

Issue 2, September - December, 2014




NAZARBAYEV
UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF PUBLIC POLICY

GSPP NEWSLETTER

GOOD GOVERNANCE MATTERS





Dear all we are pleased to present the second issue of our quarterly Newsletter. We have witnessed various events in the latest quarter and would like to share these moments with you.

In this **ISSUE:**

Singapore Component	3
Notable events	6
Grand Opening	6
OHE	7
Field trip to Village	8
Public Talks	9
Internal	
External	
New Books	11
Research highlights	12
Faculty achievements	13
Upcoming events	14
In the News	15

SPOTLIGHT

SINGAPORE COMPONENT

The Master in Public Policy students (senior cohort) took their Singapore Component core module in the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore on 10-30 November, 2014.

Apart from academic studies students met with Members of Parliament, ministers, CEOs of brand companies, government agencies, NGOs and other officials. The Programme also included visits to Land Transport Authority, Singapore Tourism Board, Institute of Technical Education, Port of Singapore Authority, Public Service Division, Ministry for Education and other organisations.



STUDENTS ALSO ATTENDED INSPIRING TALKS BY

- Martin Wolf, the chief economics commentator at the Financial Times,
- Ambassador of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Singapore Tommy Koh on a topic "Singapore's Foreign Policy and the Practice of Diplomacy", and,
- CEO of Microsoft Thailand, Dr. Haresh Khoobchandani about the role of technology and innovation in policy making and many others.

Moreover GSPP students had an opportunity to meet and network with LKY School students at a get together BBQ event.



The students also had many fun activities – tai-chi, yoga, tours around the main sightseeing and even a weekend tour to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Photos from the trip can be viewed on our website under Photo Gallery section.

Overall the students had a fantastic experience and we expect them to share their impressions with us very soon!



INCREDIBLE EXPERIENCE IN SINGAPORE

Written by Aigul BATALOVA. December 7, 2014.



Personally, I have always known that having opportunity to study at Nazarbayev University is a big luck, because this university provides students not only with excellent knowledge, but pays great attention to training future leaders. Thus, for example, one of the courses especially designed for graduate students of Public Policy School was a 3-weeks trip to the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, National University of Singapore. In November this year 19 students from senior class of Public Policy School had a chance to travel and study in one of the most developed countries – Singapore.

First, Singapore component was great in terms of academic experience. Almost every day we had intensive lectures with top LKY professors, who introduced us to modern academic methodology,

principles of governance, as well as Singapore's public policy practices. In addition to that, after theoretical lectures at school we had some practical experience: site-visits to government agencies, national companies, or infrastructure objects. This gave us an opportunity to learn how Singapore companies create efficient policies, alongside with building transparent and solid relationships with public, which is essential component of overall success of the nation. Here is the list of largest institutions where we have been to: Jurong Town Council, Urban Redevelopment Authority, Temasek Holding, Housing Development Board, U-town of National University of Singapore. More than that, at the end of the second week we had a trip to Malaysia's capital city Kuala-Lumpur, where we observed city's construction development and



also had an interesting talk with young leaders of Malaysian opposition parties. As a result, by the end of the Module we were fully equipped with new knowledge and ideas.

Second, journey to Singapore was great in terms of emotions and personal experience. For example, I learned new culture, tried various cuisines and met different people. We had an opportunity to meet international MPP students who do the same program in the LKY School in Singapore. We have become friends and now keep in touch with them, discuss our previous work experiences, and share ideas about future careers. I think, these new connections are important, because they have a potential to contribute a lot in terms of professional networking across the whole Asia in the future. Also, what I personally will never forget about Singapore are those beautiful places that I've had a chance to visit: Marina Bay Sands, China Town, Little India, Singapore Botanic Gardens, Sentosa Island. I enjoyed fabulous views there and dreamed about what can be done in my country in terms of developing local infrastructure and tourism to such level.

