

Kazakhstan as Chairman of the OSCE: A Proposed Leadership Agenda

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Introduction

Kazakhstan's assumption of the leadership of the OSCE in 2010 represents an unprecedented development. For the first time a Central Asian state will hold the chair of the OSCE. Second, according to the Kazakh government, Kazakhstan's ascension to this role represents the international community's acknowledgement of its impressive progress since 1991 and its capacity for leadership in enhancing Eurasian security.¹ But Kazakhstan's success in gaining this post is equally, if not largely, due to its geopolitical importance to the West. Here we should remember that Kazakhstan campaigned for this position precisely to gain this image abroad. It was not awarded the chairmanship because of its democratic proclivities or credentials, quite the contrary. In this respect the US' support for Kazakhstan's assumption of the OSCE chair reflects its aspirations that Kazakhstan will uphold the promises of reform that it gave as a condition of becoming the OSCE chairman.² Therefore Kazakhstan will in some measure be held to account for its actions in this new role.

Third, according to President Nursultan Nazarbayev, Kazakhstan's application for this post stems from its interest in further integration with Europe.³ This is another reason why Kazakhstan's actions as chairman merit careful international scrutiny because it has committed itself, at least rhetorically, to higher standards of governance with regard to democracy, security and human rights. As Nazarbayev said, "Our country's presidency of this prestigious organization is not only an objective recognition of achievements of independent Kazakhstan, but also a high responsibility for strengthening peace and security in the continent."⁴ Fourth, Kazakhstan's new leadership role suggests possibilities for expanding the OSCE's agenda and remit to include Central Asian problems to a much greater degree than before.

But with this new leadership role comes many challenging responsibilities for both

Kazakhstan and the OSCE which is an institution under attack, primarily from Moscow. Kazakhstan will not be able to hide behind the claim that it is under pressure from Russia because it campaigned assiduously for the chairman's position, mainly for these reasons of prestige. Consequently Kazakhstan will not be able to avoid the manifold challenges that come with its new role. For example, the OSCE also faces challenges of potential marginalization due to the overall drift of European security trends in the last decade that have emphasized NATO and the EU rather than the OSCE, notably in the Balkans. Indeed, its current chairman, Greek Foreign Minister Dora Bakoyannis, admits that sustained US involvement is necessary to retrieve the OSCE's standing.⁵ Certainly the list of challenges to either European or Central Asian security is long enough to suffice for concentration upon either regional security agenda. Accordingly this paper will suggest issues that Kazakhstan as OSCE chairman might profitably raise to benefit Central Asian and European security. These issues comprise those with which Kazakhstan is already involved in Central Asia, and the European security issues that it must face upon assuming its chairmanship.

In assuming its new role, Kazakhstan must keep in mind that its leadership role should apply to both Central Asia and Europe. Statements like the recent one by Kasymzhomart Tokayev the Speaker of the Senate of Kazakhstan's Parliament, that, "the priorities of Kazakhstan's future presidency will be a joint fight against terrorism, drug trafficking, trafficking in arms and humans, as well as rebuilding of long-suffering Afghanistan," suggest that while Astana will emphasize issues on which a consensus exists, it may not be willing to go up against Russian or other states' interests wherever and whenever they challenge the foundations of the OSCE and its overall effectiveness.⁶

President Nazarbayev has stated that his country's leadership of the OSCE will impart a

fresh impetus to the organization's activities and that it is necessary to ensure the further balanced development of all three aspects of the OSCE's activities – humanitarian; economic and environmental; and military-political.⁷ Specifically he said that, “We are driven by the goal of strengthening the OSCE as a bridge between the West and the East. Such a dialogue should become a linking factor for the countries of the organization's Euroatlantic and Euroasian zones of responsibility.”⁸ While Tokayev echoed this statement by saying that Kazakhstan favors a “step by step transformation of the OSCE's activities in exact accordance with the interests of all its members,” and taking their views and positions into account, at the end of the day, the chairman cannot allow discord to veto or obstruct progress or to transform the organization into a shell of itself.⁹ Ultimately it will have to both lead and find consensus to be effective and what's more respected as a true leader in security and democracy. Indeed, when Tokayev says that Kazakhstan does not recognize “the emergence of new dividing lines in Europe and the Eurasian continent as a whole,” he comes quite close to parroting Russian rhetoric.¹⁰

Therefore Kazakhstan, to be effective and trusted must find a way to balance the competing geopolitical claims upon the OSCE while ensuring that it functions as an avatar of democracy and security. Nazarbayev's remarks about the OSCE as a bridge between East and West suggest at least some awareness of the need for a balanced geopolitical approach. These remarks are quite consistent with Kazakhstan's multi-vector foreign policy, that aims to hold a balance among its key interlocutors.¹¹ But within that multi-vector policy compelling geostrategic reasons clearly impel Kazakhstan to be more mindful of Russian and Chinese preferences than it is of the US' interests or of Europe. This is hardly surprising for as the Chinese proverb says, “distant water cannot quench nearby fire.” Therefore we must understand that to the degree that the US and Europe jointly support Kazakhstan's ability to resist Russian

proposals that would undermine the OSCE and European security more broadly, it will be more able to uphold the OSCE's mission and possibly even to extend it as it has promised to do.

At the same time, Kazakhstan undoubtedly fully grasps Russia's neo-imperial proclivities and willingness to strike at states who offend it.¹² This is particularly the case given its large Russian minority. Although there have been no Russian charges of Kazakh mistreatment of this minority, the Kazakh authorities are well aware that Moscow can and may use this card against them any time it chooses to do so. Kazakhstan fully grasps the potential threat, for example, from the previous Russian policy of granting passports to so called Russian nationals in foreign states like Georgia and Ukraine, a policy that puts a time bomb under those states as occurred in the Russo-Georgian war in 2008. Second, Russia's control of all Central Asian gas pipelines to Europe also creates an inordinate Kazakh vulnerability in regard to its future economic development. Therefore Kazakhstan's anxiety about Russian policies should not be discounted. A recent study of Central Asian perceptions of China concluded that local governments perceive China as a uniquely powerful regime that could substantially injure their interests and therefore they make fulsome statements about friendship with it.¹³ It is quite likely that Astana's perceptions of and behavior towards Russia are not that different.

These considerations are important for the future because as chairman of the OSCE Kazakhstan will confront considerable pressure from both East and West in its efforts to define, uphold, transform, and possibly extend the OSCE's mandate on a wide range of security issues. Therefore its ability to exercise effective leadership of the OSCE must not be impaired by any prior commitments that it undertakes in its own foreign policy interests, in particular its closeness to Russian policies.

