

## **Multi – vector policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Part 1**

Since obtaining independence Kazakhstan's foreign policy has been based on a principle of multi-vector relations that was declared by Nursultan Nazarbayev as soon as he was elected the country's president on 1 December 1991.

President Nazarbayev believes that the multi-vector policy means “the development of friendly and predictable relations with all states that play a significant role in global politics and represent practical interest for our country. Kazakhstan, because of its geopolitical position and economic potential, cannot limit itself to narrow-regional problems. This would not be understandable to not only our multiethnic population but the entire international community. Kazakhstan's future is both in Asia and Europe, in East and West. By pursuing exactly this policy will we be able to avert any manifestations of threats to Kazakhstan's security. We will be able to strengthen favorable external conditions by economic and political transformations in our country.”

This position has largely been defined by the country's geopolitical position, its multiethnic and religiously diverse population and the level of economic development as a whole.

Taking into account the current international realities the main emphasis in Kazakhstan's foreign policy strategy has been placed on ensuring an efficient security system in Central Asia which is aimed at preventing unconventional threats and challenges (international terrorism, religious extremism, drug trafficking and illegal migration) posed by Afghanistan and other countries bordering the region.

In order to solve this problem the Republic of Kazakhstan found it expedient to focus on the following priority foreign policy aspects:

- involvement in interstate associations – the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO);
- strategic cooperation with Russia and China;
- friendly relations with Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan;
- constructive cooperation with the USA, European Union countries and international organizations, such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation Organization (the OSCE) and NATO.
- cooperation with the countries of the Islamic world; and
- partner relations with Asia-Pacific countries.