



# 2025 Country Report Kazakhstan

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In 2025, Kazakhstan deepened its role as a regional energy and transit hub while accelerating long-term strategic bets on nuclear power, critical minerals, and digital sovereignty. Navigating a complex geopolitical landscape, Astana balanced major new partnerships with the United States, Russia, China, and the EU; diversified energy export routes amid Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC) vulnerabilities; and advanced its domestic modernization agenda. Kazakhstan also took several landmark steps in its global positioning, including joining the Abraham Accords, launching Central Asia's most powerful supercomputer, initiating multi-reactor nuclear development with Russia and China, and advancing U.S.-backed plans for large-scale tungsten development.

## Key Points

- Kazakhstan advanced a multi-reactor nuclear program, selecting Russia's Rosatom to lead construction of its first nuclear power plant in Ulken (near Lake Balkhash), and confirming China's CNNC as the developer of its second and third reactors. Astana also expanded uranium supply agreements with Switzerland, Czechia, Slovakia, and other European partners, reinforcing its role as the world's leading uranium supplier.
- Critical minerals became a top strategic priority. At the EU–Central Asia Summit in Samarkand in April, Kazakhstan announced a 20-million-ton rare earth deposit,

potentially one of the world's largest. The EU designated the Sarytogan Graphite project in the Karaganda region as a flagship under its Critical Raw Materials Act, while U.S.–Kazakhstan cooperation deepened through rare earth and tungsten partnerships. Tau-Ken Samruk and Cove Capital advanced joint REE exploration across 25 prospective sites, including Kazakhstan's largest tungsten reserves valued at over \$80 billion.

- Energy diversification accelerated amid recurring disruptions to CPC infrastructure caused by spillover from the war in Ukraine. The first-ever shipment of Kashagan crude to Azerbaijan for onward transit via the Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline marked a major structural shift toward non-Russian export routes. Meanwhile, Chevron announced a \$48 billion expansion of the Tengiz field, one of the largest oil investments globally and a major driver of Kazakhstan's future production growth.
- Kazakhstan continued its multi-vector foreign policy, joining the Abraham Accords, deepening ties with the United States through the C5+1 Presidential Summit—which included the announcement of more than \$20 billion in U.S.–Kazakhstan commercial agreements—while upgrading relations with Russia to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and Alliance in November.
- Connectivity and digital modernization gained momentum, with major upgrades to border infrastructure, expanded Middle Corridor cooperation with Azerbaijan, and the launch of Central Asia's most powerful supercomputer to support AI and advanced computing. Kazakhstan also rolled out new digital finance initiatives, enabled Starlink satellite internet nationwide, and expanded federal digital governance capacity through the creation of the Ministry of Digital Development, Innovation, and Aerospace Industry.

## ➤ Critical Minerals

### **Kazakhstan and EU Boost Collaboration on Critical Raw Materials and Regional Connectivity**

European Commissioner for International Partnerships Jozef Sikela visited Kazakhstan on March 13, where he held talks with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Murat Nurtleu. The visit resulted in key agreements aimed at bolstering sustainable economic growth and regional connectivity. A €200 million framework loan agreement was signed between the European Investment Bank and Kazakhstan's Development Bank, focused on investments in sustainable transport and renewable energy.

Additionally, a €3 million contract was signed to enhance collaboration on critical raw materials, supporting sustainable supply chains. The EU remains Kazakhstan's top trade and investment partner, with bilateral trade reaching \$49.7 billion in 2024.

Source: [The Times of Central Asia](#)

## **Kazakhstan's Sarytogan Graphite Project Selected in EU's Global Raw Materials Initiative**

On June 4, the European Commission selected Kazakhstan's Sarytogan graphite site as one of 13 international strategic raw materials projects under its Critical Raw Materials Act. Located in the Karaganda region, the Sarytogan deposit is considered one of the world's largest untapped graphite resources and is being developed by Sarytogan Graphite Limited, an Australia-listed company. The project was included in a broader €5.5 billion investment push aimed at reducing the EU's dependence on some suppliers, especially materials vital to electric vehicle batteries and clean energy technologies. According to Brussels, the selected projects will receive targeted support to improve financing access, to build financial partnerships, and to ensure that environmental and social standards are upheld.

Source: [bne Intellinews](#)

## **Colorado School of Mines set to open in Kazakhstan next year**

The Colorado School of Mines will establish a campus in Zhezkazgan, Kazakhstan, on the grounds of the Ulytau Technical University. The campus will offer a range of bachelor's programs for aspiring mining industry specialists. The Colorado School of Mines ranks No.1 globally in the field of mineral & mining engineering.

Source: [Times of Central Asia](#)

## **Chinese company "Zijin Mining" to Acquire Major Producing Gold Mine in Kazakhstan for \$1.2 Billion**

Through its subsidiary Zijin Gold International, Zijin Mining has acquired the Raygorodok Gold Mine ("RG Gold Mine"), a large-producing asset in Kazakhstan, for \$1.2 billion. The transaction is expected to be confirmed in September. According to Zijin's statement, the mine will operate for another 16 years, from 2025 to 2040, with an average annual gold production of about 5.5 million metric tons. However, Zijin's early research suggests that with upgrades, the mining and processing capacity could be increased to 10 million metric tons per year. The company believes it can improve the project's production and economic performance by adjusting the open-pit mining limits, improving

processing technologies, and making other technical changes.