Astana apparently understands this dilemma that it faces as it prepares for its new role

and is duly trying to cultivate productive relationships with all of its major interlocutors in the Euroatlantic world, not just Russia. Apart from its membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), Kazakhstan has long advocated a similar economic integration of the CIS and is a member of the Eurasian Economic Community, EURASEC.¹⁴ It also supports Russia's call for a European summit to revamp Europe's security architecture, a highly dubious and still vague proposal that aims at undermining the OSCE's work on behalf of democratic elections as well as NATO, and that has generated much skepticism in the West.¹⁵ Meanwhile Kazakhstan appears to be cooperating successfully with NATO in its Partnership for Peace Plan,¹⁶ More recently Kazakhstan may be looking to strengthen its economic ties with Washington.¹⁷ Furthermore Kazakhstan is using its auspices to broker an Irano-American deal over Iran's nuclear program by becoming a repository for Iran's nuclear fuel and has even invited President Obama to Kazakhstan.¹⁸ As one analysis of this initiative noted, "Developing the nuclear fuel bank initiative would reinforce Astana's aim to position itself as an honest broker that serves as a bridge between East and West."¹⁹

While Kazakhstan clearly defers to both Moscow and Beijing (and may yet be forced to do so more given the current economic crisis) on issues of vital importance for them, it is by no means a satellite of either of them.²⁰ Instead it seeks to balance Russia in its policies, e.g. concluding major oil and gas deals, including a recent loan, with China, and having the US as its major foreign investor. Beyond its relations with those major powers Kazakhstan has also consistently espoused proposals for regional and even Asian cooperation. For example, it organized the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA) and has even recently proposed that this organization could serve as a basis for setting up an Asian

Group of 20 (states) and introducing a new regional currency unit.²¹ Thus in general we might expect the Kazakh government to use the OSCE as a platform to enhance regional cooperation among Central Asian states as well as mutual confidence-building measures consistent with its previous initiatives. Given the previous failure to achieve positive multilateral security outcomes in Central Asia , progress in these areas would be very welcome.

Central Asian Issues

However, we should not underestimate the difficulties here. Central Asia confronts numerous security challenges that could grow worse as a result either of the current global economic crisis or a NATO defeat in Afghanistan or a combination of both of those challenges. Indeed, the Anti-Terrorist Center of the CIS Member States that brings together their intelligence services recently warned that the regional situation could worsen because of the return home of migrant labor due to the economic crisis in Russia and Central Asia and the ensuing unemployment of many young men. That prospect exists on top of the great danger emanating from Afghanistan and Pakistan.²²

Central Asian surveys show widespread anger at official corruption and an ensuing profound alienation from local governments. The widespread repressions against religious organizations have also generated substantial resentment, particularly among younger residents aged 18 to 30 who believe that “law enforcement agencies are not held properly accountable for their actions,” and can “operate with impunity even when they cause harm to innocent people.” Moreover, the economic crisis only adds to high rates of previously existing unemployment in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, particularly among the youth, always the incendiary element in society. Understandably these conditions, particularly under worsening economic conditions, can cause an upheaval in key Central Asian states like Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, or Uzbekistan,

especially if the perception of government control weakens any further.²³ Indeed, the International Crisis Group recently stated that Tajikistan was on the verge of becoming a failing state.²⁴ Under the circumstances Kyrgyzstan is taking no chances and has recently focused attention on one of the major Islamist challenges to the regime, the terrorist organization Hizb al-Tahrir (also known as Hizb ut-Tahrir).²⁵ And Tajikistan has followed suit with the relatively obscure Jamaat-ut Tabligh.²⁶ In other words Central Asian repression of opposition is likely to continue and even possibly increase. That trend, e.g. in Uzbekistan, can create other problems such as increased refugee flows to already stressed neighbors.²⁷

Kirill Nourzhanov's recent analysis of Central Asian threat perceptions highlights the threats that exist within the former Soviet republics of Central Asia. Nourzhanov notes the need to break away from a Western-derived threat paradigm that sees everything in terms of the great power rivalry commonly called the new great game and the main internal threat to regimes, namely insurgency.²⁸ While these threats surely exist, they hardly comprise the only challenges to Central Asian security. Thus he writes that,

Conventional security problems rooted in border disputes, competition over water and mineral resources, ubiquitous enclaves and ethnic minorities, generate conflict potential in the region and are perceived as existential threats by the majority of the local population. One of the very few comprehensive studies available on the subject arrived at the following conclusions. 1)relations among the countries of Central Asia are far from showing mutual understanding on the whole range of economic issues; 2)the most acute contradictions are linked to land and water use; and 3) these contradictions have historical roots and are objectively difficult to resolve, hence they are liable to be actualized in the near future in a violent form.²⁹

This is not just another academic analysis. In fact, border problems, mainly between Uzbekistan and all of its neighbors, have long impeded and today continue to retard the development of both regional security and prosperity.³⁰ Nourzhanov is not alone in calling for this new approach to regional security. As other authors have noted,

On the other hand this perspective on Central Asian security or the second alternative of seeing it in the context of local governments' internal stability is arguably incomplete. Anyone studying security issues in Central Asia quickly recognizes that environmental factors--the use and control of land, water, energy, and other raw materials, and the reclamation of polluted lands-- play an extremely important role in that region's security and political agendas.³¹

Similarly the International Crisis Group likewise concluded that the international community must urgently approach the issues of border delimitation with more urgency than before.³²

Anyone looking at Central Asian security can readily see that tensions over borders, particularly between Uzbekistan and its neighbors, generate constant inter-state tensions in Central Asia.³³

As a result of these trends a regional arms race has taken root in Central Asia . In 2007 alone military spending in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan rose by 48%.³⁴ As Nourzhanov further notes,

The bulk of the money would be spent on heavy weapons, fixed-wing planes, and navy vessels which is hard to explain by the demands of a fight against terrorism alone. Remarkably the danger of intra-regional armed conflict is not seriously analyzed in any official document. The current Military Doctrine of Kazakhstan (2000) which talks about the tantalizingly abstract 'probability of diminished regional security as a result of excessive increase in qualitative and quantitative military might by certain states', may be regarded as a very partial exception that proves the rule.³⁵

Undoubtedly the OSCE under Kazakhstan's leadership could provide a major service simply by shifting the paradigm of regional security discourse in this direction.

