

**Committee:** Special Political & Decolonization Committee (GA4)

**Issue:** Combating the recent internal unrest in Kazakhstan

**Student Officer:** Sokratis-Konstantinos Dallas

**Position:** Co-Chair

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## PERSONAL INTRODUCTION

Dear delegates,

My name is Sokratis Dallas, I am an 11<sup>th</sup>-grade student at Ekpedefiki Anagennisi, and it is my great pleasure to serve as a co-chair of the Special Political & Decolonization Committee in the 6th conference of the American College of Greece Model United Nations (ACGMUN). 2023 will be my 3rd year in the MUN family and I can guarantee that it has been a delightful experience throughout. I had always been interested in the inner workings of politics and MUN has given me exactly that opportunity, to explore my interests as well as the real-life application of solutions to the world's most pressing issues. Apart from procedural matters, MUN is also a wonderful way to hone in on one's public speaking and collaborative skills, and most importantly to interact with people from all around the world. GA4 has always been one of my favorite committees and I hope after this conference to persuade you to enjoy it as much as I do, through fruitful debate.

This study guide will tackle the issue of "Combating the recent internal unrest in Kazakhstan". In the current climate of Russia's "Special Military Operation" in Ukraine, the widespread protests in traditionally Russian-aligned nations have gotten the attention of the global community. In Kazakhstan especially, the scale of protestors dissatisfied with the current government, widespread economic inequality and rapidly increasing gas prices escalated to the point where it garnered international coverage and intervention of foreign military personnel on behalf of the government. Even though the unrest might now be quelled, reforms are direly needed. As such, this study guide will aim at equipping you with general information about the protests and their causes, all parties involved, past actions directed at combatting or concerning the protests, and finally a guide on potential solutions to the unrest brewing in Kazakhstan.

With the information presented to you in the study guide as well as your own research regarding your delegation's policies, you will hopefully be able to produce creative and effective clauses to resolve the matter at hand. Should you have any questions concerning the study guide or the topic as a whole feel free to contact me via e-mail at [sokrates.dallas@gmail.com](mailto:sokrates.dallas@gmail.com).

Kind regards,

Sokratis-Konstantinos Dallas

## TOPIC INTRODUCTION

The 2022 Kazakhstan unrest, also referred to as “Bloody January” and “the January tragedy” by locals, was a series of mass protests which started in the city of Zhanaozen on the 2nd of January 2022 and spread throughout Kazakhstan in a matter of days, until they were subdued on January 11th.

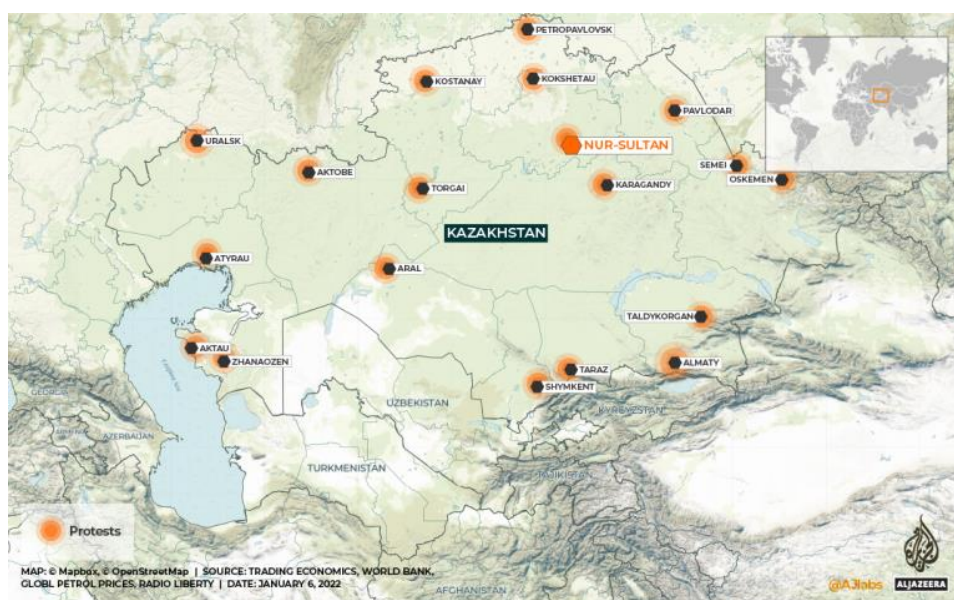


Figure 1: Map depicting the cities with protests during the 2022 Kazakh unrest<sup>1</sup>

The basis of the strikes was the government lifting the price cap of 60 tenge (0.14 USD) per liter on fuel.<sup>23</sup> In Zhanaozen, where the protests began peacefully, its citizens heavily rely on the oil production industries of the city, due to its proximity to the Caspian Sea. This inspired dissatisfied citizens in the rest of the country to rise up, for their own reasons, most notably in the nation’s former capital, Almaty. These protests quickly turned violent, as police forces were

<sup>1</sup> Duggal, Hanna, and Alia Chughtai. “Maps and Charts to Understand the Protests in Kazakhstan.” *Infographic News | Al Jazeera*, Al Jazeera, 8 Jan. 2022, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/1/7/maps-and-charts-to-understand-the-protests-in-kazakhstan>.

<sup>2</sup> Kumenov, Almaz, and Joanna Lillis. “Kazakhstan Explainer: Why Did Fuel Prices Spike, Bringing Protesters out onto the Streets?” *Eurasianet*, 4 Jan. 2022, <https://eurasianet.org/kazakhstan-explainer-why-did-fuel-prices-spike-bringing-protesters-out-onto-the-streets>.

<sup>3</sup> “Explainer: Why a Niche Fuel Market Reform Triggered Major Kazakh Protests.” Edited by Rosalba O'Brien, *Reuters*, Thomson Reuters, 5 Jan. 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/markets/commodities/why-niche-fuel-market-reform-triggered-major-kazakh-protests-2022-01-05/>.

told to suppress them, while the protestors targeted the government as well as President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev and his administration.<sup>4</sup> They primarily protested economic inequalities, such as rampant poverty, corruption, and nepotism,<sup>5</sup> some of the most devastating issues which have plagued the country ever since its independence from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).

From the 3rd of January, protestors gathered in the country's main squares and were cordoned off by police. However, the protests would not turn violent until the next day when 1000 Kazakhs marched into Republic Square and clashes between the protestors and police took place, with the latter using stun grenades and tear gas. Following these events, president Tokayev declared a state of emergency in the Mangystau region, in which Zhanaozen is located. The National Guard of Kazakhstan was also called in to pacify the protestors who captured the Republic Square and who attacked multiple locations linked to the government across Kazakhstan. On the same day, the Cabinet of Kazakhstan, under prime-minister Askar Mamim, resigned and Nazarbayev, who had declared his resignation from office in 2019, was finally removed as head of the Security Council of Kazakhstan.

