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Foreign policy of Kazakhstan towards China through the prism of economic and energy cooperation.

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1. Introduction

Kazakhstan researchers (Laumulin, Syroezkin, Kaukenov, Sultanov¹) pay a lot of attention to Sino-Kazakh relations. The main emphasis of their research has been China's foreign policy positions towards Kazakhstan and China's interests in Central Asia. Russian researchers (Paramonov and Savkovich²) and other researchers such as Zhao Huasheng and Hasan Karrar³ have focused on the same issues. None of these studies have focused on Kazakhstan's positions towards China, and have not shown the factors that have stimulated Kazakhstan to actively cooperate with China.

This article discusses the history of Kazakh-Chinese relations, with emphasis on Kazakhstan's interests. Particular attention is paid to the question of trade and energy cooperation. Trade and other economic relations between Kazakhstan and China evolved earlier than the establishment of political relations. Trade and economic relations stimulated moves towards political cooperation and contributed to the evolution of the bilateral partnership. This article deals with trade and economic relations in various stages of development of Kazakhstan, and shows the initiatives implemented for the improvement of bilateral relations and strengthening the Kazakhstan economy. Chinese investment in Kazakhstan is a key factor. Several researchers have examined the levels of investments, but did not analyze how they contributed to the development of the Kazakhstan economy. Second, this article examines the use of external soft balancing⁴ as a tool to weaken Russia's influence. This aspect is examined in terms of the development of bilateral relations through energy and transport cooperation. Third, various aspects of energy cooperation are discussed. Finally, I examine the new idea of "Silk

Road" as a new stage of development of Kazakh-Chinese relations, and the ways of Kazakhstan's foreign policy have influenced this process.

2. Main stages of the development of bilateral cooperation.

The history of the Kazakh-Chinese relations in the opinion of Barovoy⁵ had several stages, the first of which is associated with the collapse of the Soviet Union. He argues that the first half of the 1990s was the preparatory stage, when Beijing had no clear strategic component and it was limited only to the establishment of diplomatic relations. According to Syroezhkin⁶, in the first phase (1992 to 1995), the main feature was not only the establishment of diplomatic relations, but also issues such as borders and efforts against Pan-Turkish influence and separatism in the border areas. Officially, the date of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Kazakhstan and China is January 3, 1992. In order to understand the development of Kazakh-Chinese relations at this period, there is a need to look at the history of the issue of the Kazakh-Chinese border in the past. According to Clara Khafizova, a historian of the Kazakh-Chinese borders, since 1757, the Chinese Qing Dynasty enlarged the state's borders toward what is today Kazakhstan. For almost two centuries border issues between both sides remained acute. From 1755 to 1821 the Kazakh Khanate made huge efforts to win back lands through negotiations, and in 1882, when the Qing Empire was weak, it agreed to return lands. In the early years (1949-1959) of the People's Republic of China (PRC) the concept of "lost territories" re-emerged and strengthened.⁷ In the period from 1969 to 1979, this problem developed into border conflicts, and Chinese leaders called the regions

“disputed territory” . In the period of normalization of Sino-Soviet relations (1989-1990) the territorial issues were resolved through negotiations.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the formation of the sovereign state of Kazakhstan, the border problem remained. To address this issue, on September 8, 1992 in Minsk, a delegation of representatives from Kazakhstan Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Russia, began negotiations on border issues. In 1993, Kazakhstan and China signed a Declaration⁸ in which the borders between the states were determined as described previously in the Soviet-Chinese arrangements. On April 26, 1994 an agreement was signed on the Kazakh-Chinese border, which entered into force on September 11, 1995 after its ratification.⁹ An agreement clearing up some final border issues was signed in 1998. Thus, the first stage of relations between China and the new Kazakhstan were fraught with tension.

As far as economic relations are concerned, Syroezhkin¹⁰ notes that the period 1992-1993 was one of complete “freedom” , featuring uncontrolled bilateral trade and economic relations. According to Turarbekova and Shibko,¹¹ the opening of borders between states in 1992, based on an agreement on the opening of the border checkpoint, which was signed during a visit of Prime Minister Sergei Tereshchenko¹² to China, led to increased economic development in Western China. China therefore had an interest in resolving the border issues between the two countries. The period from 1994 to 1995 was characterized by the development of joint efforts to control the trade between both countries.

Syroezhkin said the second period is from 1996 to 2000, which was characterized by more active government initiatives in promoting economic ties.¹³ What contributed to this development? This period is associated with Boris Yeltsin and the decline in Russian leadership in economic and military areas,¹⁴ which opened prospects for Chinese initiatives in Kazakhstan, including trade and economic ties. This period is also notable for rising concerns about regional security and terrorism. China, after the final border settlement in 1998, began to focus on ensuring its control over its Western territories, especially after a series of domestic terrorist attacks on its territory (Xinjiang Uyghur

district-1997, Beijing-1999).¹⁵

Kazakhstan also had concerns regarding regional security, especially after attempts by fundamentalist Islamic groups to seize power in Kyrgyzstan were thwarted in 1999 and 2000. This threat forced China, Kazakhstan, Russia, and other Central Asian states to form that Shanghai Five organization in 1996, which became the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in 2001. The format of the SCO helped to facilitate improved relations, especially in economic and trade areas.¹⁶ However, the practical realization of many economic projects within SCO was hampered by interstate conflicts and the presence of Russia. Kazakhstan and China had an interest in developing bilateral relations outside of the SCO. Syroezhkin¹⁷ said the third phase of the bilateral relations since 2000 have been characterized by Kazakh attempts to expand cooperation with China, and the arrival of the reputable Chinese companies, deepening bilateral ties.

From 2005 there was a clear shift in Kazakhstan policy towards shifting the economy away from simple resource exportation, towards higher value production. The message of the President of Kazakhstan Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan in 2002 “on the main areas of foreign and domestic policy for 2003”¹⁸ become wider and include the alignment of good stable relationships, conducting pragmatic policies aimed at economic development of the country. The message of the President of Kazakhstan Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan for 2005 “Kazakhstan on the path to accelerated economic, social and political modernization”¹⁹ , the foreign policy priorities of Kazakhstan were China, Russia and the United States. These foreign policy priorities are also characteristic to the third phase of the Kazakhstan-China relations, covering the period from the second half of 2000 to the first half of 2005. The message of Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan in 2006 “Kazakhstan on the verge of a new leap forward in its development”²⁰ became the basis for the Strategy of entering of Kazakhstan in the 50 most competitive countries of the world. Foreign policy orientation has focused on the implementation of a balanced and responsible foreign policy, taking into account the interests of Kazakhstan and the regional dynamics of global development. In the light of this document, China-Kazakhstan relations marked as a

transition to a strategic partnership, connecting China to expand cooperation in the energy sector and the implementation of major projects by Chinese companies in the oil and gas and infrastructure sectors. Thus, Chinese expansion in the Kazakh energy sector played an important role in that shift. Since 1996 Chinese investments in Kazakhstan have risen significantly, a trend actively encouraged by the Kazakhstan government. Why did Kazakhstan provide such favorable policy for China?

