

REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN: REGIONAL LEADER WITH GLOBAL AMBITIONS

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Since getting independence in 1991, the Republic of Kazakhstan, in comparison with the other countries of Central Asia (Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan), seeks to play a more important role in the international arena.

Kazakhstan as of right enters a group of 30 leading countries-members of the UN which are working on disarmament and promotion of the nuclear-free world. This is a permanent peace policy in the foreign policy of the country. Kazakhstan applied for a non-permanent seat of the Security Council in 2017-2018, as well as the presidency of the United Nations General Assembly in 2016.

In addition, December 20, 2013 the Parliament of Kazakhstan unanimously supported the proposal of the President Nursultan Nazarbayev to send officers of the Armed Forces of Kazakhstan to the UN mission in order to fulfill international commitments to maintain peace and security.

To participate in the UN missions in Haiti, Western Sahara, Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia will be allocated 5 people in each mission to fulfill obligations to maintain international peace and security. The main task of Kazakhstan officers are to monitor and assist in the monitoring and reporting on the situation for the United Nations. The decision to send observers to participate in UN peacekeeping operations points also to the active role of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the process of building a safer world.

A peacekeeping activity of Kazakhstan begins in 2000, when President Nursultan Nazarbayev signed a decree on establishing the Kazakh peacekeeping battalion, which is called "Kazbat". In 2006, peacekeeping battalion was transformed into "KAZBRIG" – Kazakhstan brigade, which is consisting of three peacekeeping battalions. By the next year, the country's military doctrine noted that peacekeeping is one of the important components of the foreign policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

In the period from 2003 to 2008 soldiers of the "KAZBRIG" participated in "Operation Iraqi Freedom", where he worked on water treatment and disposal of unexploded ordnance. In addition, the medical staff has assisted more than 5 thousands of Iraqis, especially women and children who have suffered in a result of terrorist attacks. For 5 years, Kazakh peacekeepers were able to get a great experience, made a great contribution to the stabilization of the situation in this country.

Furthermore, in order to conform and develop joint interoperability between U.S., UK and Kazakhstan units, at the training center of Kazakh peacekeeping brigade "KAZBRIG", Republic of Kazakhstan conducted "Steppe Eagle" military exercises.

These exercises are conducted in the framework of the "Individual Partnership Action Plan" between Kazakhstan and NATO, as well as the "Partnership for Peace" program. Annually more than a thousand soldiers and observers participated in this exercises.

First "Steppe Eagle" exercise took place in 2003. In 2013, on the "Steppe Eagle" involved military units of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Kazakhstan, United States, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Lithuania, Switzerland, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The exercises monitored by observers from Spain, Germany and Belarus. According to the results of activities Kazakh peacekeeping battalion received very high marks from the NATO experts.

Maintaining peace and security is a collective responsibility. Kazakhstan is a responsible member of the international community and fulfills these obligations. Sending its military to take part in peacekeeping missions supports Kazakhstan in UN Security Council elections, which is the principal organ of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace and security, and to the presidency on the 71th session of the UN General Assembly. It is important to note that support for peacekeeping and conflict resolution was the focus of Kazakhstan during its presidency in OSCE.

The Republic of Kazakhstan is the leader of Central Asia, and as of right occupies a special place in the international arena. Participation in peacekeeping missions of the military observers present the possibility of acquiring some experience in matters of war and peace, promote the peaceful settlement of armed conflicts, and Kazakhstan will receive the status of member which is taking part in UN peacekeeping operations.