The next day, the state of emergency was extended on a national level and president Tokayev formally requested the aid of the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) military forces to suppress the unrest.<sup>6</sup> As such, CSTO forces arrived under the pretext of a peacekeeping operation with the governments of Kazakhstan and Russia, claiming that they were instigated by foreign powers as a coup d'état. At the same time, the government conceded to reintroducing a 6-month cap on oil and gas prices at 50 tenge (0,11 USD), while also ordering lethal force against the protestors. Finally, on January 11<sup>th</sup> order was restored around Kazakhstan and Älihan Smaiyllov was appointed as the new prime minister. President Tokayev also announced his acknowledgment of the problems facing the nation and on the 16<sup>th</sup> of March, he proposed a political and economic reform program.

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<sup>4</sup> Bilefsky, Dan. "Revolt in Kazakhstan: What's Happening, and Why It Matters." *The New York Times*, The New York Times, 5 Jan. 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/05/world/asia/kazakhstan-protests.html>.

<sup>5</sup> Walker, Shaun. "Kazakhstan Unrest: What Are the Protests about?" *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 6 Jan. 2022, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jan/06/kazakhstan-unrest-what-are-the-protests-about>.

<sup>6</sup> Walker, Shaun, and Naubet Bisenov. "Kazakhstan Protests: Moscow-Led Alliance Sends 'Peacekeeping Forces'." *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 5 Jan. 2022, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jan/05/kazakhstan-protests-president-threatens-ruthless-crackdown>.



*Figure 2: A burned car is seen in front of the mayor's office building after it was torched<sup>7</sup>*

This is not the first, and probably not the last time large-scale protests erupt in Kazakhstan, although they are usually far more dispersed. If the Amanat party, which has been ruling Kazakhstan since 1991, refuses to address the growing concerns of the Kazakh people, who claim limited political rights and economic hardship, tensions will only increase. Promises have been made to the people and some reforms have been passed, including the removal of the unpopular old guard and the lowering of gas prices. However, the global economic crisis and Kazakhstan's current political instability as it seeks to distance itself from the repercussions of the Russo-Ukrainian conflict,<sup>8</sup> have only made the situation more complicated.

## DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

**Akim**

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<sup>7</sup> Mikheyev, Pavel. *A Burned Car Is Seen in Front of the Mayor's Office Building Which Was Torched during Protests Triggered by Fuel Price Increase in Almaty*. Almaty, Reuters 6 Jan. 2022.

<sup>8</sup> Umarov, Temur. "Kazakhstan Is Breaking out of Russia's Grip." *Foreign Policy*, 16 Sept. 2022, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/09/16/kazakhstan-russia-ukraine-war/>.

In Kazakhstan, an Akim is the head of an akimdik, a municipal, district, or provincial government, and serves as the presidential representative to that region. Akims of provinces and cities are appointed to the post by the president on the advice of the prime minister and are responsible for local governance until another akim is appointed by the president.

### **Amanat/Nur Otan<sup>9</sup>**

Amanat previously known as Nur Otan is the largest leading political party in Kazakhstan. The party is considered to be the main political force in the country, ruling since its inception in 1999. It was founded by Nursultan Nazarbayev, president of Kazakhstan from 1991 to 2019. Tokayev has now assumed leadership as chairman of the party and in 2022 was renamed Amanat. The ideology of the party is right-wing, conservative and more specifically its ideologies are nationalism, social conservatism, economic liberalism and secularism.

### **Colour Revolutions**

The Colour Revolutions were a series of anti-regime protests and unrests that occurred in the post-Yugoslav and post-Soviet countries in the early 2000's. The term was coined as of around 2004 and was designed to draw parallels between all the revolutions, as they all perpetuated democratic and liberal ideas and called for greater personal freedoms and liberties.<sup>10</sup>

### **Coup d'état<sup>11</sup>**

A Coup d'état, also called a coup, is the sudden, violent overthrow of an existing government by a small group. The chief prerequisite for a coup is control of all or part of the armed forces, the police, and other military elements.

### **Democratic Choice of Kazakhstan<sup>12</sup>**

The Democratic Choice of Kazakhstan (DCK) was the largest opposition movement in Kazakhstan of the past 25 years. DCK openly opposed the monopolization of power structures by Nursultan

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<sup>9</sup> "Chairman of the 'Nur Otan' Party." *Официальный Сайт Первого Президента Республики Казахстан - Елбасы Нурсултана Назарбаева*, OFFICIAL WEBSITE OF THE FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN, 21 Nov. 2022, <https://elbasy.kz/en/chairman-nur-otan-party>.

<sup>10</sup> Thien, Poh Phaik. "Explaining the Color Revolutions." *E-International Relations*, 29 Jan. 2013, <https://www.e-ir.info/2009/07/31/explaining-the-color-revolutions/>.

<sup>11</sup> "Coup D'état." Edited by Adam Augustyn, *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 5 Jan. 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/coup-detat>.

<sup>12</sup> Serwisu, Redakcja. "The Story of 'The Democratic Choice of Kazakhstan' Opposition Movement." *Open Dialogue Foundation*, Open Dialogue, 16 Nov. 2021, <https://en.odfoundation.eu/a/7250,the-story-of-the-democratic-choice-of-kazakhstan-opposition-movement/>.



Nazarbayev and his inner circle. As opponents publicly protested against the policies of Nazarbayev's clan, they were heavily targeted by governmental forces and forced to go into exile.

### **Monopoly**

the complete control of trade in particular goods or of the supply of a particular service; a type of goods or a service that is controlled in this way

### **Nepotism<sup>13</sup>**

The act of using your power or influence to get good jobs or unfair advantages for members of your own family.

### **Security Council of Kazakhstan<sup>14</sup>**

The Security Council of the Republic of Kazakhstan is a consultative deliberative body that is formed by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan according to the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan (subparagraph 20, article 44)<sup>15</sup> and elaborates decisions and assists in the implementation of the authorities of the Head of State in the area of ensuring defensive capacity and national security, protecting the national sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of the state, maintaining social political stability in the country, guarantying constitutional rights, and freedoms of citizens.

### **State of Emergency<sup>16</sup>**

A state of emergency derives from a governmental declaration made in response to an extraordinary situation posing a fundamental threat to the country. The declaration may suspend certain normal functions of government, may alert citizens to alter their normal behavior, or may authorize government agencies to implement emergency preparedness plans as well as to limit or suspend civil liberties and human rights.

### **Unitary State<sup>17</sup>**

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<sup>13</sup> "Nepotism." *Cambridge Dictionary*, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/nepotism>.

<sup>14</sup> "Security Council - Official Website of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan." *Akorda.kz*, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, [https://www.akorda.kz/en/executive\\_office/presidential\\_councils/security-council](https://www.akorda.kz/en/executive_office/presidential_councils/security-council).

<sup>15</sup> "Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan." *Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan - "Adilet" LIS*, Republic of Kazakhstan, <https://adilet.zan.kz/eng/docs/K950001000>.

<sup>16</sup> DCAF. "States of Emergency." *Eth Z*, Backgrounder, Security Sector Governance and Reform, [https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/14131/backgrounder\\_02\\_states\\_emergency.pdf](https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/14131/backgrounder_02_states_emergency.pdf).