Firstly, the financial crisis of 2007-2008 had a negative impact on the economies of several countries, including Kazakhstan. To maintain its economy, Kazakhstan was forced to seek help from China, and China provided a \$10 billion loan in 2009. This loan was declared as a crisis management tool within the SCO framework.²¹

Secondly, the Kazakhstan government wanted to use improved ties with China as a way of balancing the power of Russia. 2003-2005 was a period of geopolitical flux in the region, with “color revolutions” happening in countries such as Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, Georgia, as well as the government crackdown in Andijan, Uzbekistan. Russia, in response to these events, became increasingly aggressive towards the countries of the CIS, including Kazakhstan, declaring in 2003 that Russia regarded them as lying within the “natural area of Russian traditional interests”. Kazakhstan, though publicly reaffirming the priority of its relations with Russia, in fact began to restructure its foreign policy towards greater independence from Russia, with long-term plans towards improving relations with China and other strategically important countries. Kazakhstan started to rely on external tools of balancing as external soft balancing to reduce Russia’s influence on Kazakhstan. The start of this policy was the participation in the BTC project, and then a gradual strengthening of cooperation between Kazakhstan and China. Kazakhstan used China as a counterweight against Russia. Kazakhstan’s initiatives were welcomed by China and the improving bilateral relations were enshrined in the “Program of the Kazakh-Chinese cooperation for 2003-2008”.²² This document covered almost all areas of cooperation: political, economic, energy, military, scientific, transport, border and cultural. A special place is given to

cooperation in the energy sector. Kazakhstan, by developing its nuclear industry sets the ambitious aim in that direction. This period is associated with the reform of Kazakhstan National Atomic Company Kazatomprom, which created a vertically integrated nuclear company, which aims at not only uranium mining and production of uranium tablets for nuclear power plants, but also to build nuclear power station. On September 2007, Kazakhstan’s nuclear-related trade sector shifted from simply the production and sale of natural resources to the sale of enriched nuclear materials to China. This went along with improved bilateral relations. As noted by Adil Kaukenov,²³ “after July 2007 China-Kazakhstan relations reached a new level of strategic partnership”. This development of bilateral relations led to the emergence of the Chinese pipeline and the diversification of energy supplies from Kazakhstan, which reduced Kazakhstan’s dependence on oil pipelines through Russia. The increase of China’s share of Kazakhstan oil exports to 22.5% a decline in oil exports to Russian exports to 9%.²⁴

Transport and communication projects play an important role in the implementation of Kazakhstan’s external soft balancing. Kazakhstan, despite being in the center of the Eurasian continent, lacked land transportation routes. Kazakhstan emphasized in foreign policy strategy the transport highway project “Western Europe-Western China”²⁵ to link a number of states. Preliminary work on the project began in 2009. The World Bank provided \$ 2.1 billion to help finance the project.²⁶ In order to further develop and strengthen bilateral relations, expand international trade and to create a new Eurasian great economic bridge, Kazakhstan opened an International Center for Transborder Cooperation (“Khorgos ICBC”) on the border with China and established a special trade and economic zone called “Khorgos-Eastern Gate”, which has become a land “port” of international importance.²⁷ In June 2011, the President Nazarbayev and the President of China Hu Jintao jointly announced the development of a comprehensive strategic partnership between China and Kazakhstan, with a goal to bring the trade turnover between the two countries to \$40 billion in 2015. To ensure this task a special economic zone, “Khorgos - Eastern Gate” was created in 2011.²⁸ Experts estimate that the full realization of the project

on development of ICBC Khorgos will reduce the time of delivery of goods from China to Europe to 14 days, and the volume of cargo in 2020 will reach 50 million tons, and will promote the development of customs, tourism and transport infrastructure of the region, including Kazakhstan.²⁹ All these projects are being implemented in the framework of Kazakhstan's foreign policy course, which contributed to the expansion of cooperation between the two countries.

The change of power in China in 2012, which brought to power a new generation of reformers led by Xi Jinping, has engaged Kazakhstan to further develop bilateral relations. In President Nazarbayev December 14, 2012 address, "Strategy of Kazakhstan-2050" and "The new political course of the state"³⁰ he emphasized the balance of foreign policy, calling for the development of "friendly and predictable relations with all states."³¹ The document emphasized that "foreign policy must be upgraded to expand the boundaries of economic and commercial diplomacy, and also develop further cooperation in the cultural, scientific - educational and other spheres".³² During the period from 2012 to 2013 the two countries signed agreements that ensured \$40 billion of Chinese investments in Kazakhstan.³³

Kazakhstan has started to apply Chinese investments towards the modernization of enterprises, agriculture and infrastructure. Since July 2010, an Action Plan to improve cooperation between the two governments in the non-oil sectors included 20 joint projects in areas such as: electric power, textile, building materials, metallurgy, transportation and communication.³⁴ Especially important was the transport component of V phase (2011-2014), which set a goal for Kazakhstan to become a transit hub by not only extending the transport corridors between Asia and Europe, reviving the Great Silk Road, but also by creating intersecting north-south highways to connect those routes to the Kazakhstan interior.³⁵ For Kazakhstan, the creation of the Eurasian transcontinental bridge is of strategic importance because the experts predict an increase in transit traffic through Kazakhstan twice by 2020. In 2012, during his visit to China, Nazarbayev announced the implementation of the New Silk Road project.³⁶ The idea was supported by Xi Jinping in September 2013 during his visit to Kazakhstan. For these purposes in

China established a \$16.3 billion fund.³⁷ Other bilateral projects include President Nazarbayev's "Green Bridge" initiative, on the development of alternative energy sources. As the Chinese Ambassador to Kazakhstan Zhou Li told to the newspaper New Generation on March 7, 2013, "Chinese technology in the field of new energy sources is very mature and we intend to cooperate with Kazakhstan in this area".³⁸ The fifth phase of the Kazakhstan-China relationship is also characterized by growing military cooperation. In September 2014, the Minister of Defense of Kazakhstan Akhmetov visited China and raised the issues of military cooperation.

Thus, the Sino-Kazakh relations have traveled a great distance, transforming from the search for solutions of boundary issues to multilateral cooperation in various fields.