Source: [E&MJ Engineering and Mining Journal](#)

## **Kazakhstan to Supply Slovakia with Uranium**

Kazakhstan's national atomic company, "Kazatomprom," and one of the largest electricity producers in Slovakia, Slovenské elektrárne a.s. (SEAS), signed a memorandum of understanding on long-term cooperation in the nuclear energy field. As a part of the memorandum, Kazatomprom will export natural uranium concentrate and, potentially, uranium dioxide (UO<sub>2</sub>). The sides also agreed to explore opportunities for future cooperation.

Source: [Kazinform](#)

## **Kazakhstan to Supply Swiss Nuclear Power Plants**

Kazakhstan's Kazatomprom, the state-run nuclear energy firm, has struck a deal with Switzerland's Axpo Power AG and Kernkraftwerk Leibstadt AG (KKL AG) to supply uranium to two nuclear power plants in Switzerland. The moves come after Western governments, including Switzerland, have taken steps to downgrade their reliance on Russian uranium supplies, with Kazakhstan now looking to fill the opening in the market.

Source: [Daryo](#)

## **Kazakhstan and U.S. Launch Joint Rare Earth Exploration in Kostanai Region**

Kazakhstan's national mining company, Tau-Ken Samruk, and U.S.-based Cove Capital announced joint geological exploration at the Akbulak site in the Kostanai Region. The work will prioritize identifying rare earth elements in the area. According to the press service of Samruk Kazyna Sovereign Wealth Fund, the initiative is part of a strategic partnership between the two companies. The geological work plans to cover 25 sites with a total area of 100,000 square kilometers. In 2024 alone, 38 promising deposits were identified in Kazakhstan.

Source: [The Astana Times](#)

## **Trump Administration Supports U.S. Company's Bid to Access Kazakhstan's Tungsten**

U.S. Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick has been mediating negotiations between Cove Kaz Capital Group LLC and Kazakhstan's sovereign wealth fund over access to the country's two largest tungsten mines. Tungsten is a valuable element used in the production of military ammunition, weaponry, medical equipment, and light bulbs. As the American firm faces competition from Chinese companies willing to pay above market price, it will likely require federal backing to remain competitive. The bid aligns with the United States' broader strategy to diversify its critical mineral supply chains beyond China, positioning Kazakhstan as a promising new partner in Central Asia.

Source: [Bloomberg](#), [Eurasianet](#)

## **↘ Energy**

### **Chevron Expands Kazakh Oilfield**

Chevron announced on January 24 a planned \$48 billion expansion of the Tengiz oilfield. This expansion, now one of the most expensive ongoing developments in the world, would increase the oilfield's output to 1% of the world's crude supply. Currently, Tengizchevroil, Kazakhstan's leading oil company, is expected to make \$4 billion in 2025, with an increase to \$5 billion next year. Chevron currently has a 50% stake in Tengizchevroil and is hoping to increase its own production by 3% over the next five years.

Source: [Reuters](#)

### **Kazakhstan Conducts First Oil Shipment from Kashagan Field to Azerbaijan**

On January 27, KazMunayGas (KMG), Kazakhstan's national energy company, announced that, for the first time, Kazakhstan had shipped crude oil from its Kashagan field to Baku, Azerbaijan. The first batch of Kashagan oil, about 6,000 tons, was loaded onto the Taraz oil tanker at Aktau port on January 25 and arrived at Baku's Sangachal terminal on January 27, to be later transported via the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline to the Mediterranean Sea. On January 15, Azerbaijan's SOCAR and the subsidiary of Kazakhstan's KMG signed an agreement to transport 240,000 tons of Kashagan oil



annually. The delivery is part of Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan's efforts to develop alternative export routes for domestic oil and to enhance the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route (TITR).

Source: [The Astana Times](#)

## **Kazakhstan Strikes Oil and Nuclear Energy Deal with Hungary**

Kazakhstan and Hungary signed a deal on February 17 involving test shipments of Kazakh oil to Hungary through the Druzhba pipeline and collaboration on nuclear energy projects. Kazakhstan expressed particular interest in Hungary's expertise in producing dry cooling towers. The deal comes following a meeting between the Kazakhstani energy minister and Hungarian minister of foreign affairs and trade.

Source: [Astana Times](#)

## **Russia to Construct Gas Pipeline to Kazakhstan**

On February 18, Russian officials released a document announcing that Russia would construct a trunk gas pipeline to supply northern regions of Kazakhstan. The pipeline will have a capacity of 10 billion cubic meters and have compressor stations capable of generating 50 megawatts. Supplying greater amounts of gas to northern Kazakhstan has been a state priority since at least 2021, with Kazakhstan's President underscoring the economic importance of reliable energy and heating.

Source: [The Times of Central Asia](#)

## **Ukrainian Drone Strikes in Russia Disrupt Kazakh Oil Exports**

Ukrainian drone strikes on the Kropotkinskaya oil pumping station have caused a significant disruption of the Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC), the main pipeline through which Kazakhstan exports its oil resources to European markets. The disruption is expected to limit Kazakh oil exports from 1.143 million barrels per day (bpd) to an estimated range of 0.69 to 0.80 million bpd, potentially causing a drop in Kazakh crude exports of up to 28.6%. This would have major economic impacts on Kazakhstan whose economy is largely oriented around energy exports.

Source: [The Times of Central Asia](#)

## **Kazakhstan Moves Forward with First Nuclear Power Plant Amid International Competition**

Kazakhstan has selected the village of Ulken, near Lake Balkhash, as the site for its first nuclear power plant, with the final location to be confirmed after engineering surveys.