<sup>17</sup> "Unitary State." Edited by Brian Duignan, *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., <https://www.britannica.com/topic/unitary-state>.

Unitary state is a system of political organization in which most or all of the governing power resides in the centralized government of a nation.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### Post-USSR collapse Kazakhstan and its creation

By the mid19<sup>th</sup> century, the entirety of Kazakhstan was brought under Russian rule and for the next two centuries Russia would continue to rule over the peoples of Central Asia. However, after the collapse of the USSR in 1991, all the Soviet Republics were now able to manage and determine the future of their own nations. Kazakhstan was the last sovereign nation to declare independence from the USSR, doing so only on the 16<sup>th</sup> of December 1991. Its independence was so delayed due to security concerns, as political unrests calling for separation from the USSR by nationalists had been prevalent since the unpopular rule of Gennady Golbin in 1986. Additionally, Nursultan Nazarbayev had recently been appointed as General Secretary of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan and wanted to maintain his position.



Figure 3: Independent Nations following the collapse of the USSR<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Dallas, Sokratis Konstantinos. *MBAM Post-Soviet States*. Soviet Union, 29 Jan. 2023.

Independence greatly favored the leader of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, as most of the country's economy and means of production fell into his hands, following the outlaw of the old Communist Party of Kazakhstan. During the unstable years of collapse, Kazakhstan was one of the first nations to declare a president, Nazarbayev, who won the 1991 elections uncontested. At the same time, he closed deals with economists and foreign experts to exploit the nations' natural wealth. For 29 years Kazakhstan was run in a stable fashion, with Nazarbayev in power with little to no opposition. During these three decades, he continued to amass the country's massive natural wealth for himself and his family, as well as passing laws and constitutions meant to further his rule of the nation.

In 1993, a new Kazakh constitution was adopted, leaving the status of its democracy as a parliamentary or presidential republic. Later, the 1995 revision of the constitution classified Kazakhstan as a presidential constitution and made the President, the head of state, responsible for the council of ministers.<sup>19</sup> He was also appointed head of the Security Council of Kazakhstan<sup>20</sup> and the official title of: "Leader of the Nation", both of which he would retain until the 2022 strikes. The constitutions of 1993 and 1995 were also significant as in they declared Kazakhstan a unitary state<sup>21</sup>, undermining regional and local governments, also known as "Akimdiqs", and restricted the operation of opposing political parties within Kazakhstan. These proposals as well as Nazarbayev were originally welcomed with open arms, due to his providing stable economic footing, even after the fall of the USSR, and easing ethnic tensions, by declaring Kazakhstan a secular state and Russian as an official language of interethnic communications.<sup>22</sup>

### Russian influence

As previously mentioned, Kazakhstan was under Russian control for approximately two and a half decades. As a result, many Russian citizens moved to Kazakhstan, especially its Northern provinces, which now host a large minority of Russian and Orthodox populations amounting to roughly 26% of the population. Relations however tilt. Nevertheless, that has not stopped Russia from claiming these regions as its own.<sup>23</sup> During the Soviet era, after an extensive internal immigration campaign towards the East, so many Russians settled in the region that in 1970, Kazakhstan became a minority Kazakh state. Most of these populations are also friendly

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<sup>19</sup> "Kazakhstan 1995 (Rev. 2017) Constitution, Article 44." *Constitute*, Kazakhstan, [https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Kazakhstan\\_2017?lang=en](https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Kazakhstan_2017?lang=en).

<sup>20</sup> "Kazakhstan 1995 (Rev. 2017) Constitution, Article 44 subparagraph 20." *Constitute*, Kazakhstan, [https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Kazakhstan\\_2017?lang=en](https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Kazakhstan_2017?lang=en).

<sup>21</sup> "Kazakhstan." *Kazakhstan - Constitution of 30 August 1995.*, International Labour Organisation (ILO), [https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex4.detail?p\\_lang=en&p\\_isn=44019](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex4.detail?p_lang=en&p_isn=44019).

<sup>22</sup> "The Constitution - Official Website of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan." *Akorda.kz*, Official Website of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, [https://www.akorda.kz/en/official\\_documents/constitution](https://www.akorda.kz/en/official_documents/constitution).

<sup>23</sup> Rothman, Noah. "Putin: You're next, Kazakhstan." *Hotair.com*, HotAir, 29 Aug. 2014, <https://hotair.com/noah-rothman/2014/08/29/putin-youre-next-kazakhstan-n192343>.



towards Moscow and do not agree with the “westernization” efforts of the Kazakh government and the resurgence of a strong Kazakh identity.

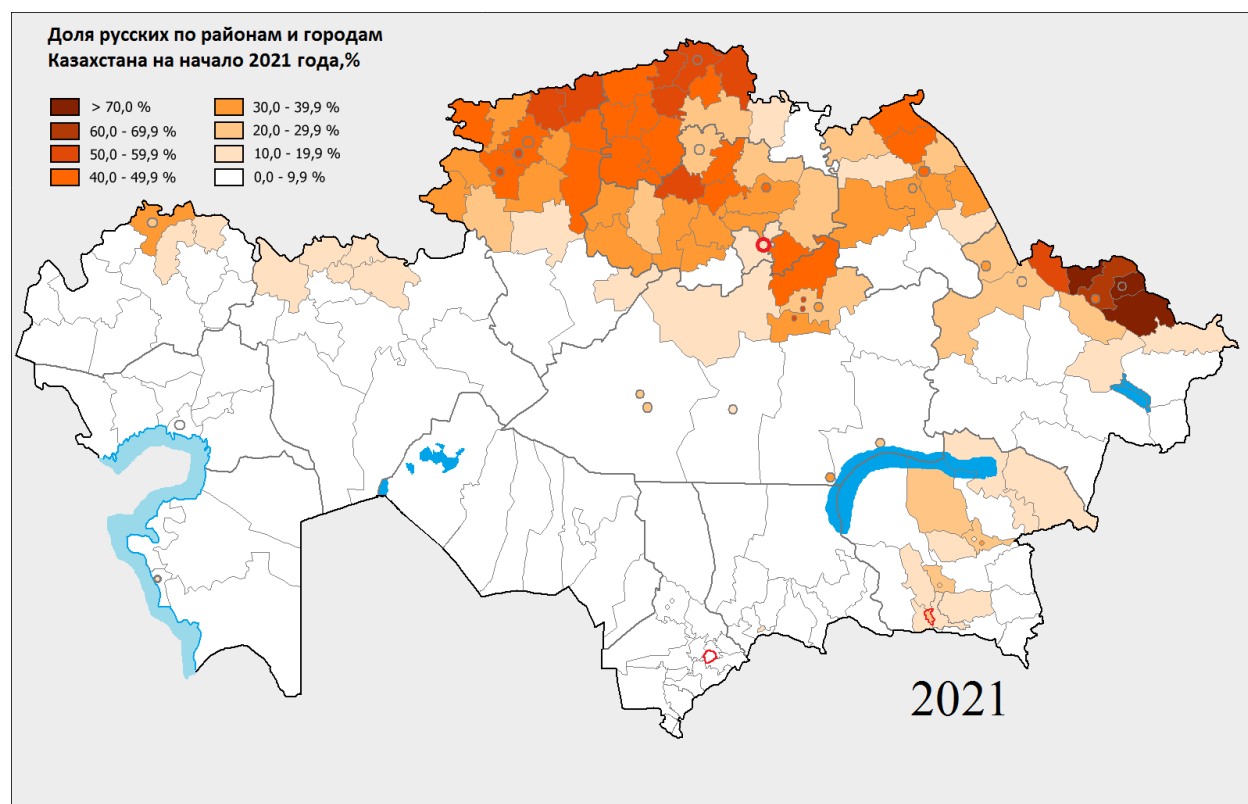


Figure 4: The share of Russians by districts and cities of regional and republican subordination Kazakhstan in 2021<sup>24</sup>