3. Kazakh-Chinese economic relations: Chinese investments and their importance in the development of the economy of Kazakhstan

The history of economic relations between Kazakhstan and China in the first phase is based on the Soviet-Chinese relations of the mid-1980s. Kazakhstan, while still being a part of the USSR, sought to independently participate in foreign policy activities, communicating with the neighboring Chinese province of Xinjiang. Bilateral economic relations with Xinjiang started in 1986, when the volume of trade amounted to \$3 billion, which then began to gain momentum and by 1989 amounted to \$45.6 billion. By 1991, 52% of Kazakhstan's exports went to China as a whole, making China Kazakhstan's the main trade partner of Kazakhstan. In July 1991, during his visit to Xinjiang, Nursultan Nazarbayev signed the agreement on the principles and main directions of development of cooperation between the Kazakh SSR and Xinjiang.³⁹ As Kaukenov notes, "the basic principles and mechanisms of building economic relations between Kazakhstan and China were laid in the 1980s. At that time it became apparent that the main trade partner of Kazakhstan in China will be Xinjiang and the cooperation will be based on a mutual interest in the development of trade, economic and scientific

cooperation.⁴⁰

The flow of shuttle traders from Kazakhstan buying retail goods in China made clear the lack of adequate transport service. In 1992, Kazakhstan reconstructed the Druzhba station, which became the primary railway to China. Shuttle trading also identified other problems, such as lack of trade controls and loss of government revenue on the one hand, and unfavorable view of Chinese brand products that was caused by the flow of low quality goods. To solve these problems, Kazakhstan strengthened immigration, customs and passport control, which greatly influenced the trade. According to Kazakh expert Konstantin Syroezhkin,⁴¹ there was a decline in the volume of bilateral trade since 1993.

Table-1. Bilateral Trade relations between Kazakhstan and China

Year	(million \$)	(%)
1992	432.0	23.2
1993	212.0	12.65
1994	218.7	5.73
1995	328.4	3.63

Source: Syroezhkin, K. *Kazakhstan-Kitay: ot prigranichnoi trgovli k strategicheskomu partnerstvu*, p. 46, Kniga 1. Almaty, KISI, 2000.

The figures of the Asian Development Bank are different and are illustrated in the Table-2.

Table-2. Bilateral Trade relations between Kazakhstan and China

Year	(million \$)
1992	373.0
1993	428.0
1994	219.0
1995	392.0

Source: Paramonov, V. *Kitay i Tsentral' naya Aziya: sostoyanie i perspektivy ekonomicheskikh otnosheniy*. Russian Series, 05/25, p. 4, Defense Academy of the United Kingdom, Conflict Studies Research Centre, England, 2005.

In this period, Kazakhstan had a narrow area of cooperation with Xinjiang. This situation did not meet the interests of Kazakhstan and there was a necessity to revise the trade policy.

In 1993 a Joint Declaration on basic friendly relations was signed during the visit of Nursultan Nazarbayev to China.⁴² As was mentioned above, this document not only laid the foundation for relations between the two

countries, but also gave impetus to the development of energy cooperation. Gradually the volumes of shuttle trading fell and such Chinese companies as China National Petroleum Corporation (oil) , Huawei (telecommunications) , and Nongken (trade) came to the Kazakh market in 1995. The chaotic nature of trade and economic relations was gradually moving towards the development of mechanisms aimed at regulating trade and economic relations. The inflow of direct investments in Kazakhstan, which amounted to \$411.7 million or 6.33% of total FDI, contributed to the strengthening of economic relations.⁴³ These investments were necessary for Kazakhstan to implement domestic economic reforms. In 1994, Kazakhstan adopted a program of "Stabilization of the economy and recovery from the economic recession" , to reduce inflation and create commodity and financial markets.⁴⁴ It took steps to deepen reforms and gradually transition to a market economy, creating conditions for the development of small and medium-sized businesses.⁴⁵ This policy allowed Kazakhstan businesses to develop, which began to look for partners in foreign countries.

The opening of joint ventures created the conditions for further development of bilateral relations, which was also reflected in the economic performance of the country. Thus, the GDP grew by 2.7% in 1999.⁴⁶ The economic reforms in Kazakhstan and government support of direct investments attracted the attention of Chinese large companies. In the summer of 1997 China started to invest to the oil and gas sector of Kazakhstan in the amount of \$11 billion, mostly oriented to the construction of pipelines. The Chinese investments were provided in exchange for the transfer of a number of major oil and gas companies of Kazakhstan to Chinese investors. The period (from 1992 to 2000) in trade was beneficial for Kazakhstan because Kazakhstan exported more than it imported.

Table-3. Trade between Kazakhstan and China, 1996-2000

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Import	35.8	46.8	50.6	81.4	152.0
Export	458.9	442.2	382.1	473.1	637.7

Source: Kaukenov, A. *Kitay v XXI veke. Aktual'nie tendentsii razvitiya klyuchevikh sfer zhizni*, p. 213, Tom 2, Almaty, 2008.

The year 2000 was a turning point in bilateral economic relations with the development of energy cooperation and large-scale economic projects designed to upgrade Kazakhstan's economy. Between 2003 and 2008, joint Kazakhstan-China projects included: the project Kenkiyak – Atyrau (2003), the transfer of “Aktobemunaigas” to CNPC (2003) and the shares for the development of the North Buzachi field (2003), Kazakhstan enterprise “Aydanmunay” to CNODC (2005) and Canadian company “PetroKazInc” to the subsidiary company of CNPC (2005). There was also signed agreement to build an Atasu-Alashankou oil pipeline. The Chinese oil and gas companies entered into Kazakhstan in exchange for direct investments, which amounted in 2001 to \$64.7 million and in 2005 to \$195 million (see Table-5).

Table-4. Kazakhstan's trade with China 2004-2008, \$ million

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Import	754.0	1252.0	1925.0	3507.0	4565.0
Export	1967.3	2423.9	3593.0	5640.0	7677.0

Source: Zhukov S.V., Reznikova O.B. Tsentralnaya Aziya i Kitay: ekonomicheskoe vzaimodeistvie v usloviyakh globalizatsii.-M.: IMEMO RAN, 2009, pp. 39-41. <http://www.imemo.ru/files/File/ru/publ/2009/09007>

The first half of the 2000s was characterized not only by the growth of trade, but also by improvements in the bilateral trade structure. Kazakhstan exported to China copper, zinc, and ferrous metals. China's growing consumption of raw materials and metals raised the world prices for these commodities, which had a positive effect on the growth of the economy of Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan's GDP in 2001 increased to 13.5%, and in the next 6 years, it grew at an average of 9.6%.⁴⁸

The structure of imports from China also contributed to the economic development of Kazakhstan, which is dominated by engineering products, equipment and ground means of transportation.⁴⁹ A series of agreements between Kazakhstan and China signed between 2003 and 2008 strengthened the trade and economic relations and also, the development of positive trends in trade and economic cooperation between the two countries increased the share of high technology within the total trade.⁵⁰

Table-5. Foreign direct investments in the economy of Kazakhstan in 2001-2005, \$ million.