Energy Minister Almasadam Satkaliyev stated that Kazakhstan plans to build three reactors in response to an increasing energy deficit. The government aims to award the construction contract by the end of 2025, with four contenders in the running: Russia's Rosatom, China's National Nuclear Corp., France's EDF, and Korea Hydro and Nuclear power. While Rosatom is widely seen as the frontrunner, the United States has also expressed interest in expanding its civil nuclear energy presence in Central Asia, including in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, both of which are also pursuing nuclear power development.

Source: [Eurasianet](#)

## **Kazakhstan to Increase Oil Transit via Azerbaijan in 2025**

Kazakhstan's KazMunayGaz and Azerbaijan's SOCAR have agreed to boost Kazakh oil transit through the Aktau-Baku-Ceyhan route to 1.7 million tons in 2025, up from 1.4 million tons in 2024. The decision follows a meeting in Baku between KazMunayGaz Chairman Ashkat Hasenov and SOCAR President Rovshan Najaf, reviewing progress on their 2022 oil transport agreement. The two sides also discussed joint efforts on decarbonization, low-carbon technologies, emission reductions, and digitizing industrial processes.

Source: [The Times of Central Asia](#)

## **Kazakhstan Maintains Uninterrupted Oil Exports via CPC Despite Security Concerns**

Kazakhstan continues exporting oil through the Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC) without restrictions, the Energy Ministry stated. This follows reports that Ukrainian forces attempted to attack CPC's Kropotkinskaya station in Russia's Krasnodar Territory, though the assault was intercepted; a previous attack on February 17 caused damage and a temporary suspension. On March 19, drones also targeted an energy facility in Kavkazskaya village, which transfers oil to the CPC pipeline. The CPC system, Kazakhstan's primary export route, transports over 80% of its crude oil, handling 72.5 million tons annually from Kazakhstan and up to 83 million tons from Russia. In 2024, CPC exported 63.01 million tonnes, including 55 million from Kazakhstan. CPC shareholders include Russia (31%), KazMunayGas (19%), Chevron (15%), Lukoil (12.5%), and other international firms.

Source: [Interfax](#)

## **Kazakhstan Set to Join TAPI Pipeline Project**

Kazakhstan is preparing to formally join the Turkmenistan-Pakistan-Afghanistan-India



(TAPI) gas pipeline project, marking an expansion of regional energy cooperation. The announcement came during a meeting in Islamabad between the Ambassador of Kazakhstan and Pakistan's Federal Minister for Science and Technology, Khalid Hussain Magsi. The talks also emphasized strengthening bilateral cooperation in education, research, and technology. Magsi stated that multiple Memorandums of Understanding are being finalized, including a proposal to establish a joint research center at Pakistan's National University of Sciences and Technology.

Source: [The Express Tribune](#)

## **Kazakhstan Prioritizes National Interests over OPEC+ Quotas, Risks Bloc Discipline**

On April 24, Kazakhstan's new Energy Minister Yerlan Akkenzhenov indicated that the country will prioritize national interests over OPEC+ production limits, challenging the bloc's cohesion. With 70% of Kazakhstan's oil output controlled by Western-led ventures at Kashagan, Karachaganak, and Tengiz, Akkenzhenov claimed that Astana has limited control over volumes. Kazakhstan's production hit 1.85 million bpd in March, significantly exceeding its 1.468 million bpd quota, driven by Tengiz expansion. Rejecting a proposed compensation plan to offset overproduction, Akkenzhenov's remarks suggest Astana will not scale back output, even under pressure.

Source: [bne Intellinews](#)

## **Kazakhstan-UAE Wind Project Signals Major Leap in Renewable Energy Shift**

On April 30, Kazakhstan approved a landmark deal with the UAE's Masdar to build a one-gigawatt wind power plant and a 300-megawatt energy storage system in the Zhambyl region, advancing its green energy transition. Signed in December 2023 and ratified by the parliament in Astana this week, the project will generate 3.4 billion kilowatts per hour (kWh) annually and cut nearly two million tons of carbon emissions. It introduces Kazakhstan's first large-scale storage system, strengthens the national grid, and brings \$1.4 billion in foreign investment. The project also promises new transmission lines, job creation, and greater use of local materials, tapping into the country's vast renewable potential.

Source: [Caspian News](#)

## **Kazakhstan Turns to Tajik Hydropower to Ease Energy Crisis**

On April 30, Kazakhstan signed a 20-year agreement to import hydropower electricity from Tajikistan, signaling deeper regional energy cooperation in Central Asia.

However, actual electricity deliveries could still be years away, because Tajikistan's Rogun Hydropower Plant, the source of electricity, remains under construction, with only two of the six turbines currently operational and full completion not expected until 2035. The deal comes amid worsening electricity shortages in Kazakhstan, with a projected deficit of 5.7 billion kWh in 2025, prompting the country to seek alternatives beyond Russian imports and delayed nuclear plants. Although the agreement sets the price at \$0.034 per kWh, it does not specify when deliveries will begin or how much power will be supplied. Once the agreement is fully operational, the electricity will flow through the restored Soviet-era regional grid, helping meet demand in Kazakhstan's populous southeast while also enabling carbon credit claims for imported clean energy.