What else did I learn in Singapore? Indeed, 3 weeks Singapore Module was a great experience. I came to conclusion that this city-state is very unique in many aspects, which is mainly due to good governance. Singapore is very famous for its successful public policy programs and projects.

Such policies as public housing, anticorruption policy, and urban redevelopment are great examples of government's success. In my opinion many countries, including Kazakhstan can learn from Singapore, take ideas and follow some examples. However, I also made a conclusion that just simply copying and implementing Singapore's models and then expecting the same success is less likely a wise solution, because history, cultural features and society structure of Singapore differ and must be taken into consideration as predominant factors of analysis. But, again, there are many lessons that we, future policy-makers, learned from Singapore. I am glad that Nazarbayev University has partnered with Singapore's top University to create a Public Policy School, because Singapore has a great Public Policy system which made a country such a big success in a short period of time and we can generally learn a lot from them.

Overall it was my first experience in the South-East Asia and a very impressive one. MPP Module was extremely intensive and very-well organized. I would like to thank the LKY School for keeping us busy all the time and introducing to Singapore's policy making system and its busy life and of course Nazarbayev University for giving such an opportunity and making this trip possible. It was an amazing journey.

NOTABLE EVENTS

GRAND OPENING CEREMONY OF NEW BUILDING



On 30 November, 2014 the Graduate School of Public Policy and the Graduate School of Business held an Opening Ceremony of New Building which was officially opened by the Prime-Minister of Kazakhstan Karim Massimov.

Among the guests there were ministers, ambassadors, and heads of national companies. The Head of Central Bank Kairat Kelimbetov and Minister for Foreign Affairs Erlan Idrissov were also honored guests of this event.

At the Ceremony, two Memorandums of Cooperation were signed. One was between the National Bank of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Nazarbayev University and the Kazakh Ministry of Education. Another was signed between the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Nazarbayev University. The signing of Memorandums of Cooperation opens

opportunities for executive education programmes, students' internships and other ways of cooperation. Following the Opening Ceremony Minister Erlan Idrissov gave a lecture to students of both schools on the foreign policy of Kazakhstan, which was informative and interesting.

The new building is equipped with huge lecture rooms and conference halls in which various world-class events, seminars and conferences are to take place. Both Schools are expected to move to the new building in the next year.

OPEN HOUSE EVENT

On October 28, 2014, NU GSPP held an Open House Event for potential students. Over 100 participants registered for the Information Session. Participants received information regarding our Master degree programmes (MPP&MPA), admissions procedure, curriculum, application deadlines etc. In 2015, the new master's programme, the MPA will be launched for the first time. The MPA gives an opportunity to students to earn a degree while retaining their jobs.

The Open House Information Session was held jointly with the School's strategic partner – the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy. In the Q&A session, prospective students had an opportunity to get further detailed information. After the Information Session all potential applicants had an opportunity to network with each other and meet GSPP staff, faculty and students during the coffee break.



FIELD TRIP TO VILLAGE

On September 19, 2014 MPP students made a field trip to the village Novorybinka, Akmola region. This field trip is a part of Social Policy module and its major objectives are to raise students' awareness of the Kazakhstani rural life, learn about the challenges faced by rural citizens and encourage students' critical reflection on the use and application of various social policies and social assistance forms targeted at different disadvantaged groups of population.



Field trips are part of interactive/blended learning process which GSPP uses to maximize MPP students' understanding and awareness of the existing problems and contribute to raising a new generation of policy makers. Students are expected to integrate their own observations gleaned from the trip with materials used during the Social Policy class.

NU GSPP is grateful to Akimat of Akmola oblast and specifically to Akims of Novorybinka and Mikhailovka to make this trip memorable and successful!