2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
64.7	64.73	248.6	387.8	195.0

Source: Ob'yem PII. Invest in Kazakhstan. <http://invest.gov.kz/?option=content§ion=4&itemid=75&lang=ru>

Since 2005, FDI inflows into Kazakhstan have grown significantly. From 2005 to 2014 China accounted for \$ 11.768 million of FDI. In 2005, FDI was directed to the mining – \$ 1.930 million, manufacturing – \$ 347 million, and scientific – \$ 4.276 million. Though, in 2006-2007 has been a slight increase in their volume.⁵¹

The second half of the 2000s, from 2008 to 2014 is characterized by a further increase in trade and economic relations. The visit of Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev to China in April 2006 was crucial for the transition of bilateral relations to a new level of strategic partnership.⁵² During the meeting, the parties agreed to “provide overall assistance in the implementation of economic projects that are of strategic importance for the sustainable development of national economies”.⁵³

The visit of the President of Kazakhstan Nazarbayev to China in December 2006 extended the scope of cooperation, covering such areas as trade, economy, and energy and railways.⁵⁴ In 2007, there was the growth of Chinese FDI into Kazakhstan. The visit of President Hu Jintao on August 18, 2007 played an important role in increasing the volume of FDI into Kazakhstan, during which the main agenda at the talks was cooperation in trade, economic and investment fields.⁵⁵ Kazakhstan needed in financial resources to expand the transport and communication capabilities. To this end, Kazakhstan initiates projects for the construction of China's railway through Central Asia to Iran. The implementation of this project required investments, which during the financial crisis of 2007-2008 it could only receive from China. Since 2007, the volume of direct investments has grown.

Table-6. The volume of direct investments into Kazakhstan, \$ million.

2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
276.24	609.9	1402.3	1516.21	1590.54	2858.45	4400.00

Source: Data for 2006 – 2011 were taken from Bedelov, A., Lyu Hung. Sravnitel' niy analiz pyamikh investitsiy Kitaya v Tsentral' nuyu Aziyu. Elektronnyi sbornik No.7, Moskva 2013, pp. 168-176. <http://www.nauchforum.ru/ru/node/2076>.

Data for 2012 were taken from Ministerstvo Industrii i novykh tekhnologiy Respubliki Kazakhstan. Osobennosti eksporta tovarov v Kitay. AO "Natsional' noe agenstvo po eksportu i investitsiyam "KAZNEX INVEST", Astana 2013. <http://www.export.gov.kz/storage/6d/6d25e52c28c208774568eaaef69ba9d6.pdf>

The direct investment from China into Kazakhstan from 2005 to 2010 was approximately \$ 11.4 billion, in third place on this indicator after Australia (\$ 33.3 billion) and the United States (\$ 22.9 billion) . At the beginning of 2014 the total volume of investments from China into Kazakhstan exceeded \$ 20 billion, while the share of direct investment (which are not financial and aimed at the development of industry) amounted to \$ 5.68 billion.⁵⁶

The Chinese investments in Kazakhstan are directed not only to the production of raw materials, but also in non-oil sectors, such as agro-processing, telecommunications and transport. Adoption of a national program of industrial and innovative development of the Republic of Kazakhstan till 2015⁵⁷ paved the way for the development of innovative projects. Trade and economic ties are expanding and the trade between the two countries grew from 2007 to 2013. The average growth rate of turnover from 2007 to 2013 is shown in the Table-7.

Table-7. The average growth rate of turnover from 2007 to 2013 \$ billion

2007	2008	2010	2011	2012	2013
13.877	17.550	14.086	21.3	24.0	28.5

Source: Data for 2007-2008 were taken from Savkovich, E. Ekonomicheskaya politika Kitaya v postsovetsoy Tsentral' noi Azii (1992-2012) , Tomskiy Gosudarstvenniy Universitet, 2012;

Data from 2010-2012 were taken from Analiz sostoyaniya vneshnei trgovli RK za 2012 god. Astana 2013.

http://www.kaznexusinvest.kz/napr/analytics/export/trade/analiz_12mesyac_2012.pdf

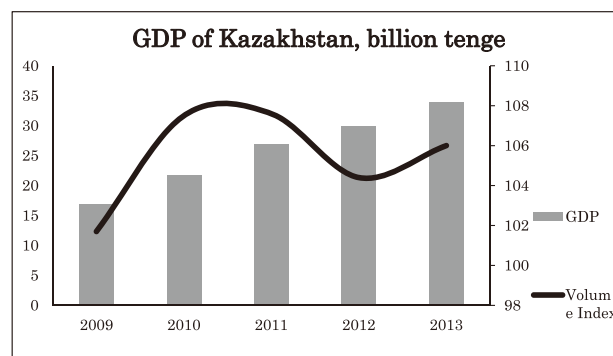
and data of 2013 were taken from Suleimenov, R. Tovaroborot mezhdru Kazakhstanom i KNR v 2013 godu vozros na 11.3% do 28.5 mlrd. \$, 29 yanvarya, 2014

<http://www.inform.kz/rus/article/262574>

The growth of trade affects the economic performance of the country. The graph-1 illustrates the increase of the GDP from 2009 to 2013. As can be seen from the graph-2 the growth of GDP volume was achieved through the growth of such sectors as industry, trade and transport. In 2014, China is second after Italy in the foreign trade of Kazakhstan, the data

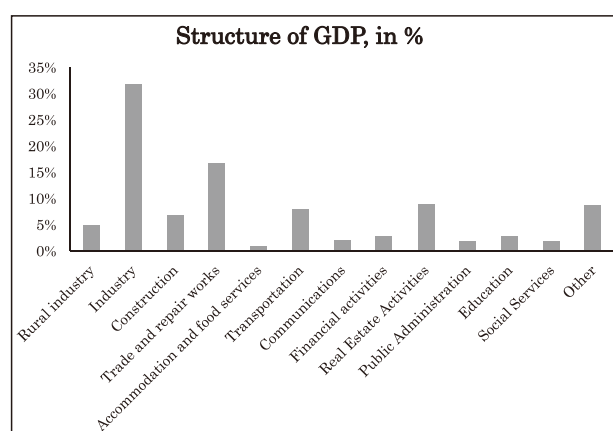
of which is represented in the graph-3.

