
12. Kazakhstan's security policy in the Caspian Sea region

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The analysis of Kazakhstan's role in the Caspian Sea region requires an exploration of the specific geopolitical processes that are taking place in the region as well as of the various aspects of the social, economic and political situation in the republic. This chapter deals with both.

I. The concept of national security

The shaping of the security doctrine of Kazakhstan has been influenced by a number of internal and especially external factors. The country's leadership has had to take into account (a) the ethnic and social composition of the population of the republic; (b) the need at least partly to retain economic relations within the framework of the once unified economic complex of the former USSR; (c) the activation of the idea of Turkic unity at the beginning of the 1990s; (d) the acute need for foreign investment in the economy of Kazakhstan; (e) the unfolding geopolitical 'game' around the Central Asian region; and (f) the inadequacy of Kazakhstan's own economic and military potential and the need to establish a collective security system.

In its first security doctrine worked out at the end of 1991 and early 1992, Kazakhstan formulated the goal of carrying on bilateral negotiations outside the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) mechanism, but at the same time continuing to support the development of the institutions of the CIS. To achieve this goal the country's leadership set three objectives: (a) to retain special relations with the Russian Federation; (b) to establish a Central Asian Union (CAU); and (c) to support the conclusion of a wide-ranging security treaty within the framework of the CIS.¹

The signing on 15 May 1992 of the Treaty on Collective Security (the Tashkent Treaty)² was the first step in attaining one of those objectives. The treaty prohibited its member states from forming other alliances or groups among themselves or with third countries that would be directed against any other signatory. It also specified principles of common security whereby all its

¹ Laumulin, M., *Kazakhstan v Sovremennykh Mezhdunarodnykh Otnosheniyakh: Bezopasnost', Geopolitika, Politologiya* [Kazakhstan in present international relations: security, geopolitics, politology] (Almaty, 2000), pp. 130–31.

² The original members were Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Azerbaijan, Belarus and Georgia also joined later. Azerbaijan, Georgia and Uzbekistan left in 1999. On the Tashkent Treaty see chapter 5 in this volume. For the text see *Izvestiya*, 16 May 1992, p. 3.

members would recognize aggression against one as aggression against all.³ However, the conclusion of the treaty did not solve the problem of creating an integrated collective security system. It began to gain strength only in 1994 when the Taliban movement became active in Afghanistan, and by 1998 the treaty had started to fall apart.

It was not mutual consent of the member states but rather the external threat from the Taliban movement that prolonged the life of the Tashkent Treaty. The seizure of Kabul by the Taliban militia in late 1996 led to the interests of the new independent states of Central Asia and Russia consolidating around the idea of maintaining regional stability and security. Their meeting in Almaty on 4 October 1996 provided a new impulse for the creation of a united anti-Taliban coalition in northern Afghanistan, the Northern Alliance, which was viewed as a buffer screening the Central Asian states from an undesirable influence from outside and a key factor of a stable regional security system.⁴ When the anti-Taliban coalition split in 1997–98 and ceased to play the role of a buffer securing the southern frontiers of the CIS, attitudes among the Tashkent Treaty states changed radically. Kyrgyzstan in fact blocked supplies of arms to the Northern Alliance,⁵ and Uzbekistan in February 1999 decided to withdraw from the Tashkent Treaty.

In May 1992 President Nursultan Nazarbayev took the first step towards a military doctrine.⁶ He formulated its general principles, to be based on peaceful coexistence, non-interference in the internal affairs of other states, the preservation of existing state borders and refusal to use weapons of mass destruction. Practical steps were taken to stabilize the situation in the military sphere, especially in respect of the armed forces. On the political level Nazarbayev was working to obtain security guarantees for Kazakhstan from the USA, China and Russia prior to the removal of nuclear weapons from its territory. The country's leadership succeeded to a certain degree in attaining those objectives. In 1994 Kazakhstan received security guarantees from the USA, China and Russia, and managed to stabilize the situation in the military sphere by concluding a number of bilateral agreements with the Russian Federation.⁷

Kazakhstan's second objective was achieved after Nazarbayev's proposal of March 1994 for a Eurasian Union to be established failed to find support, and the integration processes in the post-Soviet space began to move towards the formation of alternative alliances. The CAU was set up in April 1994. It

³ 'Dogovor o kollektivnoy bezopasnosti' [Collective security treaty], in *Sbornik Dokumentov po Mezhdunarodnomu Pravu* [Collection of documents on international law] (Almaty, 1998), pp. 260–63. The text was also published in *Izvestiya*, 16 May 1992, p. 3.

⁴ Akimbekov, S., *Afganskiy Uzel i Problemy Bezopasnosti v Tsentral'noy Azii* [The Afghan knot and problems of security in Central Asia] (Almaty, 1998), p. 196.

⁵ On 9 Sep. 1998 in the town of Osh the Kyrgyz authorities stopped a train carrying arms and ammunitions addressed to Ahmad Shah Massoud. The freight must then have been directed by the Pamir highway to Badakhshan in Afghanistan. This channel of arms supply had probably existed for some time. The Kyrgyz secret services exposed it to the world community and in this way established an actual blockade of the anti-Taliban Northern Alliance. *Izvestiya*, 15 Oct. 1998.

⁶ The text of the military doctrine was published in *Kazakhstanskaya Pravda*, 12 Feb. 2000, p. 2.

⁷ On these agreements see chapter 5 in this volume.

included Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.⁸ Although the economic and political problems between its member states continued to be stronger than the forces for unity, the Union did make possible the resolution of certain issues related to their collective security. The formation of another alliance must also be mentioned. This was the 'Shanghai Five', consisting of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan, which first met in April 1996. Uzbekistan joined in June 2001 and today the organization, originally created to provide a forum for consultation on frontier disputes, build up trust in the military sphere and encourage mutual reductions of armed forces in the frontier areas, has become the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and extended its remit to addressing urgent problems of regional security.⁹