PUBLIC TALKS



НУ ЖМСМ-дегі СПИКЕРЛЕРДІҢ ДӘРІСТЕРІ SPEAKER SERIES AT NU GSPP ГОСТЕВЫЕ ЛЕКЦИИ В ВШГП НУ



NU GSPP held a number of Guest Lectures since September. So far we have invited the following speakers:

- Erlan Idrissov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan with a lecture on Foreign Policy of Kazakhstan on November 30;
- Gulshara Abdykalikova, State Secretary of the Republic of Kazakhstan with a lecture on a topic "The Role of Human Capital in Sustainable Development of Kazakhstan" on November 20;
- William Fierman, Professor of Central Eurasian Studies, Department for Central Eurasian Studies in Indiana University Bloomington with a Lecture on Language Policy in post-Soviet Kazakhstan on November 26;
- Prof. M. Ramesh talked about the "Health Care Policy in China and India in the 1990s: Wrong Tools for the Wrong Job" on September 30;
- Michael Howlett, Professor of LKY school at NU GSPP hold a Public Talk "Dealing with Failure

Over the Long-Term: Policy Synchronization and Adaptive Policy Design" on September 24;

- Eduardo Araral, Assistant Professor of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy made a lecture "Kazakhstan 2050: Economic Diversification, Lessons From East Asia" on September 8;
- WTO Representatives make a presentation on "When Kazakhstan accedes to the WTO: what would it gain? What would its role be?" on September 5, 2014;
- Sayasat Nurbek, Director of Public Policy Institute at Nur Otan Party talked about "Policy and Politics in Practice" on September 4;
- Wu Xun, Professor of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy delivered a Public Lecture on "Policy Innovations in Singapore" on August 29.

Videos and materials of these guest lectures can be found on our website under Speaker Series Section.

REACHING OUT

In addition to inviting guest lectures to NU, GSPP has also provided a few Public Talks to external organizations:

Anton Pak, a Teaching Assistant of NU GSPP jointly with Dr. Eduardo Araral, the Assistant Professor of the LKY_School gave a Public Talk on a topic "The Impact of Oil_Price Volatility in Stock Markets" for LKY School students and faculty members on November 13, 2014 in Singapore.

On 8 October GSPP Professor Marcel de Haas gave a guest lecture "Global security tendencies from the Hague to Beijing" for graduate students of the Faculty of International Relations of the Kazakh National University Al-Farabi in Almaty and on 24 September he lectured at the National Defence University on a topic 'An analysis of Kazakh security documents' and 'Afghanistan and NATO-Russia cooperation'. There were some 50 officers, mostly colonels, some lieutenant-colonels and a couple of majors, as well as the Commandant of the NDU.

Professor de Haas has also given recently a lecture on Kazakhstan's Security policy at George Washington University for Bolashak students.

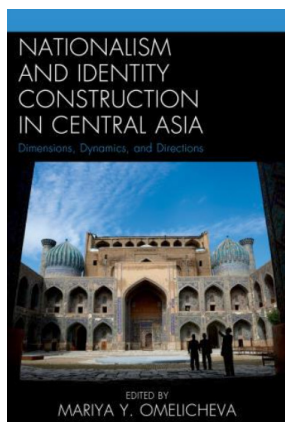
Dean Neil Collins made a presentation "Innovative approaches: Citizens as Customers" in the Agency for Civil servants on 8 December, 2014.

We are also pleased to note that Kazakhstan's Foreign Affairs Minister E. Idrissov visited the LKY School and made a Public Talk on "The Eurasian Economic Union and Implications for Asia" for LKY School students on August 28, 2014.

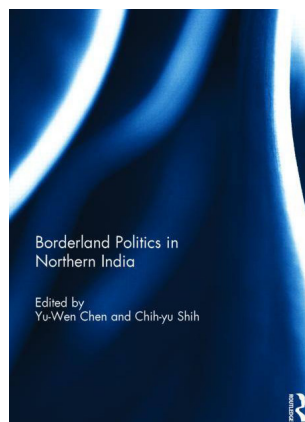


BOOKS

WE ARE DELIGHTED TO ANNOUNCE THAT GSPP FACULTY
CO-AUTHORED SEVERAL BOOKS WHICH HAVE BEEN
PUBLISHED RECENTLY:



