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THE NETHERLANDS – IMPORTANT AND PERSPECTIVE PARTNER IN EUROPEAN UNION

Abstract

The European vector remains the main trade-economic and political foreign policy priority of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The European Union is the main trade and economic partner, while the Kingdom of the Netherlands is the main economic partner in the bilateral format.

Keywords: *European Union, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, economic and political partner, diplomatic relations.*

Аңдатпа

Еуропалық вектор Қазақстанның саяси және сауда-экономикалық сыртқысаяси басымдықтарының маңызды бөлігі болып қала бермек. Еуропалық Одақ Қазақстанның басты сауда-экономикалық әріптесі және Нидерланды Корольдігі еліміздің екіжақты форматтағы негізгі экономикалық әріптес мемлекет болып табылады.

Тірек сөздер: *Еуропалық Одақ, Нидерланды Корольдігі, сауда-экономикалық және саяси әріптес, дипломатиялық қатынастар.*

Аннотация

Европейский вектор остается главным торгово-экономическим и политическим приоритетом внешней политики Республики Казахстан. Европейский Союз является главным торгово-экономическим партнером, в то время как Королевство Нидерландов считается основным экономическим партнером в двустороннем формате.

Ключевые слова: *Европейский Союз, Королевство Нидерландов, торгово-экономический и политический партнер, дипломатические отношения.*

In 2015 the Republic of Kazakhstan celebrated the twenty-fourth anniversary of the proclamation of its national sovereignty. It is known that one of the most important elements of state sovereignty is the state's foreign policy. Foreign policy is the face of the state, which must be independent and sovereign.

When it comes to the European direction of foreign policy of Kazakhstan, we mean its policy at two levels, namely, the level of relations of the Republic of Kazakhstan with the European Union (EU) and the level of bilateral relations with the European states.

No matter what processes are taking place in the world, the European Union has been and continues to be the center of world development. In this regard, the Republic of Kazakhstan should continue to develop its partnership with the EU within this framework of this Union with the countries of the Benelux, and take everything positive from the process of European integration.

For many years, the European Union remains a major foreign economic and political partner of our country. Suffice it to say that over the years the investments from EU countries amounted to more than \$ 80 billion.

The European Union is the main trade partner of Kazakhstan. The trade turnover between Kazakhstan and the EU in 2015 amounted to 31.3 billion US dollars, which is more than 40% of the total foreign trade turnover of Kazakhstan. The main volume of attracted foreign direct investments falls on European Union countries (the Netherlands, France, Italy, Belgium, Great Britain and others.) [1].

The main objective of the development of Kazakhstan-EU relations is to build a strong and sustainable political and economic cooperation with the countries of Western Europe, including the countries of the Benelux, the establishment of equal partnership with the European Union and Kazakhstan integration into the European Economic Community.

In the European vector, certainly, the Netherlands is one of the major political, economic and trade priorities of Kazakhstan's foreign policy. Since the establishment of diplomatic relations in September 1992, Kazakh-Dutch cooperation is being developed dynamically and fruitfully. There have been actively developed political contacts between the two countries, characterized by an intense and constructive dialogue, and economic and trade and investment, clearly reflected in the annual

growth of volumes of bilateral trade and the rising volume of investments, as well as, expressed in particular the cultural and humanitarian sphere, holding various exhibitions, concerts, workshops, presentations, seminars and conferences in both countries.

It may be noted that both Kazakhstan and the Netherlands are firmly committed to the expansion of bilateral political, economic and cultural ties with each other.

It can be also pointed out that the Netherlands consider Kazakhstan as a reliable political and economic partner, which plays an important role in ensuring regional stability and security.

The most important landmark in the bilateral relations between the two states was the first official visit of the President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev to the Netherlands in November 2002.

This visit established a solid foundation for the activation and further development of the cooperation between Kazakhstan and the Netherlands in various spheres. The Dutch side has highly evaluated the achievements of Kazakhstan in establishing a democratic society with market economy, the role of the Republic in propagating peace, safety and stability in the Central Asian region.