Graph-1.



Source: Suleimenov, R. Tovaroborot mezhdru Kazakhstanom i KNR v 2013 godu vozros na 11.3% do 28.5 mlrd. \$, 29 yanvarya, 2014. <http://www.inform.kz/rus/article/262574>

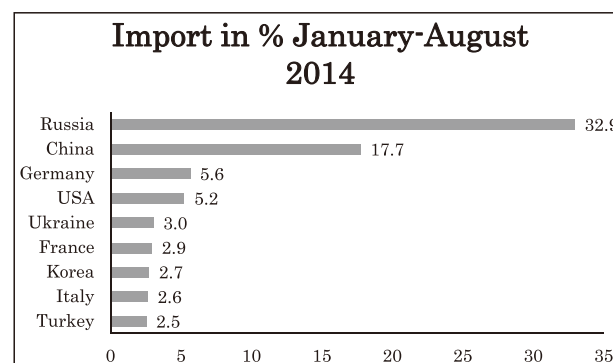
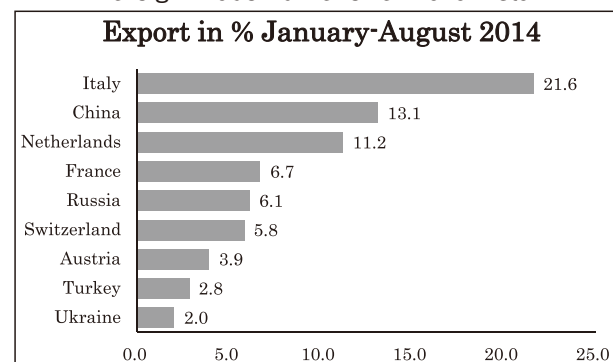
Graph-2.



Source: Suleimenov, R. Tovaroborot mezhdru Kazakhstanom i KNR v 2013 godu vozros na 11.3% do 28.5 mlrd. \$, 29 yanvarya, 2014. <http://www.inform.kz/rus/article/262574>

Graph-3.

Foreign Trade Turnover of Kazakhstan



Source: Infografika: "Vneshnetorgoviy oborot RK" , sostavlennuyu na osnove dannyykh, predostavlennyykh Ministerstvom national' noi ekonomiki Kazakhstan. Astana, 11 noyabrya 2014.
<http://bnews.kz/ru/news/post/23843> (www.stat.gov.kz)

Thus, China has become one of the biggest trading partner of Kazakhstan. As Sun Weidong, Ambassador of the Chinese Embassy in Kazakhstan, noted, "China has become the largest trading partner of Kazakhstan. China's investments in Kazakhstan exceeded \$26 billion, and the Republic of Kazakhstan became the first in the world in terms of attracting investments from China. Based upon the structure of trade and investments between the two countries, it is easy to conclude that this was achieved largely due to bilateral energy cooperation, which has become a real cornerstone in mutually beneficial cooperation between the two countries" .⁵⁸ During his visit in May 2014 in Beijing, Nursultan Nazarbayev signed a number of trade and economic agreements between the two countries, which include investments in the economy of Kazakhstan in the amount of over \$ 10 billion. As Nursultan Nazarbayev said, "Those investments will work on the development of Kazakhstan's economy and the welfare of our people" .

A key phrase in the continuation of the development of trade and economic relations is "The New Silk Road," the idea of which was suggested by Xi Jinping during his visit to Kazakhstan in September 2013. Beijing plans to invest \$ 40 billion in creating the modern analogue of the "Silk Road" .⁵⁹ This was stated by the President Xi Jinping at the Forum "Dialogue on strengthening interactive partnership." Chinese President said that the Silk Road fund's goal is to "break the connectivity bottleneck" in Asia by attracting investors from Asia and other parts of the world to actively participate in the creation of a Silk Road economic belt.⁶⁰ Hence, by providing the financial support for neighboring countries, China attempts to expand its influence in Asia.

Thus, China sees Kazakhstan as a crucial partner in the expansion of its influence. As the Chinese Ambassador Le Yucheng noted, "the economic cooperation between Kazakhstan and China has three features. Firstly, both countries pursue similar strategic goals, and thereby create the necessary conditions for the further development of bilateral comprehensive

strategic partnership. Second, the strategic development of both countries is also the same. As a Eurasian state, Kazakhstan aims by working with China to secure the access to the Asia-Pacific region, in order to use the positive effect of dynamic development of this region. Third, the economic relations between China and Kazakhstan are characterized by complementarity. Kazakhstan has abundant natural resources, favorable investment climate and geographical advantages. China has the money, technology and human resources that would help Kazakhstan to achieve economic development in more effective way and improve the welfare of its people" .⁶¹ As we see, not only China benefits from this economic cooperation, but also Kazakhstan, through the access to the Asia-Pacific region and the obtaining technologies from China.

4. Energy cooperation between Kazakhstan and China, its importance and role in the implementation of "soft balancing" .

4-1 Oil and gas cooperation (1997-2004)

Energy cooperation between Kazakhstan and China started in 1997. The signing of such Agreements as the Intergovernmental Agreement on Cooperation in the field of oil and gas in September 24, 1997, as well as the General Agreement between the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) on field development projects in Kazakhstan and construction of an oil pipeline from Kazakhstan to China contributed to the development of bilateral relations between Kazakhstan and China in the energy sector.

In 1997 the CNPC acquired 60.28% stake from the Kazakhstan oil company "Aktobemunaigas" and began oil production, which amounted 2.65 million tons in 1997. There are several reasons for the arrival of Chinese companies in Kazakhstan. First, China became a net oil importer in 1993, when demand for oil exceeded the volume of supply. In 1993, China's dependence on oil imports rose to 7.5%.⁶² The main routes of oil imports to China at that time were the Black Sea, which accounted for 93% of total imports. Simultaneously, almost 80% of this amount of oil was

imported through the Malacca Strait – a very vulnerable and crowded route.⁶³ For the growing need in China for oil, see the graph-4.⁶⁴ During this period Kazakhstan produced much more oil than it consumed, decreasing from 21.7 million tons in 1990 to 9.7 million tons in 2010, which gave the country the ability to export oil in large volumes. In the past, the limited opportunities for transportation of oil and poor infrastructure were the greatest barriers of oil exports. Moreover, 80% of Kazakhstan's oil exports were still dependent on the Russian-controlled pipelines and railway systems, which was undesirable for Kazakhstan. Turning the Kazakhstan oil to the East met the strategic interests and trade energy policy of Kazakhstan.