In November 1997 the concept of Kazakhstan's national development until the year 2030 was adopted. National security was the first priority. This strategy was based on the strong belief of the Kazakhstan leadership that neither Russia nor China, nor the Western or Muslim countries had any motive for aggression against Kazakhstan. That presented Kazakhstan with an opportunity to strengthen its economic potential and to build up on this basis a reliable system of national security. Considering this, the following priorities were singled out by the concept of national development: (a) the strengthening of reliable and equitable relations with Russia, the nearest and historically friendly neighbour; (b) the development of trust and good-neighbourly relations with China; (c) the strengthening of relations with leading democratic industrialized countries, including the United States, which were beginning to realize that an independent and prosperous Kazakhstan would suit their national interests; (d) the optimal use of aid and assistance from international institutions and forums (the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the Asian, European and Islamic development banks); (e) the development of the country's natural resources into a reliable basis for the protection of national sovereignty and territorial integrity; (f) the promotion of patriotism and love of their country among all citizens of Kazakhstan; and (g) a strong demographic and migration policy.¹⁰

Basically, none of these points is controversial. All are more or less consistent with the geopolitical realities that have developed; but to what extent have these objectives been realized? Has an appropriate economic, political and military potential been built up in Kazakhstan to ensure adequate national security and help Kazakhstan to influence the geopolitical processes under way in Central Asia in general and in the Caspian region in particular? To answer these questions it is necessary to analyse, at least briefly, (a) the way the new balance of forces has developed in the region, (b) the social, economic, political and military reforms in Kazakhstan, and (c) the nature of the new geopolitical

⁸ On the Central Asian Union see chapter 1 in this volume.

⁹ On the Shanghai Cooperation organization see chapter 5, section V in this volume.

¹⁰ Nazarbayev, N., 'Kazakhstan 2030: poslaniye Prezidenta narodu' [Kazakhstan 2030: the message of the president to the people], Almaty, 1997, pp. 119–24.

realities and of the internal and external threats to the national security of Kazakhstan.

II. The development of a new balance of forces

The collapse of the USSR not only meant the disappearance of a superpower but also produced a geopolitical vacuum in Central Asia. Initially, in 1990–96, the existence of this vacuum seemed to be acceptable for all or nearly all the countries that had interests in the region. It was on the whole acceptable for the United States and the West because it guaranteed them against the formation of an anti-US or anti-Western alliance there, meant a further weakening of Russian influence in the region and created opportunities for them to strengthen their own positions. It was acceptable for China because the rivalry between Russia and the USA in the region and the economic and political chaos in the regional states created favourable opportunities for it to build up its own positions there and attain its objective of restoring Great China. It was acceptable for the Islamic countries, mainly because the emergence of new independent states in Central Asia significantly expanded the area for Islam and for Turkic and Muslim solidarity. It suited Russia as well, if not completely. Lacking the material, financial and military resources for unconditional dominance in the region, and being busy establishing links with the USA and West, Russia reduced its presence and influence in Central Asia to control over existing transport routes, predominance in foreign trade, participation in the Tashkent Treaty, and maintaining its military presence in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.¹¹ Finally, it was acceptable for the Central Asian states as well since it provided them with conditions not only for their independent development but also, especially significantly, for the financial prosperity of the local political elites.

However, this did not mean that the geopolitical vacuum and the particular consensus about it would remain for long. The geopolitical importance of the region was much too great.

A most significant change has taken place in recent years in Central Asia. A new balance of geopolitical forces has been formed, and a fundamental revision of political and ideological values and realignment of strategic partners have taken place. Largely this was caused by the policies of Russia towards the states of the region.¹² Russia, having made active efforts for rapprochement with the

¹¹ E.g., in July 1992 Russia and Turkmenistan signed an agreement on joint command over the former Soviet Armed Forces on the territory of Turkmenistan. Under the agreement, 15 000 (air defence and aviation) of the 60 000 troops were placed under direct Russian control, and others under joint command. In Aug. of the same year another agreement was signed that provided for the presence in Turkmenistan of Russian frontier guards for 5 years, during which they were to provide assistance in the formation of the Turkmen frontier troops. Clark, S., 'Central Asian states: defining security priorities and developing military forces', ed. M. Mandelbaum, *Central Asia and the World: Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan* (Council on Foreign Relations Press: New York, 1994), pp. 193–94.

¹² For further detail see Syroezhkin, K., 'The policy of Russia in Central Asia: a perspective from Kazakhstan', ed. G. Chufirin, SIPRI, *Russia and Asia: The Emerging Security Agenda* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1999), pp. 100–109.

USA and Western countries, almost lost the opportunity that existed in the 1990s to keep its influence in Central Asia. Moreover, it saw the Central Asian countries as the 'soft underbelly' from which it was prepared to cut itself off at any cost in order to become a part of Europe quickly. Russia in fact still retained its positions in the region. This was not the result of the official policy of Moscow but happened in spite of it. The key role here was played by the weakness of the Tajik political elite. The civil conflict which started in Tajikistan in 1992 left Russia no choice. Its return to the region was conditioned by its involvement in the Tajik conflict and by the need to counter the external threat coming from Afghanistan. From then on Russia's relations with the Central Asian states developed under the influence of this factor.

The openness of the Central Asian states to the outside world created the conditions for them to be increasingly influenced by extra-regional countries, and the geopolitical vacuum in the region began to fill quite rapidly. The countries on the perimeter of Central Asia and the main world powers were tempted to undertake a redistribution of spheres of influence in the post-Soviet space. The strengthening of the USA's role and of the international political and financial institutions controlled by it in the region, attempts by Turkey and Iran to dominate in post-Soviet Central Asia, the strengthening of China's position there, the rearmament and consolidation of Islamic countries—all those factors helped to change the balance of geopolitical forces in the region.

Another factor to be taken into account was that by the end of the 1990s the redistribution of property in Kazakhstan was in the main completed. A new and quite significant player emerged in interstate relations—major domestic and foreign owners of property whose business interests frequently prevailed over the political will of the leaders of their states and determined the dynamics of most of the political processes in the region.

By the end of the 1990s the USA had become one of the main geopolitical players in Central Asia. This was quite logical considering its economic, military and political potentials and the policies of Russia at that period. In the opinion of US analysts, the interests of the USA at that period lay in three areas: (a) the support of democracy and free enterprise; (b) the development of the rich natural resources of the region, first of all in Kazakhstan; and (c) the elimination of a potential threat coming from the strategic nuclear weapons in Kazakhstan.¹³ More specifically these objectives were elaborated by Martha Brill Olcott, then adviser to US President George Bush: the United States must work closely with the Central Asian elites, prevent an emergence of anti-US sentiments among them, and have a detailed plan to provide access for young people, scholars and the cultural elite of those republics to 'American' values. Furthermore, the USA must help the Central Asian countries to become independent states—independent first of all from Russia, since only then will

¹³ Undeland, C. and Platt, N., *The Central Asian Republics: Fragments of Empire, Magnets of Wealth* (Asia Society: New York, 1994), pp. 117–18.