In the context of developing relations between Kazakhstan and the new Dutch government, a very important milestone was the introductory meeting of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan with the Dutch Prime-Minister Mark Rutte in Lisbon, which was organised within the framework of NATO summit on November 19-21, 2010. In 2010 during Astana OSCE Summit the president of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.Nazarbayev and the Dutch Prime Minister M.Rutte have met for the second time; this occasion boosted the quality of the bilateral economic and political relations between the two states.

Other important bilateral meetings were between Minister of Foreign Affairs K.Tokayev with Foreign Minister of Netherlands B.Bot (in December 2004, Brussels and in September 2005, New York), and visits of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands – Current Chairman of OSCE Jaap de Hoop Scheffer (July 2003), Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands B.Bot (May 2006), Minister of Economy of the Netherlands Maria van der Hoeven (October 2009) to Kazakhstan and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan M.Tazhin (June 2009), Secretary of the State of Kazakhstan K.Saudabayev (August 2011) to the Netherlands.

2-4 February 2014 there was an official visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands F.Timmermans in Kazakhstan. During the visit the Foreign Minister met with President Nursultan Nazarbayev, Chairman of the Senate Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Prime Minister Serik Akhmetov and Minister of Foreign Affairs Erlan Idrissov.

23-25 March 2014, the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.Nazarbayev contributed the official visit to the Netherlands, where he took part in the Nuclear Security Summit on March 24-25. On 23 March, President Nazarbayev met with the host of the Nuclear Security Summit, Prime Minister Mark Rutte of the Netherlands. During the meeting, a wide range of issues of the bilateral cooperation was discussed. Besides, the key aspects of the international agenda including the situation in Ukraine were considered. The parties focused their attention on nuclear disarmament and nuclear security, as well as expansion of cooperation in trade and economy, investment, science and energy sector. Moreover the parties discussed the issues of ecology and effective water resources management, development of transit and transport potential and logistic infrastructure of the two countries.

Also President N.Nazarbayev held a series of bilateral meetings with the leaders of the United States, France, the Netherlands, Finland, Japan, China, the United Kingdom, and other countries, as well as with the heads of the United Nations and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

2 December 2015, the Prime ministry of the Netherlands M.Rutte contributed the one-day official visit to the Republic of Kazakhstan at the invitation of the Prime Ministry of Kazakhstan K.Massimov.

The Netherlands carries out a policy of peace, it is a supporter of disarmament, human rights and the elimination of racial discrimination. The Netherlands is a member of the UN and NATO, represented in the European Parliament and the Council of Europe. The country is also actively involved in the activities of the OECD, the IMF and the World Bank. Netherlands is fruitfully involved in many other international organizations and associations, in particular, such as the World Health

Organization, the International Labour Organization. Foundation of European Economic Community (EEC) in 1958 was very beneficial to the Dutch economy.

The Netherlands is a country with a highly developed economy, taking the 14th place in the world in terms of per capita income. The Dutch economy is characterized by its openness and international orientation, as evidenced by the high share of exports in GDP. In recent years, the openness of the Dutch economy is also reflected in the successful attraction of foreign investments. For many years, the Netherlands is considered by various reputable organizations as one of the most investment attractive countries. Being the largest recipient of foreign investment, the Netherlands themselves is intensively investing in the economies of other countries, including Kazakhstan, being №1 investor in the economy of Kazakhstan.

Historically, the Netherlands is the largest trading nation. About 3.8% of world exports and 3.3% of world imports, fall on the Netherlands, which refers the country to a group of ten of the most important exporting and importing countries in the world. Partly due to its geographical location, the Netherlands assumed the role of a European distribution center. In particular, the flow of goods from the United States and Asian countries to the European market are passing through the Netherlands.

The Netherlands is the largest investor and at the same time the recipient of foreign capital. EU countries and the USA are the most important markets, into where Dutch direct investments are attracted. Their share is traversed almost 80% of the total volume of direct foreign investments of the Netherlands.

