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FEATURES OF THE FOREIGN POLICY CONCEPT OF KAZAKHSTAN 2020-2030

ОСОБЕННОСТИ КОНЦЕПЦИИ ВНЕШНЕЙ ПОЛИТИКИ КАЗАХСТАНА 2020-2030

**ҚАЗАҚСТАН 2020-2030 СЫРТҚЫ САЯСАТ ТҰЖЫРЫМДАМАСЫНЫҢ
ЕРЕКШЕЛІКТЕРІ**

Abstract. The article reveals the significance of the new concept of the foreign policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the old and new approaches and principles used in it, updated priorities. The authors conduct a consistent political analysis of the current situation in the system of international relations of Kazakhstan, international experience, and the basic principles of foreign policy. The article reflects the goals and objectives of Kazakhstan's foreign policy strategy, the country's key priorities in the international arena, foreign policy implementation tools, implementation stages and expected results.

The authors of the article emphasize that the new concept differs from the previous one by analyzing the current situation in the system of international relations. At the same time, the emphasis is on identifying such challenges and threats to this system as a crisis of confidence and an increase in conflict between various international actors. Kazakhstan, on the one hand, keeps a “hand on the pulse”, well understands and takes into account the ongoing processes at the global and regional levels of world politics. On the other hand, in the ambiguous conditions in the international arena, it is important and profitable for him to position himself as “an active and responsible member of the international community, making a significant contribution to ensuring international and regional stability and security”, focused on maintaining friendly, predictable and mutually beneficial relations with foreign partners.

Key words: crisis of confidence, multilateralism, human factor, investment cooperation, “soft power”, status of the “leading state in the region”, tools of “people's diplomacy”.

Аннотация. В статье раскрываются значимость новой концепции внешней политики Республики Казахстан, применяемые в ней старые и новые подходы и принципы, обновлённые приоритеты. Авторы проводят последовательный политологический анализ текущей ситуации в системе международных отношений Казахстана, международного опыта, основных принципов внешней политики. Статья отражает цели и задачи внешнеполитической стратегии Казахстана, ключевые приоритеты страны на международной арене, инструменты реализации внешней политики, этапы реализации и ожидаемые результаты.

Авторы статьи подчеркивают, что новая концепция отличается от прежней анализом современной ситуации в системе международных отношений. При этом акцент сделан на обозначении таких вызовов и угроз для этой системы, как кризис доверия и повышение конфликтности между различными международными акторами. Казахстан, с одной стороны, держит «руку на пульсе», хорошо понимает и учитывает происходящие процессы на глобальном и региональном уровнях мировой политики. С другой стороны, в неоднозначных условиях на международной арене ему важно и выгодно позиционировать себя как «активного и ответственного участника международного сообщества, вносящего весомый вклад в обеспечение международной и региональной стабильности и безопасности», ориентированного на поддержание дружественных, предсказуемых и взаимовыгодных отношений с зарубежными партнерами.

Ключевые слова: кризис доверия, мультилатерализм, человеческий фактор, инвестиционное сотрудничество, «мягкая сила», статус «лидирующего государства в регионе», инструменты «народной дипломатии».

Аңдатпа. Мақалада Қазақстан Республикасы сыртқы саясатының жаңа тұжырымдамасының маңыздылығы, онда қолданылатын ескі және жаңа тәсілдер мен қағидаттар, жаңартылған басымдықтар ашылады. Авторлар Қазақстанның халықаралық қатынастар жүйесіндегі қазіргі жағдайға, халықаралық тәжірибеге, сыртқы саясаттың негізгі принциптеріне дәйекті саяси талдау жасайды. Мақалада Қазақстанның сыртқы саяси стратегиясының мақсаттары мен міндеттері, еліміздің халықаралық аренадағы негізгі басымдықтары, сыртқы саясатты жүзеге асыру құралдары, іске асыру кезеңдері мен күтілетін нәтижелер көрсетілген.