Central Asia, *de jure* independent, become independent *de facto*; this would help the USA promote its own interests in the region.¹⁴

In other words, it was important for the USA to resolve several strategic problems in the region: (a) preserving strategic stability in Central Asia, since otherwise it would be impossible to maintain US influence there; (b) ensuring the elimination of nuclear arms, of the means of their delivery and of nuclear materials deployed there; (c) creating conditions that would limit the opportunities for Russia to restore its position as a serious geopolitical force: without Central Asia, or at least without Kazakhstan, this would be impossible; (d) taking steps to contain China, which many US analysts saw as about to take its place among the world leaders of the 21st century—control over Central Asia would allow the USA to establish a presence on the western borders of China, where the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region of China, a region of critical importance for China, is located; (e) containing Iran; and (f) creating conditions that would help strengthen the USA's economic and political influence in Central Asia.

By the mid-1990s the USA had succeeded in attaining most of those objectives. By May 1995 nuclear weapons were withdrawn from the territory of Kazakhstan and launching facilities were dismantled.¹⁵ The TRACECA (Transport Corridor Europe Caucasus Asia) and GUUAM projects were started with a view to preventing the re-emergence of the Russian empire¹⁶ and limiting the influence of Russia in the Caucasus and Central Asia. In 1993–99 US direct investment in Kazakhstan reached approximately \$4 billion,¹⁷ making the USA its largest foreign investor. Most US investment went into exploration and production of hydrocarbons and the development of energy and communications facilities—that is, into the spheres whose normal functioning has a direct influence on the country's capabilities and national security. In November 1997 a major production-sharing agreement was signed between Kazakhstan and the USA concerning the Kazakh part of the Caspian Sea shelf, as well as an agreement on economic and strategic partnership. US President Bill Clinton stated that the USA saw Kazakhstan as a key state in Central Asia.¹⁸ In October 1999 Kazakhstan and other states of Central Asia were placed under the responsibility of the US Central Command (CENTCOM).¹⁹

However, these developments were not without complications. They led to tension between Kazakhstan and the USA, in particular in connection with the

¹⁴ 'United States policy toward Central Asia: statements by F. Kazemzadeh, M. Olcott and G. Mirsky', *Central Asia Monitor*, no. 5 (1992), pp. 24, 28.

¹⁵ For further detail see Laumulin (note 1), pp. 143–59; and Ivatova, L., *SSha vo Vneshney Politike Respubliki Kazakhstan* [The USA in the foreign policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan] (Almaty, 1999), pp. 142–44.

¹⁶ On the TRACECA project see the Internet site, URL <<http://www.traceca.org>>. GUUAM consists of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Uzbekistan, which also participate in the TRACECA project. Their relations with Russia are complex, and to a great extent they depend economically and politically on the West.

¹⁷ Kaufman, W., 'Where investments go', *All Over the Globe*, 7 Dec. 1999, p. 16.

¹⁸ *Kazakhstanskaya Pravda*, 19 Nov. 1997, p. 1.

¹⁹ Burk, A. U., 'The strategy of the USA in the Caspian Sea region', *Strategic Review*, vol. 27, no. 4 (1999), pp. 18–29.

USA's evaluation of the level of democracy of the regime as it has developed in Kazakhstan. The first crisis in relations occurred in 1995 when the Supreme Soviet of Kazakhstan was dissolved and a referendum was held on the extension of the president's powers until 2000. On 29 March 1995 the then US Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, in a speech at the University of Indiana in Bloomington described what had happened in Kazakhstan as a step backwards, and called on Nazarbayev to cancel the referendum and hold parliamentary elections immediately and presidential elections in 1996.²⁰

Kazakhstan's leaders did not respond. The crisis was contained, for several reasons. First, the USA wanted to continue to keep under observation the incomplete process of defence industry conversion in Kazakhstan. Second, a break in relations between Kazakhstan and the USA would have substantially reduced the opportunities for the USA to realize its geopolitical strategy in Central Asia. Third, it would entirely destroy the USA's strategy of diversification of Caspian energy strategy. Finally, it was not consistent with the interests of private US business.

Although it was contained, the crisis did not pass unnoticed for Kazakhstan. The USA made it clear that the future status of Kazakh-US relations would be in direct relation to the development of democratic processes in Kazakhstan.²¹ As the events of 1998–2000 showed, that was not a mere warning. Whenever the USA needed to put political pressure on the Kazakhstan leadership, the issues of democracy or human rights in Kazakhstan were always brought up, and there was ample occasion for that.²²

China in its turn clearly understood that internal instability in Central Asia and unresolved problems between the newly independent states there were aggravated by the struggle for spheres of influence in the region between Iran, Russia, Turkey and the USA, while open confrontation with any of them was not in China's interests. Using its potential for expanding trade and economic relations with Central Asia and limiting the negative influence of the political processes going on there on its own predominantly Muslim regions, China encouraged the Central Asian states to define their foreign economic and political priorities for themselves. The political role of the USA in the region was fairly acceptable for the Chinese leadership as it restricted Iran's influence, ensured at least the semblance of market reforms in the region, and reduced the influence of nationalist political forces there.

The presence in the region of Russia, which performed a similar function in relation to the growing Turkish influence, was also acceptable for China.²³ The evaluation of the social and political situation in the new states, which with the

²⁰ For further detail see Laumulin (note 1), pp. 213–14.

²¹ Interview of W. Courtney, US Ambassador to Kazakhstan, in *Panorama* (Almaty), 26 June 1995 (in Russian).

²² On the controversial character of the US policy towards Kazakhstan see Markin, S., 'Kazahstanskaya politika vashingtonskoy administratsii' [The Kazakhstan policy of the Washington Administration], *Central Asia and the Caucasus* (Luleå), no. 2 (8) (2000), pp. 79–87.