Russia is heavily invested in Kazakhstan due to its heavy economic and political interests within the nation and the greater region of Central Asia itself. This is why, the Russian Federation<sup>25</sup>, as well as other CSTO member-states, were so eager to deploy peacekeeping forces to Kazakhstan during the January 2022 revolts to counter protestors, claiming they were backed by the west and wanted to forcefully remove the government under a coup d'état. In addition, Kazakhstan serves as a road between Central Asia and Russia for the export of natural gas, as well as joint military exercises, securing stability in Central Asian states.

Especially under former president Nazarbayev, relations between the two were guaranteed. However, Tokayev, Kazakhstan's current President, has made increasing agreements

<sup>24</sup> Sibom. *The Share Russians by Districts and Cities of Regional and Republican Subordination Kazakhstan in 2021*. Kazakhstan.

<sup>25</sup> Sabin, Lamiat, and Rory Sullivan. "Russian Troops Arrive in Kazakhstan to Quell Unrest as Police Say Officer Beheaded." *The Independent*, Independent Digital News and Media, 6 Jan. 2022, <https://www.independent.co.uk/asia/central-asia/kazakhstan-protests-oil-russia-troops-ctso-b1987634.html>.

with the west and tried to cut ties with Russia, following the invasion of Ukraine, pursuing the nation's much-needed reforms.<sup>26</sup>

### **The Zhanaozen Strike (2011)**

With the political situation barely any different than 20 years ago, the low wages and working conditions present in the Ozen oilfield of Zhanaozen, a strike culminated around Kazakhstan's Independence Day, on the 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> of December 2011. As such, the around 1000 workers fired for protesting these conditions took to the streets and quickly started demanding reforms. Their actions were quickly condemned and deemed illegal by national forces, however, workers continued protesting their situation. The two clashed in the city square which resulted in a total of 10 civilian deaths.<sup>27</sup> However, that number has been disputed by opposition parties. The Kazakh government justified its actions by claiming that "hooligans" had infiltrated the protest.

As a response to the oppression of the protest, tensions were heightened in many other neighboring towns, such as Kalamkas and Karazhanbas. Many protestors were imprisoned by police forces; however, they were soon released. After the incidents calmed down, an investigation was held into those who ordered and perpetrated the attack on civilians, as well as the directors of local oil companies, leading to the dismissal of a multitude of government or police officials, even Nazarbayev's son-in-law.

On retrospect, the situation in 2011 was not dealt with correctly, as 11 years later protests would again erupt in Zhanaozen for similar political and economic reasons.

### **The 2022 Kazakh Unrest**

From the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup> of January, Kazakhstan would see its most widespread and violent protests since its independence, nicknamed by Kazakhs as "Bloody January". Originally starting due to the strikes of the workers in the oil rigs asking for better wages and living conditions, the situation quickly spread across the nation, demanding that the government address the pressing concerns of its people to improve their economic standing, tackle corruption and fight against the old families controlling Kazakhstan and its wealth since the declaration of independence in 1991. The Kazakh government was overwhelmed by the brute force of the protestors, and with no other choice left, President Tokayev ordered security be restored by all means necessary, even

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<sup>26</sup> Brzozowski, Alexandra. "After Year of Turmoil, Kazakhstan Looks for Reform to Translate into Closer Western Ties." [Www.euractiv.com](https://www.euractiv.com/section/central-asia/news/after-year-of-turmoil-kazakhstan-looks-for-reform-to-translate-into-closer-western-ties/), EURACTIV, 13 Jan. 2023, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/central-asia/news/after-year-of-turmoil-kazakhstan-looks-for-reform-to-translate-into-closer-western-ties/>.

<sup>27</sup> "Kazakh Oil Strike: 10 Dead in Zhanaozen Clashes." *BBC News*, BBC, 16 Dec. 2011, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-16221566>.

lethal force, calling upon fellow CSTO and Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) members to help stabilize the situation. Ultimately, government buildings were destroyed, dozens of businesses and houses were torched and thousands of protestors were detained. Though no official death toll was released, some sources estimate figures of around 227 deaths.<sup>28</sup>

Because of the immense impact and size of the unrest, the government was forced to tackle and address the longstanding issues Kazakhs have faced. During the 10-day protests alone, the government was forced to concede to many terms that would have most likely never been implemented otherwise, paving the way to greater rights and reforms for the people of Kazakhstan.

### Impact of the Unrest

In an attempt to calm the public, many actions were taken during and as a direct result of the unrest, which aligned with resolving the protestor's demands. First of all, fuel caps were reintroduced, for a six-month period, to such an extent that fuel prices were lower than when the protests originally started. Moreover, former president Nursultan Nazarbayev had his position in the Security Council of Kazakhstan as well as his immunity withdrawn. Furthermore, a few months later, Tokayev cracked down on the Nazarbayev family wealth, specifically on Bolat, Nursultan's brother, by nationalizing some of his companies, shutting down his bitcoin mining operations as well as ordered investigations into Altyn Orda, a hub.<sup>29</sup> The protests also enabled large government and party restructuring. The Kazakh cabinet, under Askar Mamim, was replaced with Älihan Smaiyllov who was appointed on his technocratic merit and his assistance in the future.<sup>30</sup> After the protests ended, Defense Minister, Murat Bektanov was also relieved of his position and later arrested for showing inactivity.<sup>31+32</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Rfe/rl. "Russia-Led Military Alliance Completes Withdrawal from Kazakhstan." *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*, Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty, 19 Jan. 2022, <https://www.rferl.org/a/kazakhstan-csto-troops-withdrawal-security/31661294.html>.

<sup>29</sup> Lillis, Joanna. "Kazakhstan: Nazarbayev Family Losing Its Grip on Economy." *Eurasianet*, 4 Oct. 2022, <https://eurasianet.org/kazakhstan-nazarbayev-family-losing-its-grip-on-economy>.

<sup>30</sup> Rfe/rl. "Russia-Led Military Alliance Completes Withdrawal from Kazakhstan." *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*, Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty, 19 Jan. 2022, <https://www.rferl.org/a/kazakhstan-csto-troops-withdrawal-security/31661294.html>.