Kazakhstan could use its new leadership role to address some or all of these issues. Indeed, everyone would benefit if Kazakhstan put these issues of borders, water use, and arms races in Central Asia squarely on the table so that they could be openly discussed, preferably in a multilateral forum, and be openly rather than covertly securitized. Nourzhanov also notes that Central Asian leaders have put themselves or been put in an impossible position by having to recite public paeans to regional cooperation when they are contradicting it in their actions. Likewise, their invocations of Western threat scenarios that prioritize terrorism and insurgency

are belied by events since only in Kyrgyzstan has there been an insurgency.³⁶ This rhetorical stance towards the West, it should be noted, remarkably resembles these leaders' posture cited above vis-à-vis China and presumably Russia in that the public rhetoric conceals private beliefs and action.³⁷ Kazakhstan would therefore be doing the region and itself a great favor if it encouraged the open and frank discussion throughout Central Asia of security issues that are now approached in a tradition of suffocating secrecy. Indeed, Astana could contribute to the building up throughout the region of think tanks that have the means to discuss the issues openly and propose solutions that build mutual confidence and cooperation.³⁸

For example, issues of water security have recently risen to the forefront of public debate. There have been repeated crises, notably between Uzbekistan and its neighbors, that have led Tashkent to demand publicly that solutions to water problems take into account the interests of all states (by which it means, of course, primarily its interests). In urging "rational and effective use of water resources in the region based on universal international norms," Tashkent has thrown down the gauntlet, so to speak, to its neighbors.³⁹ Specifically it has attacked their endeavors to construct new large-scale projects to build hydropower facilities and stated that only Central Asian states can and should resolve the problem, in other words, it seeks to exclude Russia, China, and the EU. But in so doing it has also called for the UN to set up a process to examine all hydro-energy projects on transborder rivers and resolve all the issues "on the basis of mutual understanding, constructive dialogue, and consensus" among the parties.⁴⁰ Meanwhile its neighbors, e.g. Tajikistan, are hardly disposed to listen to Uzbekistan whom they regard as a threat.⁴¹

Uzbekistan's public demands offer Kazakhstan and the OSCE a splendid opportunity to open this and other related issues up for public discussion among all interested parties. This

issue clearly cries out for establishment of just such a public forum where all the governments concerned could discuss water management questions and the OSCE, especially under Kazakh leadership, would seem to be an excellent venue for doing so. This is particularly true as Central Asian leaders invoked foreign recommendations at the most recent water summit in April 2009.⁴² Furthermore there is now an international debate on this and related questions. Experts from other countries and other governments in Central Asia dispute Tashkent's claims and argue that it and possibly other states like Turkmenistan, use water irrationally and advocate carrying out an examination of all Central Asian hydro-energy projects.⁴³ Yet EU experts have also criticized Tajikistan's Rogun dam project saying it entails high risk and replicates "past reckless Soviet industrial planning."⁴⁴ These debates make a public multilateral forum the ideal place for coming to terms with the issues of water management.

These disputes over water derive from Soviet practices and the failure of the Central Asian states' inability to go beyond those practices regarding irrigation and water use or to find a basis for cooperation. As a result these disputes between the upstream and downstream states have become perennial. Not surprisingly the most recent water summit in Central Asia ended in stalemate.⁴⁵

To escape from the annual disputes and to have an independent energy infrastructure, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan are planning to build more dams to produce electricity both to meet their own energy demands and [to] sell it to Pakistan, Iran, and India. The three downstream countries (Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Kazakhstan) are opposed to this idea, because their economies heavily rely on cotton, wheat, and rice, which without the water coming from the upstream countries will be impossible to grow. Thus at the moment Central Asian countries are locked in seemingly endless disagreement. Attempts to resolve the issue since 1991 (have) so far failed. In the framework of regional water management four intergovernmental treaties were signed and one draft agreement was prepared. The provisions of the treaties have failed to resolve the real issues or remained paper agreements only.⁴⁶

As noted above, the potential for conflict on this issue is great. Indeed, conflicts have

already broken out sporadically between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan while the threat of conflict between Uzbekistan and Tajikistan also remains high.⁴⁷ As Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are preparing to build the major hydro-energy projects that so arouse Uzbekistan with Russian help, thereby giving Russia a voice in these issues, Uzbekistan may try to preempt these projects. Thus the Central Asian security situation could easily deteriorate over water. As Uri Shamir, an Israeli hydrologist, has noted, “if there is a political will to peace, water is not an obstacle. If someone wants to find a reason to fight, water gives you a lot of opportunities.”⁴⁸ Therefore a multilateral negotiating forum could be a highly appropriate venue for attempting to resolve the issue.

In fact this may be an urgent issue with which Kazakhstan will have to deal even before it assumes the leadership of the OSCE, but that fact makes this issue a prime candidate for OSCE efforts to find a solution to these problems. European institutions are already voicing their opinions on the subject. For example, Pierre Morel, the EU’s representative for Central Asia, urges that those governments avoid large hydropower projects and construct in their place small hydroelectric projects that require much less investment and are built much more quickly. He also called for a single international coordinating agency to resolve the water and energy problem lest these issues further burden regional development.⁴⁹ Furthermore water projects already underway in Kazakhstan with the assistance of the World Bank offer some prospect of alleviating its and possibly other countries’ water management issues, making Kazakhstan a logical leader in future talks, especially under the OSCE’s rubric.⁵⁰ Since the issue is already on the agenda of European security institutions, placing it on the OSCE’s agenda as an issue requiring multilateral leadership and negotiation would not be unusual and could represent a significant step forward.

These issues alone comprise a meaningful agenda for Kazakhstan's leadership of the OSCE in the Central Asian context. But unfortunately the region's problems do not end here. Indeed, the absence of regional cooperation in a context where for most states security means primarily the internal security of the regime has encouraged the great power rivalry of the new great game, a rivalry that paradoxically contributes to these states' security.⁵¹ That rivalry assists them because it induces the major external actors, be they states or international financial institutions (IFIs), to provide these governments with the resources they need for security that they could not otherwise generate internally. Or else the rivalry among them precludes a unified approach to regional issues which might compel local governments to act in ways that they would otherwise not prefer to follow.⁵²

Nonetheless the Central Asian states must keep finding ways to generate economic development and rents to elites in order to satisfy the eternal internal competition among clans, factions, and tribes that dominates Central Asian politics.⁵³ Under conditions of the present financial crisis this balancing act might become too hard to sustain. Arguably Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan are already perilously close to failing states. In these conditions absence of these economic-political benefits or rents cannot ultimately be compensated for by skill at managing economic-political challenges and vice versa. In other words, even though the external rivalries that facilitate the transfer of resources to Central Asia or of capabilities that allow these states to increase the resources at their disposal and meet their most urgent domestic challenges will continue, so too will the domestic threats to security that demand the assignment of still more of those resources to them. Indeed, these crises may even grow if institutions and policies cannot keep pace with them. And if those policies and institutions cannot keep pace, than all the foreign interest in the world will be of little help.