²³ *ZhongYa Yanjiu*, nos 1–2 (1992), pp. 14–15; and Harris, L. C., 'Xinjian, Central Asia and the implications for China's policy in the Islamic world', *China Quarterly*, no. 133 (Mar. 1993), p. 125.

exception of Tajikistan was viewed as relatively stable, was also of substantial importance for Chinese policy in post-Soviet Central Asia. In China's opinion, in spite of the significant political changes that had taken place in these states and the renaming or dissolution of former communist parties, real power still remained in the hands of reformers from the leadership of those parties.²⁴ The Chinese leadership therefore set itself the goal of supporting the existing political regimes in the Central Asian states. It also aimed among other things to help to resolve the problem of the growing influence of Islamic fundamentalists and Pan-Turkists in the Muslim regions of China itself, since, in the opinion of Chinese analysts, the Central Asian regimes were also apprehensive of the threats of Pan-Turkism and Islamic fundamentalism (especially the latter) and wanted to keep them in check.²⁵ This formulation of the issue was explained by the need to preserve stability in those regions of China that are predominantly Muslim. Both the central and the local Chinese authorities believed that their stability was directly related to the situation in the neighbouring Muslim republics that had gained independence.²⁶

By following this course over the past decade China has succeeded in solving four important problems. First, the territorial disputes with Central Asian states were settled in its favour, and the latter lost their major negotiating chip in any further dealings with China. Second, China strengthened its positions in all the states of the region both by building up its economic presence there and by becoming one of the main participants of the regional security system being formed. Third, in signing treaties with the states of Central Asia, China succeeded in gaining their support regarding the need to resist ethnic separatism and thus in splitting the Muslim population of Xinjiang from related ethnic groups in Central Asian states. Finally, as Russia and the new Central Asian states remained engulfed in political and economic crisis, a security threat from the north disappeared, thus leaving China with an opportunity to focus its attention on resolving other problems, such as developing its national economy and restoring Great China.

Iran, Pakistan and Turkey can hardly be considered important independent geopolitical players, despite the recent strengthening of their positions in Central Asia. However, having strong interests in the region and having established relations with various political factions there, those countries were playing an important role in the geopolitical game in Central Asia. Their policies were taken into account not only by the main geopolitical players—China, Russia and the USA—but also by the regional states, as the latter were striving to gain the maximum dividends from the conflict of interests between Russia and the USA in the Caspian region. Clear confirmation of that was provided by the positions taken by the Central Asian states, and by Kazakhstan in particular, in the debates regarding (a) the routes for the transport of hydrocarbon raw materials from the Caspian region, and (b) ways to resolve the Afghan problem.

²⁴ *ZhongYa Yanjiu* (consolidated issue), 1993, p. 24.

²⁵ *ZhongYa Yanjiu* (consolidated issue), 1993, p. 29.

²⁶ Harris (note 23), p. 125.

To conclude this analysis of the present geopolitical situation in the region, Kazakhstan has succeeded in solving its main national security problem, the preservation of its sovereignty and territorial integrity. This is partly thanks to its declared multi-directional foreign policy, but mainly because of Russia's lack of a clear Central Asian policy and the interest of China and the USA in maintaining the current political regime. Kazakhstan also succeeded in another foreign policy task—maintaining equitable relations with all interested states and keeping away from anti-Russian or anti-US blocs.

III. Social and economic reforms in Kazakhstan as a precondition of its national security

The concept of national security in relation to the nature of a political regime and the objectives proclaimed for the development of the state and society can be viewed in two ways. In a broad sense they can be seen as a set of measures ensuring favourable conditions for a normal life for the citizens of the country, who provide the basis for the free development of future generations. The role of the state as an institutional and ideologically organized form of power in this case is in making those conditions secure. In a narrow sense they can be seen as a set of measures to ensure the security of a state as an instrument of power for the ruling elite, that is, a group of individuals brought together by their corporate interests who are interested in creating the conditions to ensure their personal security and the security of their closest entourage. In this case the role of the state is to protect the corporate interests of this group from a negative reaction from the society and from external factors.

It is in this narrow sense that the national security strategy of Kazakhstan and the consequences of the social, economic and political reforms there are to be understood. A detailed description of the process of those reforms will not be attempted here: this chapter instead presents a few of their consequences in the context of the future development of the security of the state and of the society as a whole.

After national statehood was achieved, the development of society in Kazakhstan went in three directions. First, a bureaucratic ('comprador') bourgeoisie, wrongly identified as a national bourgeoisie, was formed. Second, different social groups were struggling to adapt more or less to the new economic realities. Among them were a few national entrepreneurs; workers and employees of industrial enterprises mainly operated by foreign managers; farmers who had changed over to traditional forms of labour; and those engaged in different services, such as 'shuttle traders', small and medium-size traders and craftsmen, and certain categories of technocrats and intellectuals. Third, an integral and constantly growing part of the society was the huge mass of marginalized individuals formally rejected by the society.

According to Arystan Esentugelov, Director of the Institute for Economic Research, the share of the most affluent in the population of Kazakhstan is only

3.3 per cent, while that of the poorest is 61 per cent.²⁷ According to Alikhan Baimenov, Minister of Labour and Social Welfare, around 66 per cent of the working population of the republic earn less than 13 000 tenge per month and 90 000 employees earn less than the minimum wage (2680 tenge).²⁸ The dangerous dynamic of the spread of poverty in Kazakhstan since 1996 has been reflected in official statistical publications. According to them the proportion of the population that is living on an income below subsistence level is now around 33 per cent.²⁹ In the opinion of this author this figure is substantially understated: after the major devaluation of the tenge in April 1999,³⁰ even judging by official publications, it was rapidly approaching 50 per cent.³¹

Thus, the transformation of the socialist property system has not led to the expected emergence of free property-owners and a free market, the establishment of a fair economic and legal environment, or the formation of a middle class. On the contrary, the society has found itself split into a minority of owners and a majority of non-owners. Instead of the emergence of free entrepreneurs it saw the development of the comprador bourgeoisie with all the attendant consequences associated with the growth of the 'shadow' economy and the collapse of the 'real' sector of the economy, the spread of corruption, the coalescence of power and mafia structures, and insufficient development of national industry. Kazakhstan was becoming a 'banana republic'.