Netherlands is a prosperous and open economy, heavily dependent on international trade. The stable industrial communication, moderate inflation, a significant surplus of the foreign trade balance are characteristic for the country, as it plays an important role as a European transportation hub. [2]

In this regard, one of the main cores of the whole complex bilateral relations is a trade and economic cooperation. The Netherlands occupies one of the leading positions among the foreign trade partners of Kazakhstan in the world. It is gratifying to note that, despite the negative impact of the ongoing global financial and economic crisis, the positive dynamics between the two countries is preserved today. In January-September 2015 the trade turnover between the countries amounted to \$ 4 billion 363.8 million, which is 38.8% less than the same period in 2014. Kazakhstan exports to the Netherlands amounted to \$ 4 billion 150.6 million, which is 39.9% less than the same period of last year, imports from the Netherlands to Kazakhstan constituted \$ 213.2 million (5.7% less). [3].

Netherlands companies are actively represented in areas such as finance, geology and exploration, petrochemicals, construction and architecture, medicine and pharmaceuticals (as of December 2015, 1000 joint ventures were registered in the Republic of Kazakhstan. [4]

In addition, the Netherlands is a major investor in Kazakhstan during the years of independence, the country has invested equity in the amount of more than 30 billion dollars. [5]

Kazakh-Dutch cooperation in the field of agriculture has a great potential. Considering the leading position and best practices in the agricultural sector and the participation of high-tech companies of the Netherlands and the leading players in the agricultural sector in the development of the sphere of agriculture of Kazakhstan are in the interests of both parties, since Kazakhstan is among the largest exporters of grain crops. We have a huge ecologically clean areas and are able to produce organic food.

It is necessary to highlight the fact that Kazakhstan ranks among the four country priorities of the government of the Netherlands (along with Russia, Saudi Arabia and Algeria) on the issue of energy cooperation. [6]

It may be noted that the Hague is interested in expanding energy cooperation with the countries-suppliers of hydrocarbon raw materials and considers Kazakhstan as an important, reliable and promising partner in this field. Kazakhstan, in its turn, is interested in high-tech and innovations in the traditional energy and "Green Energy", especially within the framework of the international exhibition "EXPO 2017". The Dutch experience in the development of renewable sources - wind and solar power and, in general, in the electricity sector is of interest.

Successful Dutch policy on development and introduction of advanced technologies and the availability of rich natural resources in Kazakhstan are good conditions for building a mutually beneficial partnership at a qualitatively new level.

This framework created the potential to bring bilateral cooperation to a qualitatively new level, and has led to the intensification of political dialogue between the two countries. [7]

At this stage, Kazakhstan has successfully implemented a major strategic task of the main document of the Strategy "Kazakhstan-2030" on the socio-economic and political development, having entered the 50 most competitive countries in the world. Currently, the country set a long-term goals for the implementation of the "Strategy" Kazakhstan-2050": New political course of established state", the Program "Nurly Zhol" and the State Program of Forced Industrial-Innovative Development ", aimed at entering Kazakhstan among the 30 most developed countries in the world in all aspects. [8]

Thus, the existing political dialogue between the parties, based on mutual understanding and trust, are a good basis to build up all areas of bilateral cooperation, which is built taking into account the interests of two states. Priorities and potential areas of cooperation are matters of non-proliferation and ensuring global and regional security and inter-parliamentary cooperation, dialogue between civilizations; in the economic part: energy, agriculture, aerospace, scientific and technical cooperation, transit and transport and innovation, in particular, attraction of advanced technologies, "green energy", the development of scientific and technical cooperation.

In conclusion, I want to say that in spite of the obvious results of our bilateral cooperation, the reached agreement should be regarded as a serious basis for the implementation of its powerful potential. I hope that the cooperation between Kazakhstan and the Netherlands will surely evolve towards a comprehensive, strategic partnership.

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