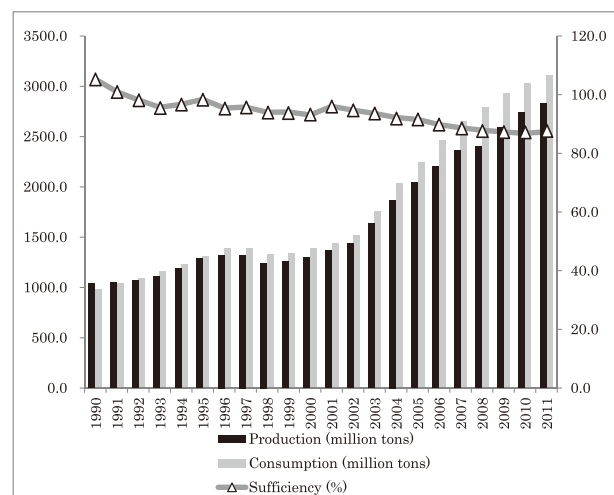
These factors also contributed to the expansion of cooperation in the energy field. In 1997, the CNPC and the Government of Kazakhstan signed a contract for the extraction of hydrocarbons from such deposits as Zhanazhol, Kenkiyak post-salt and Kenkiyak pre-salt in Aktobe region, as well as the rehabilitation of the Uzen oil field (second largest recoverable oil reserves in Kazakhstan, which produced 50% of all hydrocarbons in the country) .

The China National Petroleum Corporation has given written commitments to the Government of Kazakhstan to invest in the development of the Aktobe project not less than \$4 billion over 20 years.⁶⁵ However, the Chinese company was not in hurry to invest. Without waiting for the promised investments by China, in October 1999, Kazakhstan has decided to proceed with the rehabilitation of its own fields of "Uzenmunaigas" , which resulted in the CNPC losing its opportunity to rehabilitate of the Uzen field. This situation has forced the Chinese company to reconsider its policy.

In 1999, "CNPC-Aktobemunaigas" became the founder of the specialized enterprise "Kazakhstan-Chinese Drilling Company Great Wall" , which became the main contractor for the volume of drilling operations conducted in the fields of the enterprise. In 2000 the exploitation of wells began. During 2000-2003, the old Zhanazhol gas processing plant was reconstructed, costing \$5.5 million, and also a second Zhanazhol gas processing plant, was built, which required \$166 million in investments. In October 2003,

two of the largest in Kazakhstan oil storage tanks with a capacity of 100 thousand cubic meters each were put into operation in the field Zhanazhol.⁶⁶ During the period from late 1997 to 1998, China has exported 100 thousand tons of oil,⁶⁷ while crude oil production at the plant has grown from year to year and in 2002 was already 4.37 million tons.

Graph-4.
Self-sufficiency of China in energy (1990-2011)



Source: Suleimen, U. Geopoliticheskie aspekty energeticheskogo sotrudnichestva mezhdru Kazakhstanom i Kitaem. www.alternativakz.com/uploads/user_suleymen.ppt

China has invested Aktobemunaigas project about \$ 700 million.⁶⁸ The growth of oil production posed the problem of its transportation. In 1997-2000, rail was the main type of oil transportation, which became insufficient to handle the growing volumes. In October 2001, the China National Petroleum Company and the Closed Joint-Stock Company "Oil and Gas Transportation" signed a framework agreement on the construction of a Kenkiyak – Atyrau pipeline. In accordance with this agreement, in December 2001, both parties established Closed Joint-Stock Company "North-West Pipeline Company "Munaigas" . Northwest Kazakhstan oil pipeline starts from the field Kenkiyak and ends in Atyrau, its total length is 450 km. Construction of the pipeline was completed in December 2002. The carrying capacity of the first stage, launching ceremony of which took place on 28 March 2003, was 6 million tons per year, and in the second stage (2004) – 10 million tons per year.

Kazakhstan's leadership understood the need to develop a pipeline network. During the visit of Nazarbayev to China in December 2002, he said: "The

Chinese side confirmed its consent to the construction of oil and gas pipeline from Kazakhstan to Western China". According to the Nazarbayev, it will raise the economic possibilities of bilateral cooperation between Kazakhstan and China to a new level.⁶⁹ The idea of building an oil pipeline from Kazakhstan to China dates back to 1997, when the agreement was signed between the CNPC and the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, which determined the path from Atyrau on the Caspian Sea coast to Alashankou in the Chinese northwestern Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. In 1999 an intergovernmental agreement between Kazakhstan and China on cooperation in the oil and gas sector was signed, which provided that CNPC is responsible for the construction of the pipeline and its financing, and Kazakhstan, in turn, is obliged to provide certain areas for the construction of the pipeline, as well as ensure pipeline safety and the stability of oil exports and imports of equipment. The construction of the pipeline Kazakhstan - China covers two stages.

The first stage is the project of Atasu - Alashankou, the construction of which was carried out in accordance with the Framework Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Government of the People's Republic of China on the development of comprehensive cooperation in the field of oil and gas (Beijing, May 17, 2004), which was signed by Nazarbayev during his visit to China in May 2004.⁷⁰

The pipeline was put into operation on December 15 2005, when Nazarbayev said: "We agreed with President Hu Jintao in May 2004 to start the construction of this pipeline. In 1997, when we talked about the Kazakhstan-China pipeline, only few people believed in the reality of the project. And now all of us witness the fact that two-thirds of the "big pipeline" have already been built from Western Kazakhstan to northern China. We run a pipeline in the amount of \$ 800 million of investments. This is very important because Kazakhstan strives to diversify the ways in which oil and gas will be delivered to foreign markets. Atasu-Alashankou is the second link, the length of which is about a thousand kilometers of pipeline project. First, the Atyrau-Kenkiyak, was built in spring 2003. It is remained to connect Kenkiyak and Kumkol, and the pipeline will connect the Caspian fields with

actively developing Chinese market." ⁷¹ The strategy of Kazakhstan to diversify routes and decrease its dependence on Russian-led pipelines started from 2005 and becomes more relevant, especially now in the light of sanctions applied to Russia. The implementation of this project by two countries created the foundation for further development of energy cooperation. On July 5, 2005 Nazarbayev and Hu Jintao signed in Astana the Joint Declaration on the establishment and development of strategic partnership, which extends the results of the cooperation between the two countries and expressed the desire to further strengthen contacts in various fields.⁷² A new stage starts in the development of energy cooperation, aiming not only to attract investments in the oil and gas industry, but also new technologies, as well as the expansion of Chinese companies.