First and foremost, this was the result of lack of vision in the economic development strategy of Kazakhstan. Second, as there has been extensive destruction of the country's productive forces the normal production process has become increasingly threatened. There are certain limits to the destruction of industrial infrastructure after which a nation loses its capacity to have an independent economy. In Kazakhstan those limits have not been reached yet, but if the existing trends continue the probability of them being reached will greatly increase. Third, the practice of transferring (in fact, selling) national enterprises to foreign owners has reached a scale which is disastrous for the country's economy. Foreigners already control entire sectors of the economy—the greater part of the oil and gas sector, the chemical industry, and ferrous and non-ferrous metals. In a situation when more than 70 per cent of industrial output and 90 per cent of industrial capacity are owned or controlled by foreign firms and companies it is difficult not to agree with Umirserik Kasenov, who claimed that it

²⁷ Esengulov, A., 'Novoye pravitelstvo Kazakhstana: nasledie i perspektivy' [The new government of Kazakhstan: heritage and prospects], *Asia: Ekonomika i Zhizn'*, no. 51 (Dec. 1997).

²⁸ Interfax (Kazakhstan), 25 Sep. 2000.

²⁹ *Kratkiy Statisticheskiy Ezhegodnik Kazakhstana, 2000* [Short statistical yearbook of Kazakhstan, 2000], Almaty, 2000, p. 25.

³⁰ The tenge fell against the US dollar by almost 50%. *Kazakhstan Economic Trends: Quarterly Issue Apr.–June 1999* (European Commission, Brussels), Sep. 1999, p. 115.

³¹ Nusupova, A. and Nusupov, A., 'Za chertoy bednosti' [Below the poverty line], *Delovaya Nedelya*, 9 June 2000.

was no longer a threat, but that Kazakhstan had actually lost its economic independence³²—incidentally paid for at the expense of Kazakhstan itself.³³

These processes resulted in comprador businesses dominating those business groups in the 'real' economy which work (or are trying to work) for the local market and for the development of genuine productive industry. This phenomenon is known to all countries that have been undergoing transformation and is quite understandable: the market immediately finds the fastest and easiest methods of making money. The experience of the countries that were most successful in the transformation proves that the main part in fighting the compradors has to be played by the state. Unfortunately productive business has not yet begun to overtake comprador business in Kazakhstan. As of today, the argument between the comprador bourgeoisie and the nascent national bourgeoisie has been won by the former, supported by foreign owners.

The main reason for this was political. The government openly changed its attitude towards the nascent national bourgeoisie when it saw in it a serious force. However, the government's hope that dealing with foreign capital would be easier and simpler than dealing with the national entrepreneurial bourgeoisie proved to be a myth.

This problem was one of the main issues of national economic security discussed in the National Security Council (NSC) in 2000. President Nazarbayev unequivocally emphasized that on the agenda was the defence of Kazakhstan's national interests, while Kairat Kelimbetov, Chairman of the Agency for Strategic Planning, specified that this problem was related to the activities of foreign companies in the republic and their failure to comply with national legislation.³⁴ The intention of the leadership to rely on oil and gas resources in national development is therefore untenable. Today foreign companies in Kazakhstan already control more than 80 per cent of crude oil production, own the most advanced refinery, and control 95 per cent of shares in the Offshore Kazakhstan International Operating Company (OKIOC),³⁵ and when oil and oil products account for over 40 per cent of export revenues³⁶ the question arises what will happen if foreign companies reduce or stop production, even for the most justifiable reason (such as a fall in oil prices, as has already happened more than once).

As 'reforms' went on, the motivation for conscientious creative work was destroyed. Standstills, a high turnover of personnel and rising unemployment drastically facilitated the process of deprofessionalization of personnel, and this resulted in significant losses of the intellectual and organizational potential of the country. According to Alikhan Baimenov, out of an economically active

³² Kasenov, U., 'Natsional'naya bezopasnost' Respubliki Kazakhstan: "okna uyazvimosti" [National security of the Republic of Kazakhstan: 'windows of vulnerability'], *Delovaya Nedelya*, 11 Sep. 1998.

³³ According to the latest available data capital flight from Kazakhstan has been on the increase, reaching 3% of GDP in 1996, 5.2% in 1997 and 7.7% in 1999. Diugai, N., 'On capital flight from Kazakhstan', *Kazakhstan Economic Trends: Quarterly Issue, Apr.–June 2000* (European Commission, Brussels), p. 21.

³⁴ *Panorama* (Almaty), no. 47 (1 Dec. 2000).

³⁵ *Delovoye Obozreniye Respublika*, no. 25 (16 Nov. 2000), p. 2.

³⁶ *Kazakhstan Economic Trends: Quarterly Issue, Apr.–June 2000* (note 33), p. 182.

Table 12.1. Immigration to and emigration from Kazakhstan

Figures are in thousand persons.

Year	No. of immigrants	No. of emigrants	Balance
1990	155.1	300.2	– 145.1
1991	206.1	255.0	– 48.9
1992	190.3	369.2	– 178.9
1993	111.3	333.4	– 222.1
1994	70.4	480.8	– 410.4
1995	71.1	309.6	– 238.5
1996	53.9	229.4	– 175.5
1997	38.1	299.5	– 261.4
1998	40.6	243.7	– 203.1
Total	936.9	2 820.8	– 1 883.9

Source: Statistical Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

population of 7 million, only 2.68 million people or 38.3 per cent are employed by large legal enterprises. The other 61.7 per cent are either self-employed or unemployed.³⁷ The number of the officially registered unemployed increased from 4000 in 1991 to 287 900 in April 2000.³⁸ Not only are those figures depressing; they also mean either that the state is not interested in the development of domestic production or that it is not interested in helping local manufacturers. Neither of these possibilities promises anything good for the ordinary citizens of Kazakhstan.

The narcotics trade and drug addiction are another major threat to the social and political stability of the country. The number of drug addicts increased by 400–13 000 per cent in different regions of the country over the 10 years 1991–2000. In 1997 there were 26 584 addicts officially registered in Kazakhstan, but according to the UN Office for Drugs Control and Crime Prevention (UNODCCP), their number is actually around 200 000.³⁹ Addicts have become much younger—the average age is down to 25 years and the majority are juveniles between 13 and 16 years of age. According to Rahat Aliyev, Deputy Chairman of the NSC and Director of the NSC division for the city of Almaty and Almaty Province, the number of children and juveniles who use drugs has grown 10-fold within the past five years.⁴⁰ The volume of traffic in narcotics has also increased significantly. Not very long ago people spoke in terms of grams and kilograms; now it is tonnes of drugs, not only of the cannabis group but also of opiates, psycho-stimulants and hallucinogens. Heroin and its derivatives have an increasing share in the traffic. According to the NSC division for

³⁷ Interfax (Kazakhstan), 25 Sep. 2000.