Then these states will face the risk of unilateral foreign intervention a danger that already exists. Thus in 2006 Ilyas Sarsembaev wrote that,

Some Russian military analysts consider that if Kyrgyzstan were overtaken by a complete political collapse, Russia and Kazakhstan could impose some kind of protectorate until stability could be reestablished and new elections held. In this scenario, the United States would allow Moscow to take action in Kyrgyzstan, because most of its own resources would already be mobilized in Iraq and Afghanistan – and probably in Iran and Syria. Russian help would then be welcomed and much preferred to that of China. Indeed, if Russia did not dare to put itself forward as a stabilizing force, China might use Uyghur separatism.⁵⁴

Obviously this assessment links the prospect of state collapse in Kyrgyzstan to international rivalries (the so called new great game) and to the possibilities of separatism among China's Uyghurs. Thus it implicitly postulates the paradigm outlined above, i.e. a link from state failure to foreign invasion or intervention and even the threat of state dismemberment. Yet Russia has responded to these challenges by strongly supporting the current status quo across Central Asia, clearly believing that the only alternative to it is worse. Thus logically, if not pragmatically, its policy is ultimately contradictory because its refusal to countenance reform or let these states act more freely in the international economic policy arena so that they could obtain greater material resources and governing capacity compels them to cling to a status quo that could likely become insupportable. If Kazakhstan's leadership of the OSCE is to have substantial regional resonance, it must act together with its neighbors to curb these risks of state failure and external intervention along with the failed policies that encourage such intervention.

Afghanistan

For many analysts the main external threat and by far the most urgent one to Central Asian security is the specter of a NATO defeat in Afghanistan. That defeat, in tandem with existing crises and challenges, could trigger an outcome that must be understood in the context of the existing Central Asian risk factors. Those risk factors, cited above, are also palpably

multiplying under conditions of economic crisis and should also be considered in any regional assessment and risk analysis. The conjunction of the current economic crisis, the spillover effects of the war in Afghanistan, and the precarious domestic situation in these countries could easily come together to generate a major regional security crisis. Indeed, virtually all the CIS countries are raising their military budgets to meet such potential domestic challenges or are receiving military aid from Russia or the U.S. even as their finances come under severe pressure.⁵⁵

In regard to Afghanistan, even though Russia claims that it is willing to do more than send non-lethal supplies through its territory to Afghanistan, the fear of a NATO defeat has already led Russia to try and exploit or hedge against the potential Taliban victory even as it resists it.⁵⁶ Moscow appears to be preparing to adopt a stance of claiming it did everything to help the allies win but was disregarded. Indeed, despite its talk of cooperation Moscow actually fears that the US and NATO are losing and is therefore hedging against that outcome. Thus when President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan, sensing the loss of support for him in Washington, approached Moscow about arms sales to Afghanistan, it replied affirmatively but stipulated that there must first be a prior political agreement between the two governments and that NATO and Russia must resume their dialogue broken during the war with Georgia.⁵⁷ In other words, Moscow's interests, not surprisingly, take precedence over fighting terrorism. Indeed, it has been angling for such a sphere of influence in Afghanistan ever since 2001 and may see it as a way of leveraging its influence to gain some measure of control over NATO's decision-making. Sergei Rogov, Director of the prestigious and well-connected Institute for the Study of the USA and Canada in Moscow hinted at what an agreement with the Karzai government about Afghanistan might mean. Speaking in Washington in January 2009, Rogov said that,

The only way to achieve some stabilization of the situation in Afghanistan is to invite Russia to join the IFOR (International Forces there more commonly known as ISAF-author). Russia should accept responsibility for Regional Economic Reconstruction Teams in [the] Northern provinces. Russian teams should be supported by security personnel. The key problem will be to include Russia in the political decision-making mechanism on Afghanistan while Russia remains a non-member of NATO. A possible solution may be giving additional functions to the NATO-Russia Council, or creation of [a] special body with decision-making authority. The Soviet experience in Afghanistan makes Russia very unenthusiastic about another engagement in this county. It will demand an extra effort from the new US Administration.⁵⁸

Kazakhstan is clearly worried about the course and outcome of the war in Afghanistan. Its Ministry of Foreign Affairs has already urged that the SCO, CSTO, and NATO should all unite in the face of this threat, again consistent with Kazakhstan's overall multi-vectored foreign policy.⁵⁹ But this also repeats Moscow's demand for NATO recognition of these organizations, a step that is tantamount to recognizing Moscow's protectorate over them and ability to be their interlocutor on security issues vis-à-vis NATO. Meanwhile, the SCO and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) have already taken action. At its March 27 2009 meeting the SCO adopted a comprehensive program to step up its efforts against the drug flows from Afghanistan that have ravaged both Central Asia and Russia and adopted security precautions within member countries against terrorism.⁶⁰

Subsequently at a meeting off the SCO's Defense Ministers in Moscow on April 29, the SCO again advocated a new international order (a swipe at the US) called for greater defense cooperation among the members, reiterated the commitments made in March, and decided to expand cooperation with observer states: Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, and Mongolia.⁶¹ In other words while they will let Washington carry the burden of fighting in Afghanistan and provide it with some non-military support, they will "batten down the hatches" in their own countries and thus hedge against the prospect of a Taliban victory there. Or in Russia's case they will seek to use the CSTO to strengthen Russia's military position in Central Asia and the CSTO's overall

international standing.⁶² This stance is hardly the optimal posture for the chairman of the OSCE or the members of the SCO given their rhetoric and genuine anxiety about the seriousness of the threat from Afghanistan.