4-2 Establishment of the strategic partnership (2004-2006)

The geographic expansion of Chinese companies was started in late 2003 by the CNPC, which purchased the North Buzachi field (Mangistau region), and was continued in 2004 by the Chinese company Sinopec, which purchased oilfields in the Atyrau region, and then CNODC, a subsidy of CNPC, purchased fields in the Kyzylorda and Karaganda regions. Nazarbayev claimed the transfer by Kazakhstan of a number of fields was necessary to the country, saying "Kazakhstan is on the way of accelerated economic, social and political modernization". In this message, Nazarbayev stressed that "nowadays the main source of economic growth is the exploitation of the raw potential of the country". Thus, in comparison with 1985, Kazakhstan has managed to increase hydrocarbon production by 225 percent, while worldwide production rose less than 1.3 times. The Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) in the amount of around \$ 30 billion was attracted to the economy of Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan was the first among the CIS countries to create a National Fund for the sustainable socio-economic development, reduction of dependence on unfavorable external factors, which nowadays help the country to cope with the negative results of Russian sanctions.⁷³

Oil production growth not only had a positive effect

not only on the economy of Kazakhstan, but also on China. China's GDP has grown from \$ 1,931,644 to \$ 2,713,495 for 2 years (2004-2006) ,⁷⁴ growth that would not have been possible without access to Kazakhstan oil. Hu Hao, a Chinese researcher, noted in 2006, "The political cooperation between Kazakhstan and China has many positive factors. In recent years, bilateral relations have been developing and political trust has reached a high level" .

According to Ruslan Izimov, "the oil component of energy cooperation between Kazakhstan and China gains a new impetus for the development. In the medium term, the role and place of Kazakhstan in the external energy strategy of Beijing will only increase" . Kazakhstan was primarily interested in the increased presence of Chinese oil companies in the energy sector and this is why Kazakhstan offered the Chinese companies deals on a number of major acquisitions of assets.

4-3 Partnership Strategy in the 21st Century (December 2006 - present)

After the visit of Nazarbayev to Beijing at the end of December 2006, energy cooperation between the two countries spread from oil production and transportation to gas production and transportation, as well as the creation of multi-country pipelines.⁷⁷

Agreements signed between "KazMunaiGas" and CNPC on December 20, 2006 were key to this transition. They included two large-scale programs - Integrated program of modernization of trunk pipelines, designed for 2007-2009, and the Program of Development of main pipelines, the implementation of which took until 2011.⁷⁸ These programs were intended to create an integrated pipeline system in the country, including the construction of an oil pipeline in the Kenkiyak-Kumkol area and the expansion and modernization of oil pipeline systems. This pipeline integrated the system of main pipelines of the Western and Eastern branches of "KazTransOil" and provided cost-effective route for the transportation of Western Kazakhstan oil as well as the oil in Kazakh sector of the Caspian Sea to the rapidly growing Chinese market.⁷⁹ All this gave Kazakhstan the opportunity to gradually integrate into the world market supply of oil based on the principle of multi-vector routes.

Further cooperation between Kazakhstan and China in the energy sector has evolved beyond oil, moving into the gas industry. Cooperation in this area began with a feasibility study of investments for the construction of a pipeline from Kazakhstan to China, which was held in Beijing on February 20-23, 2006 between the National Company "KazMunaiGas" and CNPC.

This project involved the creation of a joint company "Asia Gas Pipeline Limited Liability Partnership" (hereafter "the Partnership") , which was to implement the joint construction and operation of gas pipeline "Kazakhstan-China" (from Kazakhstan to China) on the basis of the Agreement concluded between the National Company "KazMunaiGas" and CNPC on November 8, 2007 on the basic principles of construction and operation of the gas pipeline "Kazakhstan-China" . Partners of the Partnership are KazTransGas Joint Stock Company (Republic of Kazakhstan) and Trans-Asia Gas Pipeline Company Limited (People's Republic of China) . The Gas Pipeline consists of two sections: The first section – the Gas Pipeline section, being built by Asia Gas Pipeline LLP with the throughput capacity of 40 billion m3 per year (bcm/a) , runs from the border of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Republic of Kazakhstan to the border of the Republic of Kazakhstan and People's Republic of China through Shymkent (RK) to Horgos in the territory of the People's Republic of China. The second section - the Gas Pipeline section, being built by Beineu-Shymkent Gas Pipeline LLP, the Beineu-Bozoy-Kyzylorda-Shymkent Gas Pipeline section has a capacity of 10 (ten) billion m3 per year and passes through the territory of Kazakhstan and provides gas to the southern part of Kazakhstan.⁸⁰

This Kazakhstan-China gas pipeline became the base for the creation of a larger project – Trans-Asian, the longest gas pipeline in the world. The construction of the pipeline was launched on July 9, 2008. At the moment, the pipeline already has two lines ("A" and "B") and extends from the east side of the Amu Darya River in Turkmenistan, runs through the center of Uzbekistan, and the south of Kazakhstan and is connected to the Chinese pipeline West-East in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) .⁸¹ On December 12, 2009 Nazarbayev and Hu Jintao launched

the first line of the first section of the main Kazakhstan-China gas pipeline, the length of which is 1308 km.⁸² The third line of the Kazakhstan-China gas pipeline is planned to put into operation in 2016. In 2013 more than 63 billion cubic meters of gas was transported to China through the two branches of the line.⁸³

The operation of the pipeline for Kazakhstan is very important, because it increases the amount of money received by Kazakhstan for its transit. Thus, the cost of Kazakhstan's transit of Turkmen gas to China is currently about \$4 per 100 kilometers excluding value-added tax.⁸⁴ This brought benefit to both countries. It should also be noted that the trans-Asian gas pipeline bypasses Russia, a move which benefits both Kazakhstan and China.⁸⁵ For Kazakhstan it gives them greater diversification of energy routes, and for China it provided gas at a lower price than it had received from Russia.