³⁸ *Statisticheskii Press-Bulleten* [Statistical press bulletin] (Almaty), no. 1 (2000), p. 63.

³⁹ UN Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, *Central Asia Review 2000* (Tashkent), p. 7.

⁴⁰ *Panorama* (Almaty), no. 47 (1 Dec. 2000), p. 1.

the city of Almaty and Almaty Province, in 2000 alone the authorities there seized 2 tonnes of drugs, of which 1150 kg were strong narcotics.⁴¹

The states of Central Asia have become involved in international drug transit and turned into an entrepôt for drugs of Afghan origin. Stable criminal groups have formed which are oriented exclusively to the drugs business. There is a high probability (in some cases it is already a reality) of their merging with the government and law enforcement structures. The seizure of 86 kg of heroin in cars owned by the Embassy of Tajikistan in Kazakhstan and the liquidation of 31 drug transit channels by the NSC division for the city of Almaty and Almaty Province are examples of that.⁴² For a large part of the population in some Central Asian states the drugs business has become the principal source of their livelihood, and this is understandable. It is tempting to receive \$100–200 for taking drugs over the border in a country where the minimum living wage is \$5–10 per month. The activities of criminal gangs and terrorist groups operating in Afghanistan, Russia and a number of areas in Central Asia are directly connected to the drugs business. They use drugs not only for the purchase of arms but also to apply pressure on their political opponents.

Aside from that the drugs trade is creating permanent tensions at the Afghan border and indirectly helps to expand the social base of ethnic separatism and Islamic extremism in the region, whose followers' activities look increasingly like terrorist acts.⁴³

Evaluating Kazakhstan's potential to ensure its national security, the government's demographic policy should be mentioned. As was mentioned above, it is seen as a national security priority. Around 3 million people have left Kazakhstan in the 10 years since it became independent (see table 12.1). It is active and educated people who emigrate. Of those 3 million who emigrated, 65 per cent were people of working age, 25 per cent were young people, and 45 per cent had higher and secondary vocational education.⁴⁴ Also, as surveys show, it is not so much the economic situation that drives people from Kazakhstan as uncertainty as to their own future, moral and psychological dissatisfaction with their status, and concern about the future of their children.⁴⁵

In the opinion of many experts, the main domestic threats to national security are the criminalization of society and official corruption.⁴⁶ The two are related.

⁴¹ Nazarbayev, N., 'Bezopasnost' v regione mozno obespechit' tolko sovmeštymi usilijami' [Security in the region can be ensured only with joint efforts], *Analiticheskoye Obozreniye*, no. 1 (Oct. 2000), p. 4; and *Panorama* (Almaty), no. 47 (1 Dec. 2000).

⁴² Aliyev, R., 'S narkomaniyey nuzhno borotsya vsem obshchestvom' [Drug addiction must be fought by the entire society], *Kontinent* (Almaty), no. 15 (2000), p. 17; and *Panorama* (Almaty), no. 47 (1 Dec. 2000), p. 1.

⁴³ For more detail on the problem of drug addiction and narcotics transit in Central Asia see *Kontinent* (Almaty), no. 15 (2000).

⁴⁴ Shaimerdenov, I., 'Po nekotorym otsenkam za posledniye 10 let Kazakhstan pokinulo okolo 3 millionov chelovek' [According to some estimates 3 million people left Kazakhstan in the past 10 years], *Panorama*, no. 3 (Jan. 2000).

⁴⁵ Brusilovskaya, Ye., 'Chego my boimsya bol'she vsego' [What we fear more than anything], *Argumenty i Fakty*, Mar. 1999; and Sergienko, V., 'Migratsiya v Kazakhstane: poteri i priobreteniya' [Migration in Kazakhstan: losses and acquisitions], *Kontinent* (Almaty), no. 9 (1999), pp. 16–18.

⁴⁶ *Natsional'naya Bezopasnost' Kazakhstana: Ierarkhiya Ugroz* [National security of Kazakhstan: hierarchy of threats] (Almaty, 2000), pp. 81–83.

Many officials feel that they are above the law and indulge in arbitrary and permissive behaviour. This is accompanied by a complete loss of control by the state, and democratic institutions are weak. It is therefore quite natural that corruption in Kazakhstan has penetrated practically all the branches of power. Under conditions when the share of the 'shadow' economy is estimated at 40–50 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP),⁴⁷ this permissiveness and arbitrariness on the part of officials leads to them merging with the criminal world and to the state being transformed into a mafia state.

There is no doubt that a reduction of the role of the state in the society, especially in the economic sphere, is necessary in the future. However, there is a real question mark over how far the society is ready to accept a reduced regulatory role for the state. Under existing conditions in Kazakhstan, such a reduction looks like a departure by the state from its responsibilities, in particular its responsibility for social and political stability. The more the state promotes ideas of free economy, the more difficult it is for it to control the social and political processes which are under way, especially in conditions where there is no self-regulation of social processes at all.

It is quite logical that the majority of the population of Kazakhstan view the situation in the country as a crisis, close to disaster or even already a disaster.⁴⁸ Hence the growth of social tensions in Kazakhstan. According to information provided by the office of the Procurator General, in January–September 1999 alone 808 protest actions took place in Kazakhstan, of which 284 were unauthorized. According to an opinion poll conducted in January 2000 by the Almaty Association of Sociologists and Politologists, 30.1 per cent of those polled answered 'yes' and another 16.8 per cent 'perhaps' when asked if they were ready to participate in actions of mass protest to defend their constitutional rights and freedoms.⁴⁹

To summarize, the political situation in Kazakhstan is approaching a critical stage characterized by: (a) a general popular distrust of politicians; (b) the incompetence of the authorities and their inability to resolve the accumulated social and economic problems, while social polarization continues to grow and contradictions between the managed and the managers become more and more obvious; (c) a personnel crisis, which is becoming all the more evident because of the widespread corruption of officials and the authorities' inability to take adequate measures to eradicate this corruption; (d) the criminalization of society, the coalescence of government officials with the underworld and the growth of organized crime; and (e) an increase in inter-ethnic tensions and irredentist movements.

⁴⁷ 'V Kazakhstane s korruptsiyey borotsya ne tolko ne umeyut, no i ne hotyat' [In Kazakhstan they not only cannot, they do not want to fight corruption], *Nachnem s Ponedel'nitsa*, 17 Nov. 1999.