Kazakhstan's government also believes that the OSCE may be able to add to other efforts by relevant stakeholders to tackle Afghanistan's problems like economic reconstruction or possibly anti-drug activities.⁶³ But this could lead to problems because Russia clearly wants to use the SCO and CSTO's role in this struggle to gain NATO's and the OSCE's recognition of them, an outcome that is quite unlikely.⁶⁴ Russia wants European security organizations to espouse its security agenda and rhetoric recognizing these agencies as legitimate security providers so that Russia could further its long-term aim of denigrating Central Asian states' sovereignty and interposing these Russian-led organizations between them and NATO, preventing them from exercising their own sovereign freedom to choose whether and how to relate to NATO.⁶⁵ Thus Nikolai Bordyuzha, General Secretary of the CSTO stated that,

A reliable collective security system based on the principles of polycentricity, supremacy of international law, and the central role of the UN, the single and undivided security for all countries, the unacceptability of anyone's isolation and the appearance of zones with different levels of security is needed now like never before.⁶⁶

Similarly Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov recently noted that Russia's initiative on the European security architecture that the OSCE will take up and which Kazakhstan must therefore ultimately confront, called for involving the CSTO and similar organizations as participants in the process. That represents another attempt to have the West confer upon this organization that actually diminishes Central Asian sovereignty the rank of a regional security organization equal to that of NATO or the OSCE.⁶⁷ This gambit also shows that the problems of Central Asian and European security are ultimately inextricably tied to each other and that Kazakhstan will have to deal with them together when it assumes its new post.

Democratization

The OSCE was, is, and must continue to be in the forefront of the treaty-based democratization of the Helsinki Treaty and the Moscow Protocol's signatories. This is because those documents comprise what might be called the constitutional foundation of contemporary Europe's security order.⁶⁸ However, the issue of democracy presents very difficult problems for Kazakhstan given the fundamentally undemocratic nature of its political structures and processes, a trait it shares with all the other Central Asian governments even if it remains perhaps the most liberalized of them all. To win the chairmanship Kazakhstan made many promises to the Madrid OSCE summit about its future democratization in 2007 that it has since failed to uphold. Moreover, as Chairman of the OSCE, its behavior will have a demonstration effect on other states. Thus it will and should face continuing pressure to ensure compliance with its past promises and new responsibilities. If Kazakhstan wants its tenure to be regarded as a success and itself as a leading international player it must come to realize that it must improve its domestic governance in deeds, not words. This point refers as well to specific issues of recent Kazakh legislation and policy discussed below. These issues starkly emerged at the recent hearings of the Congress' Helsinki Commission.⁶⁹ The questions related to democracy in Kazakhstan are vital because they go to the heart of the legitimacy of its future actions as chairman of the OSCE. Foreign commentators already claim that Kazakhstan was approved for this role because of geopolitical reasons, not its fitness for the post which is, they say, moot.

Thus Joshua Kucera writes,

Controversy has swirled around Kazakhstan's chairmanship of the OSCE since President Nazarbayev's administration first expressed interest in guiding the organization. Many regional experts continue to assert that Kazakhstan does not adequately represent the OSCE's democratic values, and therefore does not deserve to chair the organization. In designating Kazakhstan the 2010 OSCE chair, US and European Union leaders appeared to take political and economic factors into account. Kazakhstan has abundant natural

resources, and the country has figured prominently in US and EU plans to construct an energy export network that operates beyond Russia's control. Ultimately the necessity of Kazakhstan's participation in Western-backed energy export schemes likely counterbalanced concerns about Astana's political practices.⁷⁰

Similarly Western human rights organizations are decidedly wary and skeptical about Kazakhstan's professed commitment to human rights and democracy. They have good reasons for this wariness given its failure to live up to past promises.⁷¹ Consequently as chairman of the OSCE Kazakhstan, to be effective and to defend its reputation and the legitimacy of its position - - i.e. in its own interests -- must make measurable progress on democratization as it has publicly promised to do.⁷² Despite past promises of reform of Kazakh legislation and practices regarding elections, media, etc. that skepticism remains and is not diminished by reports, for example, that Kazakhstan tortures prisoners in its jails.⁷³ Even US officials striving to be friendly to Kazakhstan have to admit that its independent media, political institutions, and civil society remain "very under-developed."⁷⁴ The new media law and the law on political parties that were supposed to embody promises made to the OSCE for reforms signed into effect by President Nazarbayev in February 2009 do not meet OSCE standards.⁷⁵ Certainly Kazakhstan's most recent elections and the awarding of life tenure to Nazarbayev cannot be portrayed as manifestations of democracy. Although Kazakh authorities have rightly emphasized the country's basic religious tolerance, its freedom of religion law was found to violate the country's constitution and was withdrawn. Nonetheless it needs to be redone.

Worse, a pending draft law on the Internet would restrict freedom of expression via the Internet and has already aroused a large amount of controversy.⁷⁶ Indeed, according to US experts this law is even more draconian than Russia's law and could easily serve as a template for other Central Asian governments.⁷⁷ Beyond the fact that Nazarbayev openly advocated limitations on the freedom of the Internet, there have been recent massive hacker attacks on

opposition websites and internet resources.⁷⁸ Andrey Richter, an expert from the OSCE, has confirmed that this law completely contradicts the promises made by Kazakh authorities concerning civil and human rights.⁷⁹ As Alexei Simonov, Head of the Glasnost' Defense Fund observed,

Kazakhstan's desire to be a European power is quite noticeable despite its Asian location. So I think that Astana will have to listen to the opinion of human rights activists, because the image of Kazakhstan, which is already not the most glowing, will be ruthlessly torpedoed by these amendments [to the law on the media and concerning the internet], Kazakhstan will quickly find itself at the bottom, among states that are not liked because they severely violate the human right to freedom of speech and opinion.⁸⁰

Finally the most recent decree first banning anyone from reading the highly critical account of Nazarbayev by his ex-son in law Rakhat Aliyev and the subsequent amendment banning distribution of the book is frankly conduct unbecoming of the Chairman of the OSCE and a highly negative example for other states.