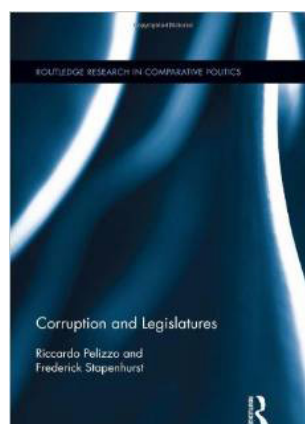
GSPP Assistant Professor Aziz Burkhanov has co-authored a chapter in a new book *Nationalism and Identity Construction in Central Asia: Dimensions, Dynamics, and Directions*. The book will be available in December. More details are at <https://rowman.com/ISBN/9780739181348>



GSPP Prof. Julie Yu Wen Chen has co-edited book *Borderland Politics in Northern India* which has been published and appeared in the US market on October 16. More details are on <http://www.amazon.com/Borderland-Politics-Northern-India-Yu-Wen/dp/113881329X>



GSPP Dean Neil Collins has co-authored a chapter in *Comparative Public Administration*. More details are on <http://www.amazon.com/Comparative-Public-Administration-J-A-Chandler/dp/0415569281>



GSPP Prof. Riccardo Pelizzo has written chapters on the costs of corruption, legislative ethics, political finance and co-authored chapters on corruption, public trust and political will in *Corruption and Legislatures*.

Details are on http://www.amazon.com/Corruption-Legislatures-Routledge-Research-Comparative/dp/0415730104/ref=sr_1_2?ie=UTF8&qid=1418189680&sr=8-2&keywords=corruption+and+legislatures

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS



CONGRATULATIONS



TO OUR STAFF ON WINNING THE RESEARCH GRANT!

Dean of NU GSPP Neil Collins and GSPP Teaching Instructor Saltanat Janenova have won Workshop Grants in the amount of 39,600 GBP and 26,000 GBP respectively under the Researcher Links Programme in Kazakhstan which is a part of the Newton – Al-Farabi Partnership Programme, launched in 2014 by the UK Government and the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

As a result Prof. Neil Collins (Nazarbayev University, Kazakhstan) in collaboration with Dr Claire A. Dunlop and Prof Claudio M. Radaelli, University of Exeter, UK will hold a Workshop “Learning in Governance” on 2-5 February, 2015 in Nazarbayev University. Applicants must be early-career researchers in political science, public policy and international relations based either in the UK or Kazakhstan.

Saltanat Janenova in cooperation with Dr. Tony Kinder, a professor from the Business School of the University of Edinburgh will hold a joint workshop GSPP on “Public Service Innovations and Modernization using ICT: Opportunities and

Challenges for Early-Career Researchers” on 2-6 February, 2015 in Nazarbayev University. They will share current research on public policy delivery including tele-medicine, e-learning, smart government etc. In particular, they will assess the impact in the UK and Kazakhstan of best practices in public service innovations and propose ways for further dissemination of lessons learned. The scholars will consider joint projects and co-authorship to deepen our research links.

All travel and accommodation expenses for abovementioned workshops will be covered by the British Council’s Newton Fund Researcher Links Programme.

The Newton – Al-Farabi Partnership Programme is coordinated by the British Council for the UK and JSC Science Fund for Kazakhstan. For information on more funding opportunities available under the programme please visit <http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/science/current-opportunities/kazakhstan-workshop-governance>



RESEARCH
LINKS



Newton – Al-Farabi
Partnership Programme

FACULTY **ACHIEVEMENTS**

Riccardo Pelizzo's appointment

Our Associate Professor Riccardo Pelizzo has been appointed as a member of the Scientific Committee of the International Conference on Public Policy (ICPP) meeting in Milan!

The Scientific Committee is comprised of the most senior and accomplished public policy academics in the world including the editors of all the top journals in the field. ICPP is the main scholarly society for schools of public policy worldwide - affiliated with Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority (IPSA) and American Political Science Association (APSA).