<sup>32</sup> Al Jazeera. "Kazakhstan Detains Ex-Defence Minister for Inaction during Unrest." *News | Al Jazeera*, Al Jazeera, 21 Feb. 2022, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/2/21/kazakhstan-detains-ex-defence-minister-for-inaction-during-unrest>.

After the tensions settled and the country returned to order and stability, President Tokayev delivered speeches in parliament and addressed the nation to present new reform programs for Kazakhstan aiming at economic development and political restructuring. He reinforced the idea of the Kazakhstan 2050 strategy, aiming to systematically improve the sustainable development of Kazakhstan. In June of 2022, a constitutional referendum was held, supported by every parliamentary party, which aimed at removing certain powers from the President, granting them to the parliament, and completely removing Nursultan Nazarbayev from the constitution and political governance. It also called for one 7-year term, which Tokayev won in the November snap elections.<sup>33</sup> Another popular amendment made to the constitution was that regional elections would now be organized and overlooked by local executive bodies, instead of the central government.

The programs also wish to tackle poverty and diversify Kazakhstan's economy. After the 2008 stock market crash, Kazakhstan was hit particularly hard due to its sole reliance on oil and natural gas productions, which is why Tokayev is pushing for the diversification of the Kazakh economy, especially in expanding the sectors of agriculture and manufacturing.<sup>34</sup>

### Situation in Kazakhstan

Although Kazakhstan is making great strides to reform and reshape the nation, it still has a long way to go. The problems of authoritarianism, poverty, corruption, and more have plagued Kazakhstan for the past 20 years, so combatting them successfully is understandably an overly complicated undertaking.

Under the Nazarbayev regime and until the constitutional reform of September, Kazakhstan was a presidential republic. However, restrictions on opposition parties and greater presidential powers meant that the President ruled almost uncontested, or as Tokayev commented, "a Super-Presidential Republic".<sup>35</sup> Even after the constitutional reforms, which granted more rights to congress, Tokayev still has sole uncontested rule as he immediately called

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<sup>33</sup> Blackwood, Maria. "Political Reforms in Kazakhstan - Csrreports.congress.gov." *Congressional Research Service*, 22 Nov. 2022, <https://csrreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IN/IN12030>.

<sup>34</sup> Cornell, Svante, et al. "Political and Economic Reforms in Kazakhstan under President Tokayev." *Silkroadstudies*, <https://silkroadstudies.org/resources/211201Kaz-Reforms.pdf>.

<sup>35</sup> Akhmetkali, Aibarshyn. "President Tokayev Calls for Moving from 'Super-Presidential' Model to 'Presidential Republic with a Strong Parliament' in Address to the Nation." *The Astana Times*, 16 Mar. 2022, <https://astanatimes.com/2022/03/president-tokayev-calls-for-moving-from-super-presidential-model-to-presidential-republic-with-a-strong-parliament-in-address-to-the-nation/>.

for snap elections, winning him another 7 years in office.<sup>36</sup> Additionally, even if the regime itself has changed, press freedom, freedom of expression, the human rights situation, and restrictions on opposing political parties continue to be significant issues and have yet to be addressed adequately to create a proper free democracy.

An additional problem facing Kazakhstan is the monopolization of the markets and general poverty as well as economic inequality. President Tokayev announced the possibility of new anti-trust laws and regulations, claiming that private companies substituting the economic functions of the state are ineffective, have high prices, and provide low-quality services and work environments. As such an estimated 50 of Kazakhstan's private companies would be nationalized since the closed circles around the exploitation of certain resources and fields must be opened up to competition.<sup>37</sup> To further this goal, a new governmental body was created, the so-called "Agency for Protection and Development of Competition of the Republic of Kazakhstan", which directly operates under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan.<sup>38</sup> This could be seen as an attack on the free market, but it is important to remember that most managers of Kazakhstan's most important industries got their positions through connections and favoritism by the government and former president Nursultan Nazarbayev.

Furthermore, corruption and nepotism were two of the main factors driving protestors during the January unrests, problems Kazakhstan has been attempting to solve since 2015 with little success. In 2015, new anti-corruption laws were introduced which managed to alleviate corruption for a short while but ultimately failed to make a difference. Although bribery-related arrests have risen by 33%,<sup>39</sup> deep-rooted corruption will not be resolved until policies become more responsive to the situation at hand and more transparency is introduced on the financials of the government and its bodies.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Al Jazeera. "Kazakhstan Leader Seeks Snap Presidential Vote with 7-Year Term." *Elections News | Al Jazeera*, Al Jazeera, 1 Sept. 2022, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/9/1/kazakhstan-leader-seeks-snap-presidential-vote-with-7-year-term>.

<sup>37</sup> Ocipova, Irina. "Private Monopolies to Be out of Law in Kazakhstan." *Kursiv Media Kazakhstan*, Kursiv Media Kazakhstan, 11 Feb. 2022, <https://kz.kursiv.media/en/2022-02-11/private-monopolies-to-be-out-of-law-in-kazakhstan/>.

<sup>38</sup> "General Information of The Agency for Protection and Development of Competition of the Republic of Kazakhstan." *Gov.kz*, The Agency for Protection and Development of Competition of the Republic of Kazakhstan, <https://www.gov.kz/memleket/entities/zk/about?lang=en>.

<sup>39</sup> Lillis, Joanna. "Bribery Is Booming in Kazakhstan amid Anti-Corruption Drive." *Eurasianet*, 21 July 2022, <https://eurasianet.org/bribery-is-booming-in-kazakhstan-amid-anti-corruption-drive>.

<sup>40</sup> Council of Europe. "Kazakhstan: Corruption Is a Serious Concern, More Transparency and Independence Needed - Portal - Publi.coe.int." *Portal*, Council of Europe, 23 Nov. 2022,



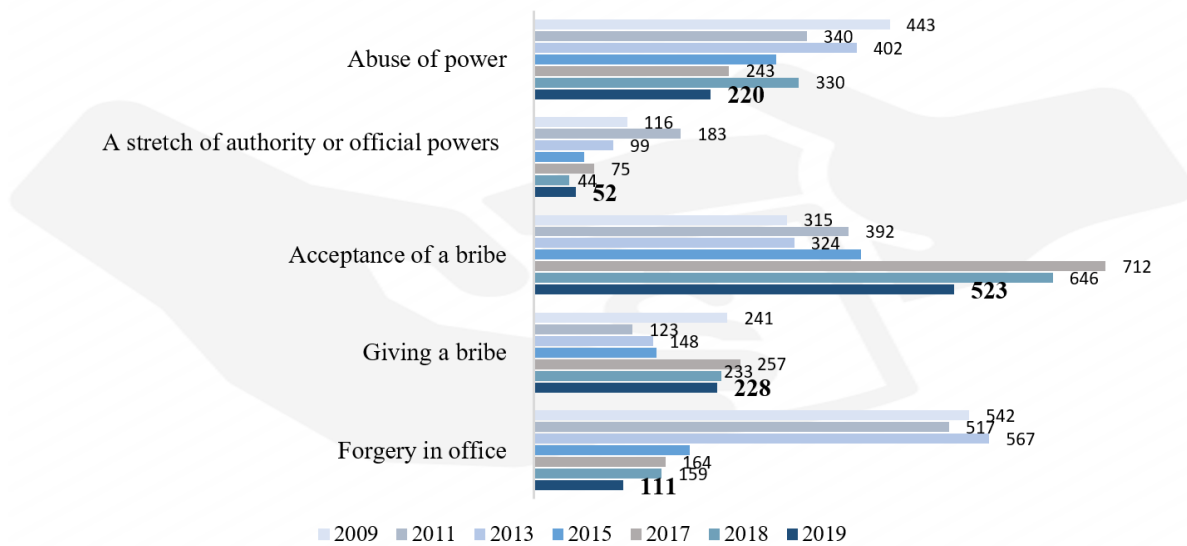


Figure 5: The most common types of corruption in Kazakhstan for 2009-2019<sup>41</sup>