To point out these problems is not to deny Kazakhstan's relative liberality compared to its Central Asian neighbors. But questions remain concerning its laws and statutes' implementation and whether or not they are being enacted pro forma or in a genuine desire to approach Western standards. Thus the test of Kazakhstan's fitness for the role of OSCE leader continues as does unremitting international scrutiny despite the promises of Foreign Minister Marat Tazhin and Ambassador to the US Erlan Idrissov that a genuine multi-party system, independent media, and term limits for the president are or have been enacted into legislation and that Kazakhstan is "determined to continue our policy of democratization in conformity with international human rights standards."⁸¹

In fact authoritarianism has remained inviolate and unchanged since 1991 and much of the social science literature that could be used to analyze Kazakhstan's political system would point to a continuing authoritarianism and little reform. However, there is the possibility that

Kazakhstan's commitment to the accords it made with the OSCE in Madrid in 2007 could enable activists to utilize those principles of international and domestic accords to launch a more vigorous campaign for the Kazakh government to observe human rights as it committed itself to doing and thus replicate the experience of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union a generation ago.⁸²

None of these criticisms should be taken as simply an attempt to delegitimize Kazakhstan's status as OSCE chairman or to deny its achievements in achieving a genuine religious tolerance and inter-ethnic concord at home under rather unpromising and inauspicious conditions. Kazakhstan's relative liberalism in Central Asia also must be noted. But having campaigned for this position of chairman, it must constantly demonstrate its fitness for the job and conduct itself in such a way as to be above suspicion. Such suspicions can only weaken its international standing and erode much of the regime's undisputed positive achievements since 1991. Kazakhstan is, by its own choice, under a magnifying glass. Therefore all its actions will loom larger than if it had been merely a quiet member of the OSCE. For those reasons and for its own benefit it cannot go back on its pledges in Madrid. Instead it has taken upon itself the necessity of further genuine reforms and will be watched very carefully by multiple domestic and foreign audiences. Even if the argument that Central Asian leaders and some Western analysts have made that the alternative to dictatorship in Central Asia is chaos not democracy is true, Kazakhstan has openly and loudly opted for a different course and freely sought and assumed an imposing responsibility upon itself.⁸³

European Security

Although Central Asian and democratization issues are already considerable in their number and scope; the OSCE, the democracy, human rights, and security baskets of the Helsinki

Treaty, and subsequent documents are at risk in Europe. And they are at risk largely due to Russian policy. At the Madrid OSCE meetings in 2007 Kazakhstan only won the OSCE and key members' assent to its chairmanship in 2010 after a compromise between Moscow and Washington even though many members felt that Kazakhstan was backsliding on democratization (this may well be the case as noted above).⁸⁴ Indeed, Moscow threatened to cripple the OSCE's work by blocking decisions on the OSCE chairman through 2011 if Astana was not granted the right to chair the OSCE.⁸⁵ This suggests that Russia might see Kazakhstan as its Trojan horse in the OSCE or believe that it can pressure Astana into endorsing its initiatives that would enhance Russia's unilateralism and polarize Europe further. As we have seen above, this is by no mean an idle concern given Kazakhstan's leaders' support for language and postures that originated in Moscow. Furthermore it is quite likely that Moscow exerts constant pressure on Kazakhstan to eviscerate the OSCE and in particular ODIHR, the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights that both supervises and comments on the democratic nature of elections in Eastern Europe and the CIS.

There are other reasons for concern that Kazakhstan might not be ready, able, or willing to stand up to Russian pressure on the OSCE from its recent behavior on key issues of European security. On April 21 Kazakhstan made an ostentatious volte-face and pulled out of the NATO exercises that took place in Georgia from May 6-June 1, 2009. This decision apparently reflected the military and government's apprehension that because of their existing dependence upon the Russian defense industry and military they might encounter serious Russian pressure and unhappiness if they participated in the exercises.⁸⁶ Similarly Astana refused to sign the joint statement at the EU's Prague Summit on Energy in May 2009 even though President Nazarbayev had publicly called for EU support to diversify Kazakhstan's energy. Instead once the Prague

Summit ended Nazarbayev endorsed the ratification by Kazakhstan's Parliament of the agreement with Russia and Turkmenistan on the construction of the 1700 KM Prikaspiisky (Caspian) pipeline.⁸⁷ These moves call into question Kazakhstan's ability and will to stand up to Russian pressure to undermine the OSCE and its work.

Moscow's unremitting efforts to cripple or undermine the OSCE's capacity for supervising and mediating democratization issues among the members have continued since 2000 and are carried on over a broad agenda. Indeed, Russia has long been complaining about the OSCE's democratization activities and particularly ODIHR. It has been joined by other CIS states like Kazakhstan as their elections have become ever less transparent and democratic, not to mention their becoming ever more insubstantial as ways of recording a democratic choice. Thus in 2007, as the decision about Kazakhstan as chair of the OSCE, was approaching a climax, Moscow proposed measures that would forbid OSCE commissioners and observers to comment about a government's electoral conduct after the election, cut the size of ODIHR missions, and prohibit publication of their reports. Furthermore the ODIHR would now report not to the Chairman in Office of the OSCE but to the Permanent Council of the member states. That would allow them to regulate and supervise it strictly and thus emasculate its capacity to pronounce on the democratic nature of a member's election.⁸⁸ Beyond that Moscow then said that it would allow ODIHR to monitor its Duma elections of 2007 but reserve the right to decide on the modalities of the monitoring itself. Finally it has set up its own organization of CIS observers who naturally find every election in these despotisms to have met democratic standards.⁸⁹

Moscow's attack upon the OSCE is also directed at its concentration upon democratization as embodied in ODIHR. It wants the OSCE to deal more with political-military issues to counterbalance and ultimately, if possible, check NATO's activity in Eurasia and it

blocks OSCE activities and programs wherever possible towards democratization.⁹⁰ More recently it has become clear that Moscow wants to obtain legitimization of the SCO and CSTO as security organizations by the UN and even have them play a role in determining European security so that it will have a bloc at its disposal on those issues at all times.⁹¹ This emphasis on these “regional organizations” would come at the expense of the OSCE and the idea is also found in President Medvedev’s 2008 proposals on European security architecture and subsequent Russian commentary on them.⁹²

Medvedev’s proposals, though still unclear, point clearly towards an attempt to dilute and undermine both NATO and the OSCE, particularly ODIHR.⁹³ Most recently Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov reiterated Moscow’s view that the OSCE could become a pan-European umbrella organization, i.e. it would supervise NATO and weaken its responsibility for democracy in the area it now monitors.⁹⁴ Although the OSCE is committed to discussing Medvedev’s proposals, in fact there is nothing substantive in those proposals. Rather there will be a lengthy process as related by the Secretary-General of OSCE Marc Perrin de Brichambaut.