ICPP is of great importance as it can open many opportunities for GSPP: 1) faculty recruitment; 2) research collaboration; 3) conferences; 4) get GSPP work cited; 5) opportunities for visiting appointments in other schools and many others.



818 | POLITICS & POLICY / December 2014

Best reviewer award!

GSPP Professor Riccardo Pelizzo was acknowledged as the Best Reviewer and awarded by Politics and Policy!

Congratulations Riccardo! It is a hard work to review and become the best in it! Well done!

Politics & Policy Distinguished Reviewer Award 2014

Riccardo Pelizzo

Nazarbayev University, Astana, Kazakhstan

Athanasios Hristoulas

Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México (ITAM)

Mark Yaniszewski

University of Western Ontario

We look forward to receiving, reading, and acting on the recommendations of such excellent reviews during the production of volume 43 next year. Our full list of reviewers for manuscripts processed or published in 2014 follows on the next page. Thank you, all!

EMMA R. NORMAN and DAVID MENA ALEMÁN
Editors-in-Chief

UPCOMING EVENTS

Workshop	Learning in Governance	Public Service Innovations and Modernization using ICT: Opportunities and Challenges for Early-Career Researchers
Dates	2-6 February, 2015	2-5 February, 2015
Venue	Nazarbayev University, Astana	Nazarbayev University, Astana
Eligibility	Early career researchers from the UK and Kazakhstan	Early career researchers from the UK and Kazakhstan
Field	tele-medicine, e-learning, smart government	political science, public policy and international relations
Application Deadlines	30 November, 2014	
Funding	All travel and accommodation expenses will be covered by the British Council's Newton Fund Researcher Links Programme	

IN THE NEWS



NU GSPP faculty Aziz Burkhanov issued an Opinions article “Hollande’s Visit to Kazakhstan: Education in Focus, Finally” in Astana Times on 9 December, 2014.

French President François Hollande visited Astana and Almaty on Dec. 5-6. This is the third visit of a French president to Kazakhstan, after François Mitterrand in 1993 and Nicolas Sarkozy in 2009. These visits roughly reflect the dynamics of French relations with Central Asia. It seems that after an initial fascination culminated with Mitterrand’s visit to Kazakhstan in September 1993, French interest in the region went into decline, except for a short boost during the anti-Taliban campaign in Afghanistan. In the past few years, however, we see a reengagement of France with Central Asia, with Sarkozy visiting Kazakhstan in 2009 and Hollande in 2014. I studied French policy towards post-Soviet Central Asia back in the early 2000s during my time at the University of Paris II Panthéon-Assas and I recall that at that time France was still trying to figure out what Central Asia could offer to France and vice versa.

Of course, speaking in economic terms, France remains one of the largest foreign investors in Kazakhstan and is largely present in the country’s oil and gas sector. Total, the French energy

major, is involved in the North Caspian Operating Company as well as in the giant Kashagan oil field exploration. Several dozen French companies operate in Kazakhstan, including Alcatel-Lucent, Alstom, Areva, Vicat, GDF-Suez, Danone, Maury, Sanofi-Aventis, la Société Générale, Thales, Total, Schlumberger, Thales Engineering Kazakhstan and Ifastar Rollers. This is all very important, indeed. There is, however, one area where France possesses a major resource that remains largely underused – that is education and culture. Back in my student days, learning the French language and going to France for studies was considered somewhat outlandish, exotic and at times even bizarre compared to the “mainstream” outflow of students to the United States, United Kingdom and Germany. Even today, although the situation has improved, France still significantly lags behind in numbers of young Kazakhs choosing French universities for their studies. This is why it is a particular pleasure to see that besides political and economic issues, this visit also focused on education. I’m pleased to see that during his visit to Kazakhstan, Hollande took part in the educational forum and in the grand opening of the Sorbonne-Kazakhstan Institute campus in Almaty. The Alliance Française is expanding its operations across the country, making learning the French language more accessible.