The next step in the development of relations is the introduction of customer-furnished raw materials operations between the two countries, an idea of which came up in 2009. In the period from 2012-2013, Kazakhstan has started the supply of crude oil to the Chinese refineries in exchange for finished products, the process of which is known as customer-furnished raw materials.⁸⁶ This process was necessary for Kazakhstan on the one hand to restructure its oil refineries, and on the other hand to escape from dependence on Russia, when Kazakhstan was forced to pay export duties for Russia. For two years from 2012 to 2013 Chinese factories processed 338,919 tons of Kazakh oil. In 2012-2013, Kazakhstan bought 150,142.8 tons of high-octane gasoline from Chinese sources.⁸⁷

The experience of cooperation in a joint venture is reflected in the creation of LLP "Kazakhstan-China Pipeline", which was established on June 30, 2004 by the decision of the "KazTransOil" and the Chinese National Corporation for exploration and development of oil and gas. This was the former "Atasu – Alashankou" pipeline. The creation of such an enterprise allowed Kazakhstan to use the technical capabilities of the partner for the efficient operation of the pipeline. A key accomplishment happened on December 14, 2011 with the beginning of operations of oil pumping station number 11, designed to improve

the capacity of the oil pipeline from 10 to 12 million tons per year.⁸⁸ This allowed Kazakhstan to increase the volume of oil transportation.

In 2010, as part of the second phase of the second stage of the pipeline "Kazakhstan-China", "KazTransOil" started the projection of the construction of the third branch of pipeline "Kumkol-Karakoin" and oil pumping station "Kyzylzhar" (to increase the capacity up to 20 million tons per year) with the end of environmental survey in the second quarter of 2011. The construction of these facilities started in 2011 and came on stream in 2012. As a result, in 2013, the pipeline transported about 12 million tons of oil. In late 2013 the capacity of the pipeline was increased to 20 million tons.

The meetings of Nursultan Nazarbayev with representatives of Chinese companies contributed to the development of energy cooperation. On April 6, 2013, President of Kazakhstan held a meeting with the Chairman of CNPC Zhou Jiping. The meeting addressed issues of expanding cooperation between the two countries in the oil and gas sector. Nazarbayev expressed his satisfaction with the dynamic development of relations in this area. It was noted that at the present time there were 10 joint projects with total value of \$ 5 billion in the oil and gas sector. Furthermore, 4 major joint projects worth more than \$ 18 billion were made in the field of energy transportation. The President of Kazakhstan and the Chairman of CNPC also discussed the issue of working out a program on comprehensive cooperation in the oil and gas industry based on the principle of "access to raw materials in exchange for investments in the oil service and processing projects". Following the meeting, the national oil and gas companies of the two countries signed an agreement on basic principles of cooperation in the expansion and operation of the Kazakhstan-China gas pipeline.⁸⁹ The Ministry of Oil and Gas continues negotiations on getting the same prices of Kazakh oil with Russian prices, which will enable later on to turn the flow of oil to the East.⁹⁰

A special place in the development of Kazakhstan-Chinese energy cooperation was the acquisition of 8.33% share of the Kashagan field by the CNPC from the American company Conoco Philips. This transaction was made after a visit of Xi Jinping to Kazakhstan in September 2013. The entry of China in the Kashagan

project was quite expected and justified, since Kazakhstan was interested in the arrival of solvent and reliable investor to its market, since the cost of the Kashagan project had been growing with each year.

For China, this transaction represents a great economic interest, since the vast majority of fields being developed by the Chinese in Kazakhstan have now passed oil peak, so they have had to look for other, larger deposits. In the framework of the VII Eurasian Forum KAZENERGY, commenting on the prospects of cooperation between Kazakhstan and China, an expert from Beijing Normal University, Li Xing said that “such countries need one another”. In the forum was announced that Kazakhstan is planning to strengthen its energy status with the help of partners from China⁹¹

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, we can easily see from these examples that Kazakhstan could use economic and political potential of China for its economic development and ensure its security. The Chinese investments were provided in exchange for the transfer of a number of major oil and gas resources to Chinese investors. However, Kazakhstan also used the cooperation with China for its own benefit. Kazakhstan started to apply Chinese investments into the modernization of enterprises, agriculture and infrastructure. After the visit of Nursultan Nazarbaev in December 2006, the scope of cooperation was extended, covering such areas as trade, energy, telecommunications, and railways.

The 2010 National Program of industrial and innovative development of the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2015 paved the way for the development of innovative projects. Kazakhstan attempted to develop alternative energy sources in the country in order to decrease its dependence on non-renewable energy resources and take advantage of Chinese technology.

Moreover, the cooperation with China provided Kazakhstan other advantages such as the diversification of the ways in which oil and gas could be delivered to foreign markets. The strategy of Kazakhstan is to diversify routes and decrease its dependence on Russian pipelines is a soft balancing tool, used by Kazakhstan vis-à-vis Russia in order to limit its power in the energy sector. By combining their

capabilities, Kazakhstan and China force Russia to take their interests in the energy sector into consideration.

The cooperation between the two countries is also mutually beneficial because Kazakhstan needs investments and technologies from China for the economic development of the country and in turn, China needs a reliable and energy-rich partner as Kazakhstan for its own internal consumption.

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Foreign policy of Kazakhstan towards China through the prism of economic and energy cooperation.

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要旨

この研究の目的は、カザフスタンと中国のエネルギー協力に関して、カザフスタンの視点にたった新しいアプローチを打ち出すことである。カザフスタンと中国の関係を研究している専門家の多くによって採用される見方とは対照的に、本研究はカザフスタンと中国の間に築かれた協力関係の理由について論じる。

カザフスタンは、中国がもつ経済的、政治的パワーを利用することを通じて自国の経済発展をはかる狙いから、企業と農業とインフラの近代化を目的とした中国の投資を積極的に受け入れるようになった。それを通じて、カザフスタンは代替的なエネルギー資源を開発することを試みるとともに、再生可能なエネルギー資源の開発にも多大な意欲を示している。その際、中国が保有する新しいエネルギー資源分野の技術がカザフスタンにとって役に立つ。さらに、中国との協力は他国への石油とガスの輸出ルートの多様化にもつながる。すなわち、カザフスタンの戦略は、ルートの多様化とロシアのパイプラインへの依存を減らすことである。特に、現在の国際環境にあっては、その方策は、ロシアに対する西欧諸国の制裁から派生するマイナスの影響を減らすことを可能にするだろう。

以上を通じて、本論文は、カザフスタンの中国に対する外交政策をより深く理解することを可能とする一連の要因を概説する。また、本論文で強調したいことは、中国が、カザフスタンの原油をもっとも多く輸入している国であり、カザフスタンの経済発展に貢献している最大の投資家の役割を担っている国であることに加えて、カザフスタンが試みるロシアに対するソフトバランシング政策に貢献する国だということである。

この論文はカザフスタンと中国の間に築かれた経済およびエネルギー協力に主として焦点をあてた研究である。カザフスタンの中国に対する外交政策は非常に重要なテーマであるが、これまで国際関係の研究分野において注目されることは少なかった。その意味で、本研究は、先行研究とは異なる新しい視点を提示する役割を果たしていると考えられる。