There will be a gradual process. Today (May 8), the Austrian Foreign Ministry holds an expert seminar to give intellectual impetus to the discussion. The Greek Council presidency has invited the foreign ministers of the 56 OSCE states to a meeting in Corfu on 26-27 June to define the framework for further discussion. At the regular OSCE foreign ministers meeting in December, we will have the opportunity to take stock and to decide whether a summit is necessary.⁹⁵

Furthermore these Russian proposals state that they begin with the principle of respecting the territorial integrity of all European states. But as Secretary-General of NATO Jaap Hoop de Scheffer said at the annual Munich Security conference in 2009,

President Medvedev has also proposed a discussion of a new Euro-Atlantic security architecture. Many leaders have publicly said that they are willing to have that discussion, and I am one of them. But I cannot see how we can have a serious discussion of such a new architecture, in which President Medvedev himself says “territorial integrity” is a primary element, when Russia is building bases inside Georgia, which

doesn't want them. That cannot be ignored, and it cannot be the foundation of a new European Security Architecture. We also need to move beyond a 19th century "Great Game" idea of spheres of influence. I am concerned by any attempts to deny the right of European democracies to choose their relationship with NATO freely.⁹⁶

Beyond those bases lies the fact that Russia has also violated the Helsinki Treaty by forcibly redrawing the map of Europe, proclaiming South Ossetia and Abkhazia independent states on its own, and stationing troops there. In all these actions its activities constitute a direct challenge to both the OSCE and the Helsinki Treaty, not to mention European security. Moscow is also waging an unceasing campaign of vilification directed against the Baltic States for allegedly discriminating against their Russians and against Ukraine and these states for not defending the Russian language.⁹⁷ These would not be insuperable issues⁹⁷ if there were a will to settle disputes and problems. However, Russia's equivocal attitude about Ukraine's sovereignty and integrity, its ambassadors' continuing denigration of the sovereignty and integrity of former Warsaw pact members and former Soviet republics, its granting of passports to foreign citizens on ethnic grounds in Abkhazia, South Ossetia, and Crimea and willingness to engage in provocations like the 2008 war with Georgia create grounds for further concern.⁹⁸ Russia's 2008 war in Georgia intensified these apprehensions because in the wake of that war Russia has defended its military operations (which looks to many like a preplanned provocation) on various grounds, namely that it was a humanitarian intervention, or it was defense of Russian citizens (because they held Russian passports despite being citizens of Georgia) under Article 51 of the UN Charter, or that Moscow was exercising the right to protect.⁹⁹

On August 31, 2008 President Dmitri Medvedev announced the following five principles that would henceforth guide his conduct of Russian foreign policy.

First, Russia recognizes the primacy of the fundamental principles of international law, which define the relations between civilized peoples. We will build our relations with other countries within the framework of these principles and this concept of international law. Second, the world should be multi-polar. A single-pole world is unacceptable.

Domination is something we cannot allow. We cannot accept a world order in which one country makes all the decisions, even as serious and influential a country as the United States of America. Such a world is unstable and threatened by conflict. Third, Russia does not want confrontation with any other country. Russia has no intention of isolating itself. We will develop friendly relations with Europe, the United States, and other countries, as much as is possible. Fourth, protecting the lives and dignity of our citizens, wherever they may be, is an unquestionable priority for our country. Our foreign policy decisions will be based on this need. We will also protect the interests of our business community abroad. It should be clear to all that we will respond to any aggressive acts committed against us. Finally, fifth, as is the case of other countries, there are regions in which Russia has privileged interests. These regions are home to countries with which we share special historical relations and are bound together as friends and good neighbors. We will pay particular attention to our work in these regions and build friendly ties with these countries, our close neighbors. These are the principles I will follow in carrying out our foreign policy.¹⁰⁰

Medvedev's remarks for the first time formally confirmed Moscow's belief that it has an exclusive privileged sphere of influence in Central Asia and in the European CIS if not Eastern Europe as a whole, and will fight any external power that threatens it, particularly the United States, the quintessential "unipolar" power. However, Medvedev's remarks merely confirm what we have long known. Indeed in 1995 Boris Yeltsin declared consolidation of such a sphere of influence to be the principal goal of Russian foreign policy, instructing all state organs to carry out policies along this line, and he did so again in 1996.¹⁰¹ Even before that Russian foreign policymakers had decided Russia alone must lead integration processes in the former Soviet Union.¹⁰² Since then numerous documents, including the 2008 Foreign Policy Concept, stated explicitly that the CIS is the priority of Russian foreign policy.¹⁰³ By 2003 Russia's official military statements and White Paper indicated that it claimed for itself the right to intervene in Central Asia (and the entire CIS) militarily against a threat to the existing regimes there or to its vital interests as it alone defined them.¹⁰⁴ Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov subsequently again made clear that Russia regarded any attempt to disturb the "existing constitutional order" in those states as its greatest security threat.¹⁰⁵ So what is remarkable is the

consistency of the goals of Moscow's foreign policy; not the fact that Moscow, due to its rising economic wealth and power, believes that it can formally proclaim such a policy.

But beyond that policy Russia claims the right to intervene in other countries where it alleges that Russians are mistreated. Thus it restored the doctrine that guided Hitler, Stalin, and earlier despots like Catherine the Great who justified war with Poland on the grounds of persecution of Orthodox minorities in 1768. This too is not new. For example, President Putin in 2000 invoked the Russian diaspora in Moldova and other ethnic minorities in an effort to gain more influence over Moldova and its frozen conflict.

Russia is interested in Moldova being a territorially whole, independent state. But this cannot be achieved unless the interests of all population groups, including Transnistria's population, are observed. Russia is prepared to participate in creating the conditions in which all residents will feel secure in Moldova. The political treaty must firmly ensure the rights of all those who reside on the territory of Moldova and who consider that Russia can be a guarantor of their rights.¹⁰⁶

Subsequently in 2003-04 he sponsored a plan crafted by Dmitri Kozak which was rebuffed by Moldova, leading to perpetual tension between Chisinau and Moscow. An assessment of the Kozak plan observed that its

Institutional features were designed to provide Transnistria a veto over any legislation that would threaten the leadership. Ultimately these multiple loci of vetoes would make it impossible for the federal government to operate. In addition, the Kozak Memorandum included clauses that could be interpreted to easily dissolve the federation. For example, the Kozak Memorandum allowed for subjects of the federation to have the right "to leave the federation in case a decision is taken to unite the federation with another state and (or) in connection with the federation's full loss of sovereignty. --- [thus] Moldovan integration with international organizations such as the EU could be used as a basis for the dissolution of the federation under this clause."¹⁰⁷