Мақала авторлары халықаралық қатынастар жүйесіндегі қазіргі жағдайды талдау арқылы жаңа тұжырымдаманың бұрынғысынан ерекшеленетінін атап көрсетеді. Бұл ретте сенім дағдарысы және әртүрлі халықаралық акторлар арасындағы қақтығыстардың күшеюі сияқты осы жүйеге қатысты сын-қатерлер мен қауіптерді анықтауға баса назар аударылады. Қазақстан, бір жағынан, «бір жағадан бас, бір жеңнен қол шығарып», әлемдік саясаттың жаһандық және аймақтық деңгейінде болып жатқан үдерістерді жақсы түсінеді және ескереді. Екінші жағынан, халықаралық аренадағы түсініксіз жағдайларда ол өзін «халықаралық және аймақтық тұрақтылық пен қауіпсіздікті қамтамасыз етуге елеулі үлес қосатын халықаралық қоғамдастықтың белсенді және жауапты мүшесі» ретінде көрсету маңызды және тиімді. шетелдік серіктестермен достық, болжамды және өзара тиімді қарым-қатынастарды сақтауға бағытталған.

Түйін сөздер: сенім дағдарысы, көпжақтылық, адам факторы, инвестициялық ынтымақтастық, «жұмсақ күш», «аймақтағы жетекші мемлекет» мәртебесі, «халық дипломатиясы» құралдары.

Introduction: On March 6, 2020, the Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2020-2030 was approved by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan. This document is a system of fundamental views on the principles, goals, objectives, priorities and mechanisms for the implementation of the country's foreign policy activities during the specified period.

The importance of the adoption of the document under consideration seems to be due to the following main factors. First of all, the change in the leadership of Kazakhstan that took place in March 2019 made a great resonance among the official and business circles of near and far abroad. The leading foreign partners of the republic naturally took care of the preservation by the new head of state of the foundations of the foreign policy of his predecessor and the fulfillment by Kazakhstan of its obligations to them, reflected in the relevant treaties and agreements [1].

Being well aware of such expectations, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, from the very beginning of his political career as the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, clearly outlined the continuity in the implementation of the official political course of Kazakhstan, the foundations of which were laid by the first President of the country, Nursultan Nazarbayev. In this regard, among the measures to implement the main provisions of his election program, the adoption of a new Foreign Policy Concept of the Republic of Kazakhstan, aimed at continuing the course of ensuring a multi-vector, balanced foreign policy, was noted [2]. The subsequent implementation of this measure contributes to the preservation and further development of the positive dynamics of Kazakhstan's relations with leading foreign policy partners.

In addition, being a professional diplomat, Tokayev pays special attention to the sphere of foreign policy. It is significant that this concept was the first document of the corresponding level, which he approved since the beginning of his tenure as head of state. Moreover, the official term of the previous concept, designed for 2014-2020, just ended this year.

Another significant point is that this is the second official document on the foreign policy activities of the republic, which the Kazakh authorities have made available to the general public, including publication on the websites of the head of state and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Until 2014, the concept of Kazakhstan's foreign policy, for unknown reasons, was closed. In this regard, the key contours of foreign policy activity could be determined mainly from the President's annual messages to the people of the country and his speeches to the foreign diplomatic corps.

Materials and methods:

The article used an official document – the Concept of Foreign Policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2020-2030 dated March 6, 2020.

The following methods were used in the study:

- 1) an integrated systemic approach, which made it possible to carry out a consistent political analysis of the current situation in the system of international relations of Kazakhstan;
- 2) comparative-historical method – comparativism, which allows to show the old and new principles and approaches used in the Foreign Policy Concept;
- 3) general scientific and philosophical methods – analysis and synthesis, cause and effect, induction and deduction, abstraction, systematic, validity of conclusions, historical and logical.

Research results and discussion:

First of all, the new concept differs from the previous one in the analysis of the current situation in the system of international relations. At the same time, the emphasis is on identifying such challenges and threats to this system as a crisis of confidence and an increase in conflict between various international factors. This includes the sanctions confrontation, the erosion of the fundamental principles of international law, the aggravation of terrorism, extremism and the arms race, the intensification of hybrid, cyber, trade and currency wars, etc.