New initiatives are offered to French students and scholars interested in Central Asia. I hope that this, along with the facilitated visa regime, will bring more French students to the region and help to establish new contacts and expand existing ones. I believe that connections between peoples and countries become stronger not just through a general fascination about a country, but through those personal contacts, interactions and friendships.

Back in the day, when France still had a compulsory military service, some young Frenchmen had an option and preferred to go abroad (including Kazakhstan) to teach the French language and promote French culture. This programme tremendously helped me and many other young

Kazakhs to improve their French language skills and make a choice in favour of studying in France. I hope all this will help to keep the prestige of French education among younger generations of Kazakhs and more students will pursue their studies there. I'm also pleased to hear that a new, direct flight between Astana and Paris will be launched in March 2015. I recall that an intergovernmental

agreement on this was signed back in 1993. It took a good 22 years for this wonderful initiative to actually happen. One would only hope that future cooperation initiatives will not have to wait that long.

The author is a PhD and Assistant Professor at Nazarbayev University

NU GSPP professor Marcel de Haas issued Dutch newspaper opinion article *Kazakhstan has to navigate between big brothers* in Friesch Dagblad on 7 October 2014.

KAZAKHSTAN HAS TO NAVIGATE BETWEEN BIG BROTHERS

10 **Opinie**

Kazakhstan moet laveren tussen grote broers

De Centraal-Aziatische republiek Kazachstan ligt ingeklemd tussen Rusland en China. Om die twee grote broers en het Westen te vriend te houden, is een doordacht en voorzichtig buitenlands en veiligheidsbeleid vereist.

Analyse
Marcel de Haas

Kazachstan is een voormalige Sovjetrepubliek in Centraal-Azië, met als hoofdstad Astana. Het land heeft een inwonertal vergelijkbaar met Nederland maar is meer dan zeventig keer groter. Kazachstan neemt een bijzondere plaats in, zowel in de voormalige Sovjetregio als internationaal. Kazachstan is verreweg de grootste Centraal-Aziatische republiek. In het bezit van aanzienlijke olie- en gasvoorraden. Voorts ligt deze staat ingeklemd tussen Rusland en China. Om die twee grote broers – met bevolkingaantallen van bijna tienduizend (Rusland) en 75 (China) zo groot, en niet grote legers en kernwapens – en het Westen te vriend te houden, is een doordacht en voorzichtig buitenlands en veiligheidsbeleid vereist. Hoe doet men dat? Naast bilaterale samenwerking met deze grote mogendheden, vooral ook door actieve deelname aan organisaties, waartoe Moskou en Peking een hoofdstad spelen. Op militair gebied is dat de Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), een militair alliantie vergelijkbaar met de NAVO. Zo heeft het net als de westerse alliantie een militair bijstandsanalyse waarbij een aantal op een enkel CSTO-land geleid als een aanval op allen. Naast Kazachstan en Rusland zijn twee andere Centraal-Aziatische staten lid, Kirgizstan, Tadzjikistan, evenals Armenië en Wit-Rusland. De CSTO is tegenwoordig, gezien de terugtrekking door het Westen van de meeste troepen na 2014, vooral gefocust op Afghanistan, met de gevechten van terroristen

en drugshandel die uit dit land worden komen. De CSTO berischt zich voor op de NAVO-terugtrekking uit Afghanistan met militaire oefeningen – zoals onlangs nog in Karaganda in Kazachstan – en met versterking van de grensbeveiliging van Kirgizstan en Tadzjikistan.