⁴⁸ 'Aktzii massovogo protesta: eto nashe zavtra, a segodnya?' [Actions of mass protest: this is our tomorrow, but today? Poll by the Almaty Association of Sociologists and Politologists in Jan. 2000], *All Over the Globe*, 11 Feb. 2000.

⁴⁹ 'Aktzii massovogo protesta: eto nashe zavtra, a segodnya?' (note 48).

IV. New challenges and new approaches

At the end of the 1990s several significant events took place which in one way or another influenced the geopolitical situation in Central Asia and the balance of forces there.

Above all the foreign policy of Russia changed. In contrast to the period of orientation towards the USA when Andrey Kozyrev was foreign minister, the foreign policy of Russia, without denying the need to expand and strengthen relations with the West, is now focused on the East as well, in particular on Central Asia. It has become, if not tougher, certainly more pragmatic, and the national interest, in particular economic interests, predominates. These aspects of the Russian foreign policy became especially clear after the election of Vladimir Putin as president. Although it would be premature to speak of an integrated Russian foreign policy concept with regard to Central Asia today, it is impossible to deny that Russia is returning to this region, and not only in the political but also in the economic sense.

Notwithstanding the Central Asian states' participation in the NATO Partnership for Peace (PFP) programme, the USA's financing of certain programmes for ensuring security in the region, and uncertainty as to the positions of several Central Asian states on some key security issues, it is Russia (albeit jointly with China) that has become the main guarantor of security in Central Asia. Moreover it can be safely predicted that Russia's significance as protector of the security of the region will only increase because: (a) a repetition of the events of 1999 and 2000 in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan is inevitable;⁵⁰ (b) new security challenges are emerging in the region; (c) there will inevitably be changes in the US foreign policy priorities following the change of administration in Washington; and (d) Russia will become economically stronger.

This became particularly evident between the spring and autumn of 2000, when the incursion of Islamic militants into Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan took place and theoretical talks on the need to coordinate interstate positions on ensuring security moved onto a practical plane. In March 2000 in Astana at a session of the ministers of defence of the Shanghai Forum, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan announced the formation of a CIS anti-terrorist centre.⁵¹ In May 2000 the Collective Security Council (CSC) of the six Tashkent Treaty member states⁵² met in Minsk. A number of important documents and decisions aimed at reanimating the Tashkent Treaty and transforming it into a functioning tool for ensuring the security of the member states were considered and adopted at this session.⁵³ In September 2000 Sergey

⁵⁰ These fears are expressed by the leadership of Kazakhstan. The Secretary of the NSC, Marat Tazhin, stated that there was every reason to expect an aggravation of the situation on the southern frontiers of the Central Asian region in the spring and summer of 2001 (although there is no direct threat to Kazakhstan yet). *Panorama* (Almaty), no. 47 (1 Dec. 2000), p. 2.

⁵¹ See also chapter 5 in this volume.

⁵² Now Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan.

⁵³ Nikolayenko, V., 'Netraditsionnye otvety novym ugrozam' [Non-traditional responses to new threats], *Sodruzhestvo NG* [supplement to *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*], 27 Sep. 2000.

Ivanov, Secretary of the Russian Security Council, called on the heads of security councils of the Tashkent Treaty countries to stand up jointly to international terrorism. Finally, in October at the session of the CSC in Bishkek, the six heads of state signed an agreement on the Status of Forces and Facilities of the Collective Security System in the region, and approved a plan for the formation of a regional system of collective security. Under the agreements reached the parties may send military formations to the territories of Tashkent Treaty member states at their request and in coordination with them for joint deterrence of external military aggression, joint counter-terrorist operations, or command-and-staff and military exercises.⁵⁴ In December 2000 the Kazakhstan Majlis adopted a decision that allowed for Kazakh military contingents to participate in military operations beyond the national borders. No less significantly, the Tashkent Treaty countries were given the opportunity to buy Russian arms at reduced prices, which was important not only for the modernization of their armed forces but also for enhancing their combat readiness.⁵⁵

Russia is also winning the battle for transport of hydrocarbons from the Caspian region. Today the Russian routes and the Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC) are the only real option. The last joint of the CPC Tengiz–Novorossiysk pipeline system which provides a link between the new pipeline and the sea terminal has been welded. On 30 June 2001 the first tanker loaded with Caspian oil was expected to depart from the terminal in Novorossiysk, and this means that the route for the transport of Caspian oil has been finalized. This does not, of course, preclude the possibility of alternative routes being built, but at least two prerequisites are necessary for that—confirmation that commercially viable hydrocarbon reserves in the Caspian are available, and confirmation that those alternative routes are cost-effective. For the immediate future, neither of these conditions is met.

Some progress, at least within the framework of the Tashkent Treaty, was also made with regard to the threat from the Taliban in Afghanistan. The USA takes a similar view of the Taliban. Thomas Pickering, former US Under Secretary of State, has stated that Russia and the USA share the profound sense of threat from the Taliban and have agreed to strengthen sanctions against their regime because of its support for international terrorism and drugs dealing.⁵⁶ Unfortunately, so far this threat has been underestimated by Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, which are ready to collaborate with the Taliban,⁵⁷ and by certain officials in Astana who are not hostile to such groups in Afghanistan.⁵⁸ Time will show how Russia and the USA will act, but it is already clear that Kazakhstan's multi-directional policy has nothing further to offer and that in the

⁵⁴ Odnokolenko, O., 'Kontingent vyzyvali?' [Called a contingent?], *Segodnya*, 12 Oct. 2000.

⁵⁵ Mohov, V., 'Dogovor o kollektivnoy bezopasnosti napolnyaetsya konkretnym soderzhaniiem' [The Collective Security Treaty is given concrete substance], *Krasnaya Zvezda*, 13 Oct. 2000.

⁵⁶ 'Pickering on talks with Russians about Taliban', URL <<http://www.usembassy.ro/USIS/Washington-File/300/00-10-18/eur311.htm>>.

⁵⁷ Chernogayev, Yu., 'Podal'she ot Talibov' [Keep away from the Taliban], *Kommersant*, 5 Oct. 2000.

⁵⁸ 'K vizitu glavy Islamskoy Respubliki Pakistan generala Perveza Musharafa' [On the visit of General Pervez Musharaf, Head of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan], *Kazakhstanskaya Pravda*, 7 Nov. 2000.

immediate future all the states of Central Asia will have finally to determine their strategic priorities.