Kazakhstan's economy is heavily based on its natural resources, especially oil drilling and natural gas extraction. For six months after the strikes, oil prices dropped, but now Kazakhstanis have to pay almost double the amount, with oil prices reaching a staggering 210 tenges (0,45 USD) a liter<sup>42</sup> and still rising. More than 80% of Kazakhstan's extracted oil gets exported, mostly through American companies, such as Chevron or Exxon Mobile, which only increases domestic prices. So, Kazakhstan is facing a dilemma; either satisfy the people's demands and lose out on the huge source of income that are foreign multinationals or vice versa. Another interesting aspect of this is that Russia is wishing to fill in the fuel gap in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan by proposing a technical alliance, a gas union between the three.<sup>43</sup> This would create a new mechanism for coordination between the nations and give Russia access to new markets in Central Asia.

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/-/kazakhstan-corruption-is-a-serious-concern-more-transparency-and-independence-needed>.

<sup>41</sup> Mukashev, Askar. *The Most Common Types of Corruption in Kazakhstan for 2009-2019*. Kazakhstan, 28 May 2020.

<sup>42</sup> "Kazakhstan Gasoline Prices, 23-Jan-2023." *GlobalPetrolPrices.com*, [https://www.globalpetrolprices.com/Kazakhstan/gasoline\\_prices/](https://www.globalpetrolprices.com/Kazakhstan/gasoline_prices/).

<sup>43</sup> Rfe/rl. "Putin Proposes Creation of 'Natural Gas Union' with Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan." *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*, Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty, 29 Nov. 2022, <https://www.rferl.org/a/russia-kazakhstan-uzbekistan-gas-union-putin/32153946.html>.

Even though Kazakhstan has traditionally been thought of as allied to the “East” and especially to Russia, recent decisions made by the government of Kazakhstan seem to suggest a shift towards neutrality, even maybe in favor of the West. Kazakhstan, now more than ever, is attempting to embrace its own nationality and identity, disconnected from Russian influences. The armed conflict between Ukraine and Russia has given a perfect opportunity for Kazakhstan to distance itself from the Russian government. In fact, Tokayev seems to be going against Russia, now that Russian attention is diverted elsewhere. However, Kazakhstan is in no shape to cut itself off from Russia. Most of its imports for domestic needs and natural gas are supplied from Russia, holding Kazakhstan in a necessary alliance with Moscow.

## MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED

### Russian Federation

On the 6<sup>th</sup> of January 2022 CSTO peacekeeping forces led by the Russian Federation entered Kazakhstan to forcefully end the unrest. Russia seemed very keen to keep Kazakhstan by its side. Russia has played a key role in helping with financial and political security matters. Ever since the independence of Kazakhstan under Nazarbayev in 1991, the two countries have been heavily interconnected. Additionally, both countries are leading members of the CSTO, Commonwealth of Independent States, the Eurasian Economic Union, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation. The Kazakh economy, in a similar fashion to that of Russia is heavily reliant on its natural resources, which is why their economies have been generally intertwined. During times of crisis, they both come to each other's aid. For example, Russia has systematically helped Kazakhstan quell protests and maintain stability and Kazakhstan is now indirectly helping Russia, by buying government bonds and housing Russian bankers. Furthermore, both accused the West of inciting the protests and condemned the actions of the protesters as mere puppets of the West acting to overthrow the current legal government under the guise of a “color” revolution.<sup>4445</sup>

### United States of America

In the past years, the United States of America (USA) have become an increasingly enticing partner for Kazakhstan, especially economically. In the year 2021 alone, trade amounted to about 2,5 billion USD between the two nations. American investors have always been interested in investing in the rich oil and gas market of Kazakhstan, which was available to them

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<sup>45</sup> Seddon, Max. “Vladimir Putin Vows to Stop 'Colour Revolutions' after Sending Troops to Kazakhstan.” *Subscribe to Read | Financial Times*, Financial Times, 10 Jan. 2022, <https://www.ft.com/content/ee9005ee-7269-4081-801a-61011b233e78>.

after the collapse of the USSR. The USA does however express its concerns about corruption and arbitrary law enforcement when it comes to relations with Kazakhstan but is actively trying to ameliorate the situation by helping improve democratic change, stability, and economic development.<sup>46</sup> Additionally, the USA has applauded Kazakhstan's negative attitude towards nuclear weapons while it condemned Kazakhstan's request for military and peacekeeping assistance from the SCO and CSTO.

### Republic of Uzbekistan

Although Uzbekistan is just south of Kazakhstan, its position on how the unrests were handled as well as its relationship with Russia are considerably different. When nation-wide protests sparked in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan offered to fly out any of its citizens living there. Moreover, it was alarmed by the events and the violence that took place and stated it was monitoring the situation and security threats closely. The ministry of foreign affairs also made it clear that it stood against the intervention of CSTO troops in Kazakhstan and called for inward-looking military action that is fully focused on domestic security, essentially that the Kazakh military should handle the situation on its own and not involve foreign peacekeeping forces. The President stated Uzbekistan is vigilant about the security situation in the region and always prepared to respond to threats similar to those unraveling in Kazakhstan<sup>47</sup>. Apart from that, Uzbekistan has always considered itself a regional power in Central Asia, as it controls the fertile Fergana Valley and is determined to secure its interests, which is why multiple conflicts with CSTO nations, such as Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan have arisen.

### Collective Security Treaty Organisation

The Collective Security Treaty Organization is composed of six members Russia, Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. It is an interparliamentary assembly originating from the Collective Security Treaty signed in Tashkent in 1992. Its aim was to take coordinated measures in the interests of the collective security provision of member-states.<sup>48</sup> Through the CSTO, Russian military bases have been established for members, who can also buy Russian arms at domestic prices. As underlined previously, the CSTO played a very crucial role in reestablishing order in Kazakhstan. They were ordered to suppress the protests, with president Tokayev even ordering them to use lethal force against the protesters, which in the midst of chaos caused multiple injuries and even deaths. The peacekeeping forces deployed

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<sup>46</sup> "U.S. Policy in Central Asia: Balancing Priorities." *U.S. Policy in Central Asia: Balancing Priorities (Part II)*, U.S. Government, [http://commdocs.house.gov/committees/intlrel/hfa27230.000/hfa27230\\_0f.htm](http://commdocs.house.gov/committees/intlrel/hfa27230.000/hfa27230_0f.htm).

