicating and handling documents, as well as for obtaining funding.

It is important to develop a scientifically based, competent algorithm for action at state level, a plan for the development of the environmental sphere, indicating all the objectives, indicators and mechanisms for their achievement, with further monitoring of progress.

The creation of professional associations, based on the example of European countries, consisting of qualified specialists in a particular field of environmental knowledge, possibly even interdisciplinary in nature, for a narrower and deeper study of the environmental situation and problems in Kazakhstan. And also to provide qualified consultations and expert assessments.

Educational initiatives

Governments need to guide representatives of environmental movements to acquire environmental

knowledge, as many of them often lack the necessary knowledge in the field of ecology; improve access to information, data, training, etc. Support for environmental impact assessments is also important, linking environmental movement representatives to experts and scientists in the field of ecology.

Systematically, it is also important to raise the level of environmental scientists, while at the same time emphasising the training of our own professional staff. The state spends many millions of funds to invite foreign scientists and pay them for their work as scientific project managers. It would be more appropriate to study the shortage of specialists, scientific personnel and educational pathways in the country, formalize agreements with foreign partners and send their young scientists (including through the Bolashak programme) to improve their scientific level and qualification skills.

The ideology should be aimed at building environmental awareness. It is fundamentally important to raise public responsibility through stricter measures, as well as through raising intellectual capacity. It is one thing when a person knows that one should not harm the environment, it is another thing when

he/she is responsible for it, and most importantly, when he/she is truly aware of the consequences of his/her actions. There is no punishment for everyone, so it is important to work on raising the intellectual awareness of the importance of environmental behaviour.

Recommendations to improve the relationship between government, business and civil society

It is necessary to create a single portal for communication with civil society and eco-activists on environmental issues. Break it down by directions of environmental problems. The portal would include all aspects, algorithms of step-by-step actions, information and news from all over Kazakhstan. Also on this portal it would be possible to register and hold all public hearings, events and meetings related to environmental topics, both online and offline.

It is essential that society, government and international bodies develop mechanisms that enable non-governmental organisations, and hence environmental movements, to become effective and responsible partners in devising a sustainable development path that prevents environmental destruction.

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