Source: [The Times of Central Asia](#)

### **Rosatom To Build Kazakhstan's First Nuclear Power Plant**

The Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan on Atomic Energy has completed the process of selecting a leading company for the consortium tasked with constructing the country's first nuclear power plant. After a review, the shortlist of potential vendors included Rosatom (Russia), China National Nuclear Corporation (China), Électricité de France (France), and Korea Hydro & Nuclear Power (South Korea). Based on the results, the Russian company, Rosatom, has been designated as the leader of the international consortium for the project. Currently, in line with Rosatom's proposals, efforts have begun to secure state export financing from the Russian Federation.

Source: [Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan for Atomic Energy](#) ; [The Astana Times](#)

### **South Korea's YPP to invest \$3.1B in Kazakhstan's Hydrogen Production**

The South Korean energy company, YPP, plans to invest \$3.1 billion to produce green hydrogen in Kazakhstan underpinned by up to 2 gigawatts of renewable energy power generation. YPP will implement the project in agreement with the Kazakhstan state agency, Kazakh Invest. The Korean proposal envisions installation of electrolyzers that produce about 75,000 tons of green hydrogen annually. Part of the output from wind and solar sources will be used to meet domestic needs, but most will be exported to foreign markets. Samsung C&T Corporation is seen as a potential off-taker of the project.

Source: [The Times of Central Asia](#)

### **China to Build Second and Third Nuclear Power Plant in Kazakhstan**

While Russia leads the consortium for building the first nuclear power plant in Kazakhstan, Kazakhstan's First Deputy Prime Minister, Roman Sklyar, confirmed that China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC) will lead the construction of both second

and third nuclear power plants. The parties, including Kazakhstan's Atomic Energy Agency and Kazakhstan Atomic Power Plants LLP, are working on finding suitable locations for both power plants, highlighting the importance of nearby water and energy resources for the successful operation of the plants.

Source: [Kazinform](#), [The Times of Central Asia](#)

## **Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan Sign Water-Energy Protocols Effective Until 2026**

On September 7, representatives from Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan held a trilateral meeting in Cholpon-Ata to discuss the exchange of water releases and electricity supply. To reduce risk in the next growing season, the officials reached an agreement on water releases from Kyrgyzstan's Toktogul reservoir in exchange for energy supplies from Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. The parties also agreed on conditions for the transit of electricity from Russia to Kyrgyzstan via Kazakhstan's power grid. Bilateral talks between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan closed a deal to assist with Kazakhstan's energy shortages from March to December 2026.

Source: [Astana Times](#)

## **Turkish State Oil Company to Sign New Contract with KazMunayGaz**

Under the agreement, which was announced on October 2, the Turkish Petroleum Corporation (TPAO) will gain access to operate in two new oil fields in Kazakhstan. After both parties sign the agreement, TPAO will begin exploration. TPAO's CEO praised Kazakhstan's use of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Oil Pipeline, adding that the two new fields will complement current flows with the pipeline.

Source: [qazinform](#)

## **Gazprom and Kazakhstan Sign Memorandum on New Gas Pipeline**

At the 14th St. Petersburg International Gas Forum (SPIGF), Russian state-owned energy company Gazprom's Chairman Alexey Miller and Kazakhstan's First Deputy Prime Minister Roman Sklyar signed a memorandum of understanding to build a new gas pipeline from Russia to Kazakhstan, with the proposed infrastructure designed to have an initial transport capacity of 10 billion cubic meters per year. The sides also signed a document outlining the long-term processing of Kazakhstan gas at the modernized Orenburg Gas Processing Plant in Russia. According to the framework agreement, this facility will handle gas from Kazakhstan's Karachaganak field.

Source: [Interfax](#), [Pipeline Technology Journal](#)

## China to Invest \$1 Billion in Kazakhstan's Renewable Sector

China Energy will invest over \$1 billion to build major wind and solar power plants in Kazakhstan, according to Kazakhstan's Ministry of Energy. The sides confirmed plans for a 300 MW solar plant in Turkistan and a 500 MW wind project in the Karaganda region. The initiatives fall under the intergovernmental renewable energy agreement signed during COP-29. The countries also discussed developing a renewable-powered data processing center with Kazakhtelecom, aligning with Kazakhstan's priorities for green energy and data infrastructure. Energy Minister Yerlan Akkenzhenov highlighted that the cooperation will bring both capital and advanced technology to support Kazakhstan's carbon neutrality.

Source: [QazInform](#)

## Kazakh Oil Projects Receive Exemptions from Latest U.S. Oil Sanctions on Russia

The U.S. Department of the Treasury announced that the Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC), Tengizchevroil, and the Karachaganak field in northwest Kazakhstan will all be allowed to continue operations in full, despite the involvement of Rosneft and Lukoil. The United States levied sanctions against the two Russian oil giants in October. Rosneft has shares in the CPC, while Lukoil is a shareholder in Tengizchevroil and the Karachaganak Petroleum Operating consortium.

Sources: [The Times of Central Asia](#), [U.S. Department of the Treasury](#)

## ➤ Infrastructure

### Kazakhstan Plans to Establish Air Accident Investigation Center by Year-End

Kazakhstan plans to open a dedicated air accident investigation center by the end of 2025, aiming to improve aviation safety standards. Deputy Transport Minister Talgat Lastayev announced the initiative following the crash of an Azerbaijani AZAL airlines plane near Aktau in December 2024, which led to inspections of domestic airlines and airports. The country's current air accident investigation capabilities are currently low, with a 51% rating in International Civil Aviation Organization assessments. Lastayev highlighted a shortage of certified local pilots, with only 400 of Kazakhstan's 1,500 pilots currently certified to international standards, due to certification gaps at the Almaty Academy of Civil Aviation.