The continuing pressure against the Baltic states and Ukraine for allegedly violating the rights of Russians, Russian-speakers, and Russian culture could easily serve as a springboard for further action to revise regional boundaries. e.g. the Crimea. In the wake of the Russo-Georgian

war Sergei Markedonov, one of Russia's most insightful analysts of the Caucasus, observes that Russia, operating through an internationalized negotiating format in Geneva, is interested in obtaining a ratification of the new status quo that it created by force, but warned that,

At the same time, it is still hard to grasp that the two conflicts in question are not simply a matter of rivalry of ambitions and interests, but also an objective process. It is a question of the formation of nation-states after the destruction of imperial formations and the victory of the nationalist discourse. The breakup of the Soviet Union was not the end point in this process it was a beginning. Such processes, by definition, are not completed quickly. A conflict of "imagined geographies," different mentalities, is in progress. And not only the conflict but the actual formation of political and even ethnic identities is not yet finished.¹⁰⁸

Other observers like Lawrence Sheets, the Caucasus program director for the International Crisis Group, similarly warn that the so called frozen conflicts along the peripheries of the former Soviet Union are now unfreezing and could lead to further ethno-political conflicts there, if not elsewhere.¹⁰⁹ For Kazakhstan, given its large Russian minority and Russia's mounting vigilance about their status, these Russian claims are potential dynamite and if it does not use the OSCE chair to uphold its sovereignty and integrity it runs very severe risks in the future.

Finally, there is the question of Russia's blocking of the OSCE's ability to function in South Ossetia. Here again it is clear that Moscow intends to hold the OSCE hostage to its determination to gain international recognition for the illegally proclaimed independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, an independence that Kazakhstan still refuses to recognize.¹¹⁰ Thus Moscow used the war with Georgia to chip away (if not more) at the foundations of the European and international political order, a highly reckless act given its own problems in the North Caucasus. Moreover, because nobody could or would effectively come to Georgia's aid, these states are now vulnerable to any further escalation in the Caucasus and to Moscow's determination to assert its unchecked primacy throughout the CIS.¹¹¹

In this context the Russian demonstration of power in the Caucasus not only calls the effectiveness of the CIS and its member states further into question, but also narrows the options for Kazakhstan when it takes over the OSCE chairmanship in 2010. The choice of Kazakhstan was from the outset associated with the expectation that it would strengthen the legitimacy of the OSCE in the post-Soviet region and thus contribute to a renewal of this security organization. The looming polarization within the CIS makes it even more unlikely that such expectations can be fulfilled.¹¹²

Not surprisingly Moscow soon tried to compel the OSCE to accept a new draft mandate for its presence in South Ossetia to recognize South Ossetia and allow itself to be placed in a situation where it operated there wholly at Moscow's mercy. Since the previous mandate expired on December 31 2008 Moscow's ultimatum to the OSCE, which it could not and would not accept, meant that it had to leave South Ossetia, thus giving Moscow a still more exclusive control there with no countervailing Western presence. Thus Moscow has essentially evicted another international monitoring agency from the conflict, checkmating Georgian and Western efforts to internationalize the conflict zones and the conflict and undermining its earlier accords with the EU negotiating team in August-September 2008.¹¹³

More recently Moscow vetoed an OSCE effort at a compromise regarding the mandate of the OSCE to place monitors in Georgia, including South Ossetia and Abkhazia. It refused to countenance any plan that does not imply or formally accept the recognition of these two provinces as independent states in violation of the Helsinki Treaty or that does not subordinate monitors to the supervision of local authorities, a way of both undermining their ability to function and of implicitly recognizing those authorities' sovereignty.¹¹⁴ Thus it has earlier advocated two separate missions, one for Georgia and one for South Ossetia, another way of acknowledging South Ossetia's sovereignty.¹¹⁵ Although Moscow claims it does not want to destroy the OSCE, it does clearly want a free hand to do as it pleases in the CIS, a fundamental contradiction to the ideas embodied in the OSCE and other European security organizations that

either openly limit or “pool” their members’ sovereignty. Instead it apparently claims that it wants to strengthen a reformed OSCE and does not oppose transforming it into an umbrella organization that would also apparently supervise NATO in some fashion along with the CSTO and other bodies.¹¹⁶ However, Moscow’s stance reveals that it is only advocating incoherent and contradictory general principles that have no discernible point other than that they are utterly self-serving and aim at allowing it to do as it pleases in Europe and the CIS.¹¹⁷ Obviously the OSCE cannot recognize these provinces without undermining its own legitimacy and that of the Helsinki Treaty, a stance that only invites further attacks on the European status quo and security from Russia if not other actors.

Conclusions

If Kazakhstan is to take its new role seriously it will have to rebuff these Russian plans and insist on the integrity of the OSCE which is the essential precondition for any success on the OSCE’s part whether it be in Europe or Central Asia. It will also have to show a genuine commitment to reform at home for its own legitimacy as chairman and the integrity of the OSCE to be taken seriously. Given the breadth of the security challenges facing it and the OSCE in both Central Asia and Europe there is no other way that Kazakhstan could serve both its own desire for independence in foreign affairs and the enhanced status as a leader in international security that it has sought. Moreover, it has chained its status to that of the organization it has chosen to head. If it fails the OSCE will fail and vice versa. Therefore the West must both hold it to account and strengthen its ability to preserve the integrity of the OSCE and its component parts. But responsibility for the OSCE does not end with Western efforts to strengthen it. Either way Kazakhstan must find a way to enhance both its security and the mission of the OSCE

because otherwise the security of its own government and of all the OSCE members will be compromised further with consequences that nobody can wish to see.

Annex

This annex briefly lists the issues where Kazakhstan might make an important contribution to security as leader of the OSCE.

Central Asia:

- 1 Multilateral forum for discussion and if possible resolution of water management issues
- 2 Multilateral resolution of outstanding border issues among Central Asian states
- 3 Mutual confidence-building measures and measures to reduce regional arms races
4. Improve democratic governance in Central Asia as well at home to stabilize local governments

Afghanistan

- 1 Promote programs fostering regional economic reconstruction in Afghanistan and with Central Asia
- 2 Find Ways to harmonize Russian, SCO, and NATO activities in Afghanistan

Europe

- 1 Uphold the integrity of the ODIHR organization and function within OSCE
- 2 Defend the integrity of the OSCE against Russian attempts to evade its international commitments to human rights or undermine the sovereignty of post-Soviet states
- 3 Find ways to resolve issues of minorities in the former Soviet Union
- 4 Find a way to uphold the OSCE mission in Georgia without compromising on recognizing the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia

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