<sup>47</sup> Hashimova, Umida. "Uzbekistan Reacts to the Crisis in Kazakhstan." *The Diplomat*, For The Diplomat, 21 Jan. 2022, <https://thediplomat.com/2022/01/uzbekistan-reacts-to-the-crisis-in-kazakhstan/>.

<sup>48</sup> "From the Treaty to the Organisation." *Collective Security Treaty Organisation*, Republic of Kazakhstan, <https://en.odkb-csto.org/25years/>.

there were a coordinated multinational force, made up mostly of Russian and Armenian troops. This highlighted the effectiveness and swiftness of the CSTO to crush unrests as well as the interconnected nature of the member states.

## European Union

The European Union (EU) although far away from the region was one of the first to criticize the violence displayed in Kazakhstan. The issue was also debated in the European Parliament to decide what their next step needed to be. The European Union and the majority of its member states issued statements condemning the use of force and calling for reforms in Kazakhstan,<sup>49</sup> with some exceptions, including Hungary, which stated that it stood in solidarity with president Tokayev and his regime. Furthermore, a resolution was presented to the European Parliament and a multitude of texts were adopted to respond to the crisis in Kazakhstan. The measures urged Kazakhstan to comply with international treaties and stipulations by stopping acts of violence and brought forth the restriction of EU funds to Kazakhstan until the Kazakh government makes tangible changes to improve the situation of human rights within its borders as well as an investigation of human rights abuses during the unrests and peacekeeping operations.<sup>50</sup> After the meeting of the European Union-Kazakhstan Cooperation Council on June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022, the two sides agreed to sign the EU-Kazakhstan Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (EPCA)<sup>51</sup> to further strengthen bilateral relations.

## Shanghai Cooperation Organisation

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is an intergovernmental organization comprised of eight member-states (China, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Pakistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan). The main goal of the organization, since its establishment in 2001, has been maintaining peace and security. This could mean countering terrorist groups, ethnic separatism, and/or religious extremism. Especially China took a keen interest in the matter, with the foreign ministry stating: *“As its neighbor and permanent comprehensive strategic partner China is willing to offer all necessary support to Kazakhstan to help it overcome recent*

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<sup>49</sup> “EU Condemns Widespread Violence in Kazakhstan.” *Trtworld*, TRT World, <https://www.trtworld.com/asia/eu-condemns-widespread-violence-in-kazakhstan-53450>.

<sup>50</sup> “S&DS Join the Call for International Investigation and Sanctions Following Unrest in Kazakhstan.” *Socialists & Democrats*, S&D, 20 Jan. 2022, <https://www.socialistsanddemocrats.eu/newsroom/sds-join-call-international-investigation-and-sanctions-following-unrest-kazakhstan>.

<sup>51</sup> “EU-Kazakhstan Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement.” *EEAS*, [https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/eeas-factsheet\\_eu-kz\\_epca\\_entry\\_into\\_force\\_v.2.0\\_hr\\_fin\\_0.pdf](https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/eeas-factsheet_eu-kz_epca_entry_into_force_v.2.0_hr_fin_0.pdf).

*difficulties*”<sup>52</sup>. This materialized soon after the unrest began, with the SCO office stationed in Kazakhstan stating their intention to help stabilize the region.

## BLOCS EXPECTED

### Bloc 1

Members of the CSTO and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (such as Russia, Armenia, China, etc.) are likely to support the current Kazakh government. Even if the Kazakh government has promised reforms, Tokayev still has shown no intention of putting his position in danger and it is in the interest of countries as previously mentioned to maintain their stable interests and influence in Kazakhstan.

### Bloc 2

Other countries closer to the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and European Union (EU) that have criticized the events, police reaction, and authoritarianism in Kazakhstan are more likely to push for greater reform and are in favor of a more liberal democracy, unlike the current government. Moreover, they oppose excess Russian influence in the region.

## TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Date	Description of event
16 <sup>th</sup> December 1991	Kazakhstan declares independence and Nursultan Nazarbayev is elected as the first president of the Republic of Kazakhstan
28 <sup>th</sup> January 1993	Adoption of the 1993 Kazakh constitution
30 <sup>th</sup> August 1995	A referendum is held, and the amended 1993 constitution is adopted
1 <sup>st</sup> March 1999	Foundation of the Nur Otan Party under Nazarbayev
18 <sup>th</sup> November 2001	Establishment of the Democratic Choice of Kazakhstan
16 <sup>th</sup> December 2011	The Zhanaozen Strike begins

<sup>52</sup> ul Khaliq, Riyaz. “Shanghai Cooperation Organization Ready to Help Stabilize Kazakhstan Situation'.” *Anadolu Ajansı*, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/shanghai-cooperation-organization-ready-to-help-stabilize-kazakhstan-situation/2467998>.



20 <sup>th</sup> March 2019	Resignation of former president Nursultan Nazarbayev and Kassym Tokayev assumes power
2 <sup>nd</sup> January 2022	Strikes for lower fuel prices begin in Zhanaozen
4 <sup>th</sup> January 2022	Strikes begin in Almaty and a state of emergency is declared in the Mangystau district
5 <sup>th</sup> January 2022	Kazakh cabinet resigns, government buildings are seized by protestors, national state of emergency is proclaimed
6 <sup>th</sup> January 2022	CSTO peacekeeping forces arrive in Kazakhstan
7 <sup>th</sup> January 2022	A fuel price cap is reintroduced at 50 tenges
11 <sup>th</sup> January 2022	End of protests
1 <sup>st</sup> March 2022	Nur Otan is renamed to Amanat
16 <sup>th</sup> March 2022	A state-of-the-nation address that outlined a program of economic and political reforms
5 <sup>th</sup> June 2022	A constitutional referendum is held
16 <sup>th</sup> September 2022	Parliament adopts constitutional amendments

## RELEVANT UN RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES AND EVENTS

### Report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association in Kazakhstan<sup>53</sup> and General Assembly Resolution 25/38<sup>54</sup>

The Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association carried out an official visit to Kazakhstan in January 2015 to assess the situation of freedom of peaceful assembly and of association in the country and contained a list of good practices and remaining challenges regarding rights to freedom of association with political parties, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), religious groups and trade union, as well as the freedom to peaceful assembly. Resolution 25/38 of the General Assembly discusses the issue of the freedom

<sup>53</sup> "Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association, Maina Kiai :"  
*United Nations*, United Nations, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/797642?ln=en>.

<sup>54</sup> "United Nations /HRC/RES/25/38 General Assembly - Office of the United ..."  
*OHCHR*, <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Executions/A-HRC-RES-25-38.pdf>.

of peaceful assembly as well and as an extension the right to peaceful protest, outlining the same aspects as the report.