Source: [The Times of Central Asia](#)



## **UAE Firm Invests \$1.1 Billion in Astana Airport**

On May 12, during a trip to Kazakhstan by Crown Prince Sheikh Khalid bin Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan of Abu Dhabi, the Ministry of Transportation of Kazakhstan signed an agreement with a subsidiary of the Emirati firm Terminals Holding to invest \$1.1 billion into Astana International Airport. The investments will be directed toward the construction of a second runway, a third passenger terminal, and a cargo terminal as well as upgrading the airport's digital and operational infrastructure.

Source: [The Times of Central Asia](#)

## **Astana and Kabul Pledge to Deepen Bilateral Engagement, \$500 Million Towards Railway**

Kazakhstan's Foreign Minister Murat Nurtleu and Afghanistan's Acting Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs, Abdul Ghani Baradar, met in Kabul on July 10 to discuss the expansion of bilateral engagement in trade, transportation, infrastructure, education, communications, mining, energy, and regional security. Most notably, the two representatives signed a memorandum of understanding pledging to invest \$500 million towards the construction of the 115-kilometer Torghundi-Herat railway that will link western Afghanistan to Turkmenistan.

Sources: [The Times of Central Asia](#), [Bakhtar News Agency](#).

## **Northern Aral Sea Showcases Record Water Recovery**

Kazakhstan's Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation has reported a record increase in the volume of water in the Northern Aral Sea. Such growth has exceeded national and international expectations. With the support of a World Bank grant, The Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation of Kazakhstan is continuing research and actions towards this issue. The government of Kazakhstan emphasizes the critical role of regional cooperation among Central Asian states in recovering Aral Sea and ecosystem restoration.

Source: [The Times of Central Asia](#)

## **Kazakhstan Reaches \$4.2 Billion Deal with U.S. Locomotive Manufacturer Wabtec**

The U.S. Department of Commerce announced that a deal was struck between Wabtec and Kazakh national railway company Kazakhstan Temir Zholy on September 22. The deal came after Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev spoke with U.S. President Donald Trump and U.S. Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick. The new agreement aims to supply 300 new locomotives to Kazakhstan over the next decade, creating 11,000 U.S. jobs in the process.

Source: [Reuters](#), [Kazinform](#)

## Politics

### **Kazakhstan Strengthens Ties to Morocco**

On February 28, Kazakhstan's Foreign Minister Murat Nurtleu arrived in Morocco for an official diplomatic trip seeking to increase ties between the two countries. While there, Nurtleu stated that trade turnover between Kazakhstan and Morocco had increased 70% in 2024, reaching \$274 million. He also announced that 2025 would see the introduction of a visa-free regime for Kazakhstan-Morocco travel. If realized, it would be the first visa-free regime between Kazakhstan and an African country.

Source: [Astana Times](#)

### **Kazakhstan Transfers Anti-Corruption Authority to National Security Committee**

Kazakhstan President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev has dissolved the Anti-Corruption Agency and transferred its functions to the National Security Committee. Certain responsibilities surrounding development and implementation of anti-corruption policy, interagency coordination, and public outreach will be handled by the Agency for Civil Service Affairs.

Source: [The Times of Central Asia](#)

### **Kazakhstan Bans Face Coverings in Public**

On June 30, Kazakhstan's President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev signed a law banning face coverings in public that hinder facial recognition, with exceptions for medical, weather-related, and cultural or sporting purposes. While the law does not directly interfere with religion, it aligns with similar measures in other Central Asian countries. Tokayev previously supported the legislation as a means of promoting Kazakhstan's ethnic identity, encouraging traditional attire over face-concealing garments. Comparable policies exist in Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan, where governments have cited the preservation of national culture to justify bans on clothing such as the niqab.

Source: [Reuters](#)

### **Central Asian States Form Contact Group on Afghanistan**

On August 26, envoys from Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan met in Tashkent for the first session of a new Contact Group on Afghanistan. Initiated by Uzbekistan, the group will serve as a platform for regional coordination on Afghan issues.

Delegates stressed the need for a unified, self-reliant stance that supports stability, trade, and security. While none of the four countries formally recognizes the Taliban, they agreed to pursue pragmatic engagement to restore economic ties with Kabul and tackle terrorism, extremism, and cross-border crime.

Source: [The Times of Central Asia](#)

## **Kazakh Officials Meet with U.S. Members of Congress to Lift Jackson-Vanik Amendment**

During their visit to the United States, a group of Kazakh officials, led by Deputy Prime Minister Serik Zhumangarin, lobbied U.S. congressmen hoping to accelerate the undoing of the Jackson-Vanik amendment against Kazakhstan. The move aims to expand Kazakhstan's bilateral trade with the United States and open investment into key sectors, such as critical minerals and logistics infrastructure. The amendment was passed during the Cold War originally to limit trade with communist countries that restricted emigration, specifically Jewish emigration, but it has now morphed to cover human rights in general. While Congress has lifted the restriction on other former Eastern Bloc states, it still applies to five former Soviet republics, including Kazakhstan.