In this case, Kazakhstan, on the one hand, makes it clear that it keeps a “hand on the pulse”, understands well and takes into account the ongoing processes at the global and regional levels of world politics. On the other hand, in the ambiguous conditions in the international arena, it is important and beneficial for him to position himself as “an active and responsible member of the international community, making a significant contribution to ensuring international and regional stability and security” [3], focused on maintaining friendly, predictable and mutually beneficial relations with foreign partners.

Thus, the country, despite the change of leadership, is interested in maintaining its distance and maximum neutrality regarding the contradictions and conflicts of world powers. Therefore, the multi-vector approach and pragmatism, allowing it to build relations with other countries and international organizations in accordance with its interests and on an equal and constructive basis, remain the key principles of its foreign policy.

At the same time, the concept is supplemented by new principles of the country's foreign policy, including the promotion of building a stable, just and democratic world order, promoting the external openness of the state and the inextricable link between security and development at all levels of international relations. Some of the previous principles have received an expanded interpretation. In particular, the equality of all states of the world is presented as an equal integration into the global political, economic and humanitarian space. And the collective solution of international problems and conflicts is seen as multilateralism, “aimed at the formation of a collective vision and effective approaches of the international community to solving a wide range of global and regional problems on the basis of multilateral consultations and agreements” [3].

Also noteworthy is the rather noticeable reflection of the human factor in the new document, emphasizing its focus not only on the state, but also on society and individual citizens. This approach is based on the concept of the “Listening State” [4], voiced by Kassym-Jomart Tokayev in his first Address to the people of Kazakhstan. In this case, we are talking about creating a qualitatively new mechanism for ensuring a constant dialogue between the authorities and society, as well as the prompt and effective response of the first of them to all requests from citizens.

In the context of foreign policy, this resulted in the construction of the practical interests of the citizens of Kazakhstan and national business at the forefront of this policy direction. It is significant in this regard that the implementation of the protection of the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of Kazakhstanis and compatriots living abroad from among ethnic Kazakhs is reflected not only in the goals and objectives, but also in the basic principles of the country's foreign policy. Moreover, Kazakhstani children adopted by foreigners are included in this category. The concept also provides for the establishment of an effective system of communications with the general public of Kazakhstan on foreign policy issues, a systematic explanation of its relevant tasks and priorities, and the use of tools of “people's diplomacy”.

At the same time, the economic dimension of Kazakhstan's foreign policy also increased. The number of its priorities, in comparison with the previous concept, increased from 9 to 14. First of all, the investment cooperation of Kazakhstan with foreign partners was specified by listing the basic sectors of the economy interested in foreign investment. These are, in particular, mechanical engineering, instrument making, agro-industrial complex, light industry, healthcare, education, transport, tourism, etc. Thus, the activities of Kazakh diplomats are focused on promoting the development of non-primary sectors of the country's economy.

In addition, the concept is designed to contribute to the development of the transit and logistics potential of Kazakhstan, including the introduction of the “open skies” regime, the expansion of the range, volumes and geography of national exports, the elimination of various barriers to it in foreign markets, as well as the promotion of such structures as the “Astana” International Financial Center, the “Khorogos” International Center for Cross-Border Cooperation and the Center for Trade and Economic Cooperation “Central Asia” being created jointly with Uzbekistan.

At the same time, the final version of the document under consideration did not include such a concept as “soft power”, which could bring new meaning to the economic and humanitarian dimension of Kazakhstan's foreign policy. It was assumed that the domestic “soft power” would be based on such values as social stability, interethnic and interfaith harmony, ease of doing business, innovative education, etc [5].

According to a number of analysts of state and public policy and law, it is necessary and possible for Kazakhstan to form and use its own “soft power”. And not only in the interests of promoting a positive image of the country in the international arena, but also in opposition to active information influence from outside. Moreover, experts suggest projecting Kazakhstan's “soft power” on other countries and even on the entire world community, using for this the achievements of the country's independent development, previously intended mainly for solving internal problems [6]. It seems that such recommendations, to one degree or another, will find their application in the process

of international cooperation of Kazakhstan, primarily in the area of culture, education, science, tourism and sports.