#### **United Nations Sustainable Development Group Country Team in Kazakhstan<sup>55</sup>**

The United Nations Country Team in Kazakhstan is a subgroup of the United Nations Office in Kazakhstan, and its goal is the promotion of the 2016-2030 global sustainable development goals within Kazakhstan. As such the team manages the allocation of the funds towards furthering the SDGs where the most help is needed, which as of 2022 was the alleviation of poverty, which received upwards of 18% of the total funding (6.6 million USD). The organization generally works towards economic and social development and health, especially of the most vulnerable, environmental protection and disaster relief, the promotion of good governance and human rights, gender equality, and the advancement of women.

#### **Centre for Emergency Situation and Disaster Risk Reduction<sup>56</sup>**

The Centre for Emergency Situations and Disaster Risk Reduction is an intergovernmental organization, based in Kazakhstan, established to ensure effective mechanisms to decrease the risk of emergencies, mitigate the consequences, organize a joint response through agreed measures of the Parties, and stimulate regional and international cooperation. The organization was established on the 14<sup>th</sup> of September 2016 and has involved itself in providing its services, such as emergency systems and response plans to emergency situations, so as to best react to national emergencies. Some of the Agency's most recent humanitarian efforts include the creation of territorial and population protection plans<sup>57</sup> and the implementation of international law<sup>58</sup> in emergency situations.

### **PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SOLVE THE ISSUE**

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<sup>55</sup> "Sustainable Development Goals in Kazakhstan." *United Nations*, United Nations, <https://kazakhstan.un.org/en/sdgs>.

<sup>56</sup> "Center for Emergency Situations and Disaster Risk Reduction." *ReliefWeb*, <https://reliefweb.int/organization/cesdrr#updates>.

<sup>57</sup> "The Plan for Comprehensive Protection of Population and Territories of the Kyrgyz Republic from Emergency Situations for 2023-2026, Developed by the CESDRR Experts, Is Approved - Kyrgyzstan." *ReliefWeb*, 20 Jan. 2023, <https://reliefweb.int/report/kyrgyzstan/plan-comprehensive-protection-population-and-territories-kyrgyz-republic-emergency-situations-2023-2026-developed-cesdrr-experts-approved>.

<sup>58</sup> "The Center Cooperates with the Red Crescent of Kazakhstan in the Field of International Law in Emergency Situations - Kazakhstan." *ReliefWeb*, 5 Dec. 2022, <https://reliefweb.int/report/kazakhstan/center-cooperates-red-crescent-kazakhstan-field-international-law-emergency-situations>.

### **Kazakhstan 2050 Strategy: A new Political Direction for Existing Governance<sup>59</sup>**

The Kazakhstan 2050 Strategy is an economic plan, directed by former president Nursultan Nazarbayev to create a society based on a strong state and developed economy with universal labor opportunities through new markets, and to develop and modernize the private and public sectors of Kazakhstan, all under the leadership of a strong state.

### **European Parliament resolution on the situation in Kazakhstan 2022/2505 (RSP) P9\_TA (2022) 0012<sup>60</sup>**

The European Parliament Resolution passed on the situation in Kazakhstan urges the government of Kazakhstan to abide by international human rights treaties and regulations as well as halts economic activities and EU funds going to Kazakhstan, until the human rights condition had become satisfactory. It also called for an investigation into the unrest and violation of human rights by Kazakh national forces and CSTO peacekeepers.

## **POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS**

### **Promotion of Political Reforms under the September constitution**

The changes made to the Kazakh constitution as of the 16<sup>th</sup> of September by Tokayev grant Congress, as well as local governments greater powers. This is a great step forward and could be the basis for introducing other much-needed political reforms, or expanding the aforementioned ones, by granting local elections and greater executive power to the “Akims” or regional heads, instead of just securing unbiased regional elections,<sup>61</sup> a demand which had been raised by the people of Kazakhstan during the unrest. Other important reforms needed are ensuring the freedom of press, the right to peaceful assembly as well as greater transparency in the financial and political decision-making of the Kazakh government which have so far not been addressed.

### **Increased peace and stability through Police Reform**

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<sup>59</sup> Mark Otto, Jacob Thornton. “A New Course for the Republic.” *Kazakhstan 2050 Strategy*, <https://kazakhstan2050.com/>.

<sup>60</sup> “Texts Adopted - Situation in Kazakhstan - Thursday, 20 January 2022.” *Europarl.europa.eu*, [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2022-0012\\_EN.html](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2022-0012_EN.html).

<sup>61</sup> Bulatkulova, Saniya. “New Kazakhstan: The Path of Renewal and Modernisation.” *The Astana Times*, 25 Mar. 2022, <https://astanatimes.com/2022/03/new-kazakhstan-the-path-of-renewal-and-modernisation/>.

Police reform is direly needed in Kazakhstan. As demonstrated by the January unrest, the police failed to react directly and appropriately to the situation, leading to the use of force by the government of Kazakhstan. The police force in general needs to be more adaptive to situations and learn how to resolve matters peacefully, instead of resorting to violence. The Security and Cooperation in Europe offices in Kazakhstan have interested themselves in the human rights situation as well as rule of law, so they could also prove to be of assistance in providing the “blueprints” for better officer training and alternative approaches to dispute resolution, through dialogue and negotiation.

#### **Funding and oversight of Kazakhstan’s natural resource companies by the United Nations Sustainable Development Group**

The Agency for Protection and Development of Competition of the Republic of Kazakhstan aims to tackle monopolies and corruption in the sector, but it is still a very new organization. Cooperation with the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNDSG) and the Organisation could be useful, to make Kazakhstan’s oil production self-sustaining and reduce oil and gas prices nationally. Additionally, the UNSDG could help track and report restrictive cooperation and price gauging, meaning the collaboration of these companies to raise prices or to get rid of unwanted competition, to the agency. Lastly, it could help combat unsatisfactory working conditions and wages by helping to promote workers' rights and better wages throughout Kazakhstan, informing the citizens of their rights, and offering to help implement such policies on the nation’s behalf.

#### **Increased involvement and supervision from the Anti-Corruption Agency, under the guidance of the UN convention against corruption**

The Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA) has increased its works in Kazakhstan, with the acceptance of President Tokayev, and wishes to help find more systematic ways to tackle corruption in the country. The reforms under the ACA would aim at creating a better system for reporting from the populace, as well as the necessary frameworks to supervise corruption in civil society organizations and private entities. Additionally, they wish to help the Kazakh government create a more transparent way of operating, by publishing reports on agencies and bodies as well as the government itself being open about non-confidential economic and political figures.

#### **2050 Kazakhstan strategy**

The Kazakhstan 2050 strategy was an ambitious idea thought of by former president Nursultan Nazarbayev, however its vision for intergovernmental trade partnerships with foreign nations while creating favorable labor and investment opportunities is a worthwhile goal. As such, Kazakhstan and other nations should seek to bilaterally create trade agreements, combatting poverty in Kazakhstan as well as diversifying their economy. The United Nations' economic support or low-interest loans could help the continuation of this project as well as provide an adequate starting capital to attract foreign investors.

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