Eurasiatische Unie
Naast de militaire organisatie CSTO is Kazachstan nauw betrokken bij de oprichting van de Eurasiatische Unie (Eurasian Union), vanuit de huidige douane-unie met Rusland en Wit-Rusland. In januari 2015 moet deze economische organisatie, als tegenwoordige van de Europese Unie (EU), formeel van start. Aan de leiding voor EAU of EU ligt de crisis rond Oekraïne ten grondslag. Weliswaar zullen Kirgizstan en Tadzjikistan, die voor hun overleving grotendeels afhankelijk zijn van Rusland, zich ook bij de EAU aansluiten, maar zonder Oekraïne is de economische slagkracht van deze nieuwe organisatie maar beperkt. Zowel CSTO als EAU zijn instrumenten van Moskou

– dat zichzelf als rechtsopvolger van de Sovjet-Unie en daarmee als leider van de regio beschouwt – om voormalige Sovjetrepublieken aan zich te binden en een gezamenlijk beleid jegens het Westen te voeren. Kazachstan is zich er goed van bewust dat het de andere grote spelers in de regio, China, ook te vriend moet houden. Samen met Peking en Moskou maakt Astana deel uit van de Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). De SCO is – maar wel op afstand – enigzins vergelijkbaar met de EU, omdat het actief is op politiek, economisch en veiligheidsgebied. Naast genoemde drie landen maken verder nog drie Centraal-Aziatische staten, Oezbekistan, Kirgizstan en Tadzjikistan deel uit van



De Iraanse president Rouhani (l) bezoekt vorige maand zijn Kazachstaanse ambtgenoot Nazarbayev. Iran en Kazachstan werken samen aan een spoorweginfrastructuur dat beide landen en Turkmenistan met elkaar verbindt. Foto: AFP

We zullen zien hoe Astana haar unieke voortrekkersrol verder gaat benutten

de SCO. Voorts kent de SCO waarnemers, te weten Mongolië, Iran, Pakistan, India en Afghanistan. Met grote leveranciers – Rusland, Iran, Kazachstan en Oezbekistan – en grote afnemers – India en China – zijn olie en gas naast wederom de ontwikkelingen rond Afghanistan, belangrijke agenda-items voor de SCO.

NAVO
Gerzien het bovenstaande zou je concluderen dat Kazachstan uit-

sluitend op het Oosten is georiënteerd. Dat is zeker niet het geval. Astana onderhoudt ook goede betrekkingen met de NAVO, waarmee het dit jaar al twintig jaar samenwerft in het verband met het Partnerschap voor de Vrede. Zo houden Kazachstan en de NAVO jaarlijks gezamenlijke militaire oefeningen. Verder zijn in Astana ook vertegenwoordigers aanwezig van de EU en de Organisatie voor Veiligheid en Samenwerking in Europa (OSCE). Als eerste niet-westerse staat heeft Kazachstan in 2010 het voorzitterschap gevoerd van deze organisatie.

Hoeveel de Kazachse veiligheidsdocumenten – gezien de geografische positie en het gezamenlijke verleden – een duidelijke voorkeur uitdrukken voor het Oosten, doet dit land er alles aan om door een zogeheten 'multivector'-beleid samenwerking te onderhouden met alle richtingen, dus ook met het Westen. Door haar unieke positie en veelzijdige buitenlandse beleid heeft Astana

het vermogen om een bemiddelaar te spelen. Dat komt goed naar voren bij de huidige problematiek rond Oekraïne, waarbij Kazachstan samen met Moskou en Minsk optreedt maar ook heldere signalen afgeeft dat het klein niet in de kou staat en dat dit conflict geen belemmering vormt voor samenwerking met NAVO en EU. Ook de NAVO-terugtrekking vanuit Afghanistan biedt Kazachstan de mogelijkheid om de samenwerking tussen Oost en West met betrekking tot Afghanistan te intensiveren, wat ook een dringende werking kan hebben op de gespannen relaties tussen Moskou en het Westen. We zullen zien hoe Astana haar unieke voortrekkersrol verder gaat benutten.

Prof. dr. M. de Haas is hoogleraar Public Policy aan de Nazarbayev University in Astana, Kazachstan. Hij is tevens verbonden aan het Instituut Clingendael en de Rijksuniversiteit Groningen.