The new concept also shows a serious change in Kazakhstan's foreign policy priorities. This is especially true of its positioning in a regional context. If in the previous concept Kazakhstan presented itself as a country that is aware of its role and responsibility and strives for the development of intra-regional integration in Central Asia, now it openly declares its intention to secure the status of a “leading state in the region” [7]. In accordance with this, the strengthening of leading positions and the promotion of long-term interests in Central Asia ranks second among the strategic goals of Kazakhstan in the field of foreign policy.

In order to achieve this goal, Kazakhstan, firstly, attaches a strategic character to relations with other countries of the region, bringing them on the same level with geopolitical actors of greater potential, such as China, Russia, the United States and the European Union (EU). Secondly, it advocates the expansion of multilateral dialogue and cooperation in Central Asia. And, thirdly, it expresses readiness to assist in strengthening the existing formats of interaction between the countries of the region and external partners.

In particular, Kazakhstan is interested in using the regional hub of international organizations that are part of the UN structure, opened in Almaty in autumn 2018, for all this. We are talking about giving it the status of an interregional UN center in Kazakhstan for the Sustainable Development Goals and promoting its activities in the states of Central Asia and Afghanistan. At the same time, there has not yet been any official reaction to these changes in the positioning and goals of Kazakhstan from other Central Asian states.

In general, in the concept, Kazakhstan's foreign policy priorities are shifted from individual countries towards regional and multilateral cooperation. In the bilateral context, only neighboring countries, the US and the EU, are specifically highlighted. In Asia, for example, the emphasis is placed both on active participation in the work of the SCO, CIMCA, OIC, the Cooperation Council of Turkic-Speaking States, etc., and on expanding ties with ASEAN, the League of Arab States and other international organizations in which Kazakhstan does not participate.

Separate priorities are outlined in the new concept, taking into account the changes in the international arena that have taken place to date. In particular, they noted the expansion of cooperation in the Caspian region in the field of energy, transport, environmental protection and security on the basis of the Convention on the Legal Status of the Caspian Sea adopted in 2018. The intention was also expressed to continue close cooperation with the EAEU member countries and optimize approaches to the negotiation process within the framework of this association. As for the development of relations with the “leading states of Europe outside the EU”, in this case, there is an emphasis, first of all, on the UK, which completed the process of leaving the European Union (Brexit) last year.

Conclusions: The new concept of Kazakhstan's foreign policy, on the one hand, is a reflection of changes in the political life of the country due to the change of its leadership. Hence the innovations noted above, including claims for regional leadership in Central Asia. On the other hand, the continuity of the former foreign policy course based on multi-vector and pragmatism is clearly marked.

With all this, the daily practice of Kazakhstan's relations with various foreign countries and international structures has repeatedly shown that a multi-vector approach and other foreign policy principles do not guarantee the development of these relations in an exclusively constructive manner. Indicative in this regard, for example, are the frequent claims against Kazakhstan by Kyrgyzstan regarding restrictions on the movement of transit goods coming from the latter to third countries through Kazakhstan's territory. Kazakhstan, in turn, often makes claims against Russia because of barriers to the supply of its goods to its markets.

In any case, in the context of everything that is happening on the world stage, from conflicts between leading geopolitical factors to the consequences of the global spread of the coronavirus infection COVID-19, most countries of the

world have to either choose clear guidelines in favor of a certain power, or isolate themselves from external influence in every possible way, or constantly be flexible in dealing with different partners.

Due to a number of factors, Kazakhstan manages to stay in the third group of countries. In this regard, the concept under consideration is not only a guide to action for himself, but also sends clear signals to foreign partners about the limits of what is permissible in relations with him. The implementation of the document and everything stated in it in practice will largely depend on the professional qualities and abilities of the head of state, representatives of the diplomatic service and other officials of the republic involved in international cooperation.

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