Source: [Eurasianet](#)

## **Astana Think Tank Forum Concludes**

On October 15–16, Kazakhstan's capital hosted the Astana Think Tank Forum, bringing together leading scholars, diplomats, and policymakers from the United States to Eurasia, to "explore practical ways to rebuild trust and strengthen cooperation in an increasingly fragmented world." The event, organized by the Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies (KazISS), featured remarks from Magzum Mirzagaliyev, the Kazakh President's advisor; Yerzhan Ashikbayev, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan; and others. President of CPC Efgan Nifti, and Senior Fellow Dr. Eric Rudenshiold were also among distinguished panelists.

Source: [Astana Times](#)

## **Tokayev Vouches for Azerbaijan's Participation in Central Asia-U.S. Summit**

President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev has stated that he would welcome Azerbaijan's participation in the upcoming Central Asia-U.S. Summit, which is scheduled to take place in Washington, DC, on November 6. "I consider Azerbaijan's participation in such an important forum desirable. Given its energy resources, favorable geographic location, strategic vision, and the political will of President Ilham Aliyev, this country plays

a crucial role in the South Caucasus and beyond, essentially becoming a regional transport, logistics, and energy powerhouse,” Tokayev said in an interview with an Azerbaijani media outlet. He praised Azerbaijan’s regional role and called the country a “natural part of Greater Central Asia.” The planned C5+1 is expected to include participation from heads of states of all the Central Asian nations and will mark the first such gathering held in Washington. It remains unclear whether Azerbaijan will participate in the summit, since so far there has been no public announcement of an invitation to Baku.

Source: [Times of Central Asia](#), [Minval Politika](#)

### **Kazakhstan’s President Tokayev Meets with U.S. Representatives Sergio Gor and Christopher Landau**

Ahead of the upcoming C5+1 Leaders’ Summit in Washington on November 6, President, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev met with U.S. Special Envoy for South and Central Asia Sergio Gor and Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau. The meeting focused on the potential for increased cooperation between the United States and Kazakhstan, particularly in trade and investment. President Tokayev highlighted Central Asia’s collaborative growth as a region and its commitment to progress. Deputy Secretary of State Landau reaffirmed Central Asia’s strategic importance in U.S. foreign policy and expressed readiness to expand ties during the upcoming C5+1 summit.

Source: [The Astana Times](#)

### **President Trump Announces Kazakhstan Joining Abraham Accords**

During last week’s C5+1 Summit, U.S. President Donald Trump announced that Kazakhstan will join the Abraham Accords, a set of agreements aimed at normalizing relations between Israel and Muslim-majority countries. Kazakhstan will be the first Central Asian country to join. Kazakhstan President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev explained that the significance of his country’s accession is primarily economic, describing the move as a “logical continuation” of Kazakhstan’s existing policy. On the website Truth Social, President Trump praised the decision as a major step forward for global peace and claimed to have held a call with Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Tokayev.

Source: [The New York Times](#), [Reuters](#)

### **Kazakhstan Agrees to Introduce Amur Tigers from Russia**

During Kazakhstan President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev’s recent visit to Moscow, the two states’ ministers of ecology agreed to an action plan to transfer four Amur, or Siberian,



tigers from Russia to Kazakhstan. The tigers will relocate to the Ile-Balkhash State Nature Reserve, which already received two Amur tigers from the Netherlands in 2024. These recent efforts aim to reintroduce tigers to Kazakhstan, which was previously home to the Caspian Tiger—an extinct species that is genetically similar to the Amur tiger.

Source: [Tengrinews](#)

## **Kazakhstan and Armenia Strengthen Cooperation**

Kazakhstan and Armenia are forging a strategic partnership as seen in a joint statement between two states during Armenian Prime Minister Pashinyan's state visit to Astana. Tokayev awarded Pashinyan the Order of Altyn Qyran (Golden Eagle), highlighting Armenia's regional development in peace efforts and bilateral relations. The act was of special importance due to the growing transit role of Central Asia and the South Caucasus in the Middle Corridor as well as the specific role of the planned TRIPP Corridor that will provide a land route from Azerbaijan through Armenia and into Türkiye.

Source: [The Times of Central Asia](#)

## **Security**

### **Russian Espionage Campaign in Kazakhstan**

Sekoia, a French cybersecurity company, has released findings highlighting an ongoing Russian cyber espionage campaign against Kazakhstan. The report explained ongoing "spear phishing" attacks on Kazakhstan, sending supposedly official documents. These files originated from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan and were sent to various Kazakh departments and international governments, with one document being a draft for a joint statement from Germany, Kazakhstan, and Central Asian leaders. This attack has been ongoing, with the earliest document being an administrative note from 2021 alerting Kazakh officials about cyber espionage attacks.

Source: [Sekoia](#)

### **Kazakhstan Ranks Among Top 40 Arms Importers in the World**

Kazakhstan has been ranked among the world's top 40 arms importers over the past five years, making it the only country in Central Asia and the Caucasus on the list, according to a report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. Between 2020–2024, Kazakhstan accounted for about under one percent of total global arms imports, placing

26th, with Russia supplying 88% of its weaponry. Despite their conflict, Armenia and Azerbaijan did not make it to the list, though both plan to increase defense spending in 2025, with Armenia's rising to \$1.7 billion. The report also highlights a steep decline in Russia's global arms exports, which fell by 64% in 2020–2024 compared to the previous five-year period, reducing its share in global market from 21% to 7.8%.