What has happened in Central Asia, and why did the return of Russia to the region happen so quickly? Doubtless the main factor in this, as mentioned above, was the change in Russia's foreign policy. The states of the region ceased to be seen as the Asian 'soft underbelly' and were placed in the category of strategic partners who are able to help in building not only their own security but also the security of Russia on its southern frontiers.

There were also other factors.

First and foremost, threats that had previously been discussed on an academic level suddenly became a reality. The spread of drugs and drugs trafficking through the territory of the Central Asian states, terrorism and extremism in their various manifestations, the prospect of another military intrusion, frontier problems, latent ethnic conflicts, confrontation over water and natural resources—all have priority in national security. Those problems are real not only for the states of Central Asia but for Russia itself, which encountered them before they did. Today, when those problems are becoming more acute in the region, the Russian experience of dealing with them is more useful than ever. Because of their economic situation and limited military potential, the states of Central Asia are not in a position to deal with these problems on their own. Finally, it is understood in Russia that if it does not localize these threats in the Central Asian region then it runs the risk of expanding the instability on its own southern frontiers.

Second, Russia's return to the region was also just as much influenced by the change in the attitude of the regional states—particularly Kazakhstan—towards the USA and by US policy in the region. By the end of the 1990s relations between the USA and the states of Central Asia had gradually moved from the economic to the political sphere. The logic of these changes is quite understandable. The USA has gained such a degree of influence in the region that it can use a wide range of methods of economic and political leverage in the event of a threat to its national interests. The strengthening of Russia's position in Central Asia was regarded as such a threat. As soon as the administration of President Bill Clinton realized that years of effort to draw the Central Asian states into the sphere of US foreign policy might be lost, massive political coercion began. The political regimes of Central Asian states began to be described as authoritarian. Scandalous material on corruption in the highest echelons of the Central Asian governments appeared in the US press.⁵⁹ In the spring of 2000, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan were visited, literally one after another, by the Director of the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), George Tenet, the Director of the Federal Bureau of Intelligence (FBI), Louis Freeh, and finally then Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. Aside from the

⁵⁹ Minutes of the US Congress Sessions, 2nd session of the 106th Convocation: Resolution 397 of the House of Representatives, *Congressional Record*, 1 Nov. 2000, URL <<http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/multidb.cgi>>; Tagliabu, J., 'Kazakhstan is suspected of oil bribes worth USD100 million', *New York Times*, 28 July 2000; and Perlmutter, A., 'Kazakhstan: more words than deeds', *Washington Times*, 4 Oct. 2000.

declared objectives (clarifying the prospects for US business in the region and the human rights situation), all these visitors explored the attitudes of the Central Asian presidents to strengthening ties with Moscow. Nor was it by chance that these visits were made by very senior representatives of the US Administration: they were to demonstrate the USA's potential to influence the political situation in Central Asian states in the event of any of them being inclined to take decisions which were not in the strategic interests of the USA in the region. (The results of this strategy proved, in fact, quite discouraging, because the real threats to the region's security were more significant than those that can be dealt with by injections of cash or troop landings in the framework of PFP exercises.) The USA's persistent attempts to put political pressure on the states of the region were not only negatively received in those states, but were criticized in the USA, too.

A third factor that helped the states of Central Asia and Russia to draw closer was their liberation from the illusions of the first years of independence. While their own resources turned out not to be a sufficient basis for ensuring economic growth, the financial aid and investment promised by the West remained mainly good intentions. Furthermore, as became apparent, at least to the Kazakhstan leadership, foreign investors were no less a threat to the economic security of the country than dishonest domestic businessmen. In conformity with the new realities certain changes appeared in Kazakhstan in approaches to the issues of national security.

In a message to the people of the country on 24 October 2000, President Nazarbayev set out four principal priorities for the medium term.⁶⁰ The first was building an efficient system of regional security in Central Asia with the Tashkent Treaty and the Shanghai Forum as its basis. The second was military reform aimed at building a strong modern army. The objectives of implementing the military doctrine and military reform concept that had already been adopted were highlighted within the framework of this priority. The government was instructed to allocate annually not less than 1 per cent of GDP for the needs of the Ministry of Defence, to build an advanced system of territorial defence and to restore a comprehensive system of mobilization training. Third was the fight against drugs and drugs trafficking. Concrete objectives were set to introduce programmes to fight drugs and drugs trafficking in every province and to earmark funds in the budget of every district for such programmes. Finally, the fourth priority was the implementation of an economic security strategy. In accordance with presidential instructions, the Agency for Strategic Planning and the NSC prepared a draft Strategy of National Economic Security in which the experience of other countries that had undergone similar economic transformation was examined exhaustively. This allowed four main elements of the economic security of Kazakhstan to be identified—structural, technological, institutional and financial—as well as specific measures to implement them.⁶¹

⁶⁰ *Kazakhstanskaya Pravda*, 25 Oct. 2000, p. 1.

⁶¹ Tazhin, M., 'Vyzovam vremeni—pravil'nye otvety' [Right response to the challenges of the time], *Kazakhstanskaya Pravda*, 24 Nov. 2000.

Some work is being done today on the practical implementation of those priorities. The strengthening of the Tashkent Treaty system and the creation of the CIS anti-terrorist centre have been mentioned above. In April 2000 a treaty on 'joint efforts to fight terrorism, political and religious extremism, transnational organized crime and other threats to the stability and security of the parties' was signed by all the Central Asian states with the exception of Turkmenistan. Work continued on ways of enhancing the potential of the Shanghai Forum in fighting security threats in the region. Along with this Kazakhstan is continuing the speedy reinforcement of its borders. This includes the creation of four military districts, additional military units and formations along the border, new clearance points in the southern part of the border, mobile military units, and an air force formation to secure efficient control of the entire airspace of Kazakhstan. In order to fight extremism and terrorism Kazakhstan is taking a range of legal and operative measures to prevent illegal activities of unregistered religious communities, sects and spiritual educational organizations. Finally, measures are being undertaken to strengthen passport and visa controls as well as control of international transport communications.⁶²

⁶² Tazhin, M., 'Natsional'naya bezopasnost' Kazakhstana: novoye ponimaniye, novye podkhody' [The national security of Kazakhstan: new understanding, new approaches], *Analiticheskoye Obozreniye*, Oct. 2000, pp. 9–10.