ANALYSIS

Marcel de Haas

Kazakhstan is a former Soviet republic in Central Asia, with Astana as its capital. The country has a population size similar to the Netherlands, but is more than seventy times bigger. Kazakhstan occupies a special position, both in the former Soviet region and internationally. Kazakhstan is by far the largest Central Asian republic. Moreover, it has significant oil and gas reserves. Additionally, this state is sandwiched between Russia and China. For these two big brothers - with populations of nearly ten times (Russia) and 75 (China) as big, and with great armies and nuclear weapons - to appease, as well as maintaining cooperation with the West, a thoughtful and cautious foreign and security is required.

How does Kazakhstan do that? In addition to bilateral cooperation

with these major powers, in particular by active participation in organizations in which Moscow and Beijing play a leading role. In the military field that is the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), a military alliance similar to NATO. Thus, just like the Western alliance, CSTO has a military assistance clause in which an attack on a single CSTO country is an attack on all. Besides Kazakhstan and Russia, two other Central Asian states member, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, as well as Armenia and Belarus are the members of the CSTO. The CSTO is now, given the West's withdrawal of most troops after 2014, mainly focused on Afghanistan, especially on the dangers of terrorism and drug trafficking arising from this country. The CSTO is preparing for the NATO withdrawal from Afghanistan by military exercises - as recently conducted in Karaganda in Kazakhstan - and by strengthening the border security of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

Eurasian Union

Besides the military organization CSTO, Kazakhstan is closely involved in the creation of the Eurasian Union (EAU) from the current customs union with Russia and Belarus. In January 2015, this economic organization, as an alternative to the European Union (EU), will formally be launched. The choice of states of joining EU or EAU, is partly related to the crisis over Ukraine, in which Kiev made this choice in favour of the EU. Besides Russia and Belarus and Kazakhstan, the smaller states Armenia, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan – which are largely dependent for their (security) survival upon Moscow – will also join the EAU. But without Ukraine, the economic power of this new organization is quite limited. Both CSTO and EAU are important organizations for Moscow's clout. The Kremlin, considering itself the legal successor of the Soviet Union and thus as leader of the region, aims to tie former Soviet republics to itself and to implement a common policy towards the West.

Kazakhstan is well aware that Russia is a friend to keep. The other major player in the region is China. Along with Beijing and Moscow, Astana is part of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). The SCO is somewhat similar to the EU because it is also active in the political, economic and security fields. In addition to these three countries, three Central Asian states - Uzbekistan,

Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan – are also part of the SCO. Furthermore, the SCO has observers, namely Mongolia, Iran, Pakistan, India and Afghanistan. With major suppliers - Russia, Iran, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan - and large customers - India and China - oil and gas as well as the developments around Afghanistan, are important agenda items for the SCO.

NATO

Given the aforementioned, one would conclude that Kazakhstan is exclusively Eastern oriented. That is certainly not the case. Astana also maintains good relations with NATO, with which Kazakhstan this year already 20 years cooperates in the framework of the Partnership for Peace. Moreover, Kazakhstan and NATO conduct annual joint military exercises. Furthermore, Astana houses representatives from the EU and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). As the first non-western state, in 2010 Kazakhstan held the presidency of the OSCE.

Although the Kazakh security documents - given the geographical position and the mutual past - express a clear preference for the East, the country is committed to a so-called 'multivector' policy, i.e. to maintain cooperation in all directions, including the West. Due to its unique position and multifaceted foreign policy, Kazakhstan has the ability to play a mediating role. That emerges well with the current problem of Ukraine, on which Astana works together with Moscow and Minsk, but at which Kazakhstan also gives clear signals that it supports Kiev, as well as that this conflict does not hinder cooperation with NATO and the EU. The NATO withdrawal from Afghanistan offers Kazakhstan the possibility to strengthen East-West cooperation on Afghanistan, which could also positively affect the strained relations between Moscow and the West. We will see how Astana continues to exploit its unique position.

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