Source: [EurasiaNet](#)

### **Azerbaijan Hosts Joint Military Exercises with Kazakhstan, Qatar, Pakistan, Türkiye, and Uzbekistan**

Azerbaijan is hosting joint military exercises "Eternal Brotherhood" with the participation of forces from Kazakhstan, Qatar, Pakistan, Türkiye, and Uzbekistan. The drills started on September 9 and are expected to conclude in two weeks. Minister of Defense of Azerbaijan Zakir Hasanov said that this is the fourth Eternal Brotherhood joint exercises, which had a "tradition and a vivid example of military cooperation."

Source: [Caspian Post](#)

### **Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan Start Military Exercises in Uzbekistan**

On October 14, large-scale joint military exercises involving units from the defense ministries of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan commenced at Kattakurgan training ground in Samarkand, Uzbekistan. The joint exercises, entitled Unity-2025 ("Birlik-2025") are aimed at enhancing military cooperation and partnership in the face of growing geopolitical tensions and crises worldwide, as well as the emergence of new threats and challenges. The exercises consist of three stages, including strengthening the protection and defense of the state border, and searching, localizing, and destroying illegal armed formations. Samarkand will also host the meeting of the defense ministers of Central Asia and Azerbaijan.

Source: [Tashkent Times](#), [Ministry of Defense of Azerbaijan](#)

## **Trade and Economy**

### **Kazakhstan and Russia Look to Boost Economic Cooperation**

On January 30, a Russian delegation headed by the Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation met for talks with the Prime Minister of Kazakhstan, Olzhas Bektenov, in Astana, Kazakhstan. The meeting focused on increasing trade turnover between

Kazakhstan and Russia, which last year reached \$24.2 billion. Both countries are now aiming for a trade turnover of \$30 billion in 2025. Key sectors that they focused on included agriculture, energy, industrial projects, and transportation.

Source: [Daryo](#)

### **World Bank: Kazakhstan Sees Strong Start to 2025 Amid Rising Inflation**

Kazakhstan's economy maintained strong momentum in early 2025, with the composite Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) rising to 51.3 in February. The manufacturing PMI climbed to 54.0, while the services sector rebounded to 50.6. However, inflation increased to 9.4% in February, driven by food price hikes (6.5%), non-food inflation (8.7%), and services inflation (14.1%). The National Bank raised its key interest rate to 16.5%, yet lending remains strong, with consumer loans up 13.2%. Kazakhstan's trade balance remained positive at \$1.6 billion in January, although exports declined by 13.4%, mainly due to a drop in crude oil shipments. The EU's share of Kazakhstan's exports rose to 46.7%, while trade with Russia declined sharply.

Source: [Kazinform](#)

### **Kazakhstan Becomes the Largest Supplier of Wheat to Azerbaijan**

Speaking at the fourth Kazakhstan–Azerbaijan Expert Council in Baku, Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Azerbaijan Alim Bayel stated that in the first quarter of 2025, Kazakhstan became the largest source of wheat imports for Azerbaijan. Bayel emphasized that this achievement was realized due to effective cooperation and coordination between the relevant structures in both countries.

Source: [KazInform](#)

### **Kazakhstan and Pakistan Sign Agreements on Trade and Connectivity**

During the 13th meeting of their Intergovernmental Commission held in Islamabad on April 30, Kazakhstan and Pakistan signed 10 agreements on key sectors including trade, education, sports, entrepreneurship, standardization, and information exchange. The agreements, signed between Kazakhstan's Minister of Transport Marat Karabayev and Pakistan's Minister of National Economy Ahad Khan Cheema, focus on enhancing rail, sea, and road connectivity, simplifying customs procedures, and resuming regular direct flights between the two countries. Special emphasis was placed on regional connectivity, including the Kazakhstan–Turkmenistan–Afghanistan–Pakistan and Kazakhstan–Uzbekistan–Afghanistan–Pakistan routes.

Source: [Daryo](#), [Kazinform International News Agency](#).

## **Meloni Visits Central Asia, Signs Trade Deals with Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan**

Giorgia Meloni, Prime Minister of Italy, visited Central Asia from May 28 to 29. The trip, which included a C5+1 summit with the heads of state of the five Central Asian republics as well as stops in both Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, was the latest in a series of high-level visits by European policy makers aimed at growing trade and energy relationships between Europe and Central Asia. In Kazakhstan, Meloni and Kazakhstan's President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev signed trade and energy deals worth over \$7 billion while in Uzbekistan Meloni struck agreements worth over \$3 billion. Meloni also addressed the Astana International Forum conference.

Source: [Euractiv](#)

## **Trump Hits Kazakhstan with 25% Tariffs on “Any and All” Goods**

Amid a series of similar letters sent to the world's heads of state, President Donald Trump released his letter to Kazakhstan's President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev on July 7 stating that the United States would impose a 25% tariff on “any and all” goods originating from Kazakhstan. While the letter stated that the tariff would come into effect on August 1, few other details were given. Trump has announced other such tariffs over the course of his second term but has routinely delayed or walked them back.

Source: [Daryo](#)

## **Kazakhstan to Become a Leader in GDP per capita in the Caspian Region**

According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) estimates, Kazakhstan's GDP per capita in 2025 was \$14,770. This has exceeded the GDP per capita not only of other Central Asian and South Caucasian states, but also even of Russia and China, which had \$14,260 and \$13,690 respectively. According to analysts, this indicator, which took into account current prices, inflation rates, and purchasing power, signals Kazakhstan's stable economic progress and growth.

Source: [Kazinform](#), [The Times of Central Asia](#)

## **Kazakhstan Ships Wheat Directly to Vietnam in Logistics Breakthrough**

Kazakhstan has completed its first direct wheat deliveries to Vietnam without container transfers, streamlining export logistics. From May to September, 17,000 tons of grain were shipped from northern Kazakhstan via China's Lianyungang port to Haiphong, Vietnam. The uninterrupted container route cut costs, preserved product quality, and shortened



delivery times. Experts say the trial underscores Kazakhstan's growing role as a Eurasian transit hub and opens new opportunities for grain exports to Southeast Asia's expanding markets.

Source: [The Astana Times](#)

## **U.S. Expands cooperation with Georgia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan along Middle Corridor**

U.S. Chargé d'Affaires to Georgia Alan Purcell led a delegation of American business leaders to Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Azerbaijan to explore opportunities in trade, energy, infrastructure, and logistics along the Middle Corridor. Organized with the U.S. Commercial Service, American-Georgian Business Council, US-Azerbaijan Chamber of Commerce, and American Chamber of Commerce in Kazakhstan, the visit included meetings with government officials, including Georgian Minister of Economy Mariam Kvrivishvili. The initiative aims to strengthen U.S. economic partnerships and enhance regional connectivity along this strategic Asia-Europe transport route.

Source: [Trend](#)

## **Sixth Annual Caspian Business Forum Takes Place in New York**

On September 23, CPC held its sixth annual Caspian Business Forum in New York in partnership with the embassies of the Caspian Region. The event brought together key stakeholders from the United States and the Caspian Region to discuss and strategize emerging business and energy landscape across the South Caucasus and Central Asia, with a focus on growing regional connectivity and finance. The keynote remarks were delivered by Caleb Orr, Senior Advisor to Deputy Secretary of State Christopher Landau; Conor Coleman, Head of Investments at the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation (DFC); and representatives of the Caspian region countries including Hikmet Hajiyev, Assistant of the President of Azerbaijan; Magzum Mirzagaliyev, Advisor to the President of Kazakhstan; Öztürk Selvitop, Director General for Foreign Relations Department of the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources of Türkiye; and Lasha Darsalia, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia. The Forum's second panel, "Critical Minerals—Solving Supply Chain Challenges," focused on how the United States is increasingly turning to resource-rich regions like the South Caucasus, Central Asia, and Ukraine as it faces mounting pressure to secure stable access to critical minerals and rare earth elements.

Source: [Sixth Caspian Business Forum Press Release](#)

## Technology

### **Kazakhstan Approves IBRD Loan to Boost Rural Digitalization**

Kazakhstan's Senate has ratified a loan agreement with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) worth 46 billion tenge to support the "Accelerated Digitalization for an Inclusive Economy" project. The initiative aims to expand sustainable digital infrastructure, particularly by providing high-speed internet access to rural communities. It will also support small and medium enterprises, remote services, and regional development through telecom upgrades and public-private partnerships. The project is expected to drive technological growth without requiring additional national budget spending or causing socio-economic harm.

Source: [Tengrinews.kz](https://tengrinews.kz)

### **Kazakhstan Launches Central Asia's Most Powerful Supercomputer to Boost AI and Digital Sovereignty**

Kazakhstan has launched Central Asia's most powerful supercomputer, capable of 2 exaflops, at the Alem.cloud center in Astana to drive AI development and e-government services. President Tokayev, who has made AI a national priority, said the project will help digitalize the economy and strengthen technological sovereignty. The supercomputer will support Kazakh-language AI models, forest fire detection, and other advanced applications. However, experts warn that brain drain and the need for constant updates could challenge Kazakhstan's AI ambitions despite this milestone launch.

Source: [EuroNews](https://euronews.com)

### **Kazakhstan's New Strategic Priority – Artificial Intelligence**

During a meeting with fellow government officials on August 11, Kazakhstan's President Tokayev called national efforts to develop and employ artificial intelligence (AI) within Kazakhstan a strategic priority for Kazakhstan's future. Alongside his announcement that his office would directly oversee Kazakhstan's national AI development, he instructed the government to bolster federal efforts to support domestic AI startups and AI expertise among Kazakh youth, as well as for officials to study AI national strategies of other countries so as to implement best protocols for the country's larger AI and digitalization efforts.

Source: [The Astana Times](https://theastanatimes.com)

## **Kazakhstan Launches Central Asia's first Spot Bitcoin ETF**

Kazakhstan has launched Central Asia's first spot bitcoin ETF, the Fonte Bitcoin Exchange Traded Fund (BETF), trading on the Astana International Exchange as of August 13.

Overseen by U.S.-regulated BitGo and insured up to \$250 million, the fund offers secure, regulated access to bitcoin. The launch highlights Kazakhstan's role as a regional crypto hub, supported by the Astana International Financial Centre's legal framework for digital assets. BETF allows investors to gain bitcoin exposure without managing private keys or unregulated exchanges.

Sources: [CoinDesk](#), [Astana Financial Center](#)

## **Starlink Satellite Internet Officially Launches in Kazakhstan**

Kazakhstan's Ministry of Digital Development, Innovation, and Aerospace Industry reported that Starlink satellite internet became available in Kazakhstan on August 13, offering high-speed, reliable connectivity even in remote areas. Operated by SpaceX, the launch follows a June 12 agreement ensuring Starlink complies with Kazakhstan's legislation. The service is expected to expand access to modern digital services nationwide, with tariffs and connection details available on SpaceX's official website.

Source: [The Astana Times](#)

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