

OSCE'S NEW VISION UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF KAZAKHSTAN

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Özet:

Avrupa Güvenlik ve İşbirliđi Teřkilâtı (AGİT) otuz dört yıldan beri en büyük güvenlik teřkilâtı olarak faaliyet yürütmektedir. Yıllar içerisinde, teřkilât, Sođuk Savaş döneminde Batı ile Dođu arasında diyalogu sađlayan bir kurum vasfından; tüm AGİT üyelerinin üzerinde mutabık kaldıkları taahhütleri temel alan, uluslararası çapta işbirliğini hedefleyen benzersiz bir mekanizmaya evrilmiştir. Günümüzde ise Teřkilât, geçirdiđi bu evrimin beraberinde getirdiđi yeni rolüyle ilişkili olarak birincisi güvenlik boyutunu güçlendirme, ikincisiyse AGİT taahhütleriyle uyumlu demokratik reformların yürürlüğe konması yoluyla insani boyutunu pekiştirme gibi iki önemli meseleyle yüz yüzedir. Örgütün başkanlığının Kasım 2007 tarihinde 2010 yılı için Kazakistan'a devredilmesi bu bağlamda kayda değer bir gelişmedir. Orta Asya-Hazar Havzası Bölgesindeki stratejik cođrafî konumu ve zengin enerji kaynaklarına rağmen, Kazakistan, başkanlık dönemi boyunca güncel güvenlik sorunlarına ilişkin çözüm önerilerinin yanı sıra, Batı dünyasının kendisinden beklediđi ülke içindeki demokratik reformları da içeren bir gündem geliřtirmek mecburiyetindedir. Hal böyleyken, Kazakistan'ın başkanlığı bir yandan önemli olanaklar sunarken, öte yandan da ciddi sorunları da beraberinde getirmektedir. Bu çalışmada, söz konusu olanak ve sorunların yanı sıra Kazakistan'ın 2010'a dek geçen süreçteki AGİT başkanlığı maratonu ele alınacaktır.

Abstract:

For thirty four years the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe(OSCE) has operated as the largest security organization. Over the years, the organization has evolved from an institution for dialogue between the West and East during the Cold War to a unique mechanism which aims an international cooperation based on commitments agreed by all members of the OSCE in a consensual process. Today the organization is facing two important challenges, the first one is about its new role as enhancing its security dimension and secondly strengthening its human dimension through implementing democratic reforms consistent with the OSCE commitments. Therefore, the designation of Kazakhstan in November 2007 as Chairman-in-

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office for the year 2010 is very noteworthy. Despite its strategic geographical position in the Central Asian-Caspian Basin Zone and rich energy resources Kazakhstan also has to develop an agenda including all current security issues for its chairmanship term and consolidate democratic reforms inside the country demanded by the Western world. Therefore, Kazakhstan's chairmanship presents important opportunities, at the same time significant challenges as well. This paper focuses on these opportunities and challenges as well as Kazakhstan's long journey to take over the OSCE's chairmanship in 2010.

Keywords: the Organization for Security and Cooperation, OSCE, Central Asia, Kazakhstan, Security

INTRODUCTION

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) was created to serve as the multilateral forum for dialogue and negotiation between the East and West with key commitments on politico-military, economic and environmental and human rights issues on which agreement was reached on the Helsinki Final Act signed on August 1, 1975. The organization mainly functioned as a series of meetings and conferences built on and extended the participating States' commitments. OSCE that first appeared on the political stage in the Cold War era as a forum for negotiations and diplomacy for conferences aimed at minimizing the disputes between the military blocks for increasing security in Europe has today turned into a political Eurasian Forum functioning in line with the principles of the UN organization, taking decisions through "consensus" as a principle, and conducting activities on a vast geographical area.¹

The organization forms the largest regional security organization in the world with 56 participating states from Europe, Central Asia and North America. The organization is a primary instrument for warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation dealing with three dimensions of security – the politico-military, the economic and environmental and the human dimension, which are also referred to as three baskets on the OSCE, which addresses the wide range of security-related concerns, including arms control, confidence – and – security building measures, human rights, national minorities, democratization, policing, strategies, counter-terrorism, and economic and environmental activities. Politico-military dimension aims at formulating mechanisms for conflict prevention and resolution while seeking to enhance military security by promoting greater openness, transparency and cooperation. The economic and environmental dimension includes the monitoring of developments among participating states while alerting them of any threat of conflict and assisting the creation of economic and environmental policies and related initiatives to promote security in the OSCE region. The human dimension aims at ensuring full respect to human rights and fundamental freedoms; abiding by the rule of law, promoting the principles of democracy by building, strengthening and

¹ Fatih Karaosmanoğlu, '21. Yüzyılın Eşiğinde Türk Dış Politikası', içinde İdris Bal, (der.) *İnsan Hakları amaçlı Türk Dış Politikası: Bir Faktör olarak AĞIT İnsan Hakları Normları*, (İstanbul: Alfa Yayınları, 2001), s. 70

protecting democratic institutions, and promoting tolerance throughout the OSCE area.² McKenzie and Rupp stated that OSCE reflects the challenges facing multilateral cooperation in new era. The members of OSCE have committed themselves to promote security operation.³ Freire mentioned that post 9/11, most of the countries were concerned about the terrorism issues and OSCE was no exception in focusing on the need to respond to terrorism as a source of instability and an obstacle to the spread of democratization and rule of law principles.⁴ The field mission groups which are currently active on a total of 18 different regions, which provide support in establishment of sustainable political bodies and creation of an active civil society in the countries that have recently switched to democracy as well as in border observations, crisis prevention and battle against human trafficking and corruption are the most evident example of this.⁵

According to Chandler, the organization was the only international forum that defined respect for human rights as an essential factor for international security and not a purely domestic concern. The connecting of three baskets along with the inclusion of human rights in the Helsinki Act provided implications that human rights could no longer be defined as an internal affair.⁶

However, since the late 1980s, the OSCE has introduced much more detailed rules amplifying and clarifying their meaning and scope.⁷ In this period, the risks resulting from asymmetric threats were rather focused on and the interstate security issues were left in the background. Because the USSR to have been considered as the main threat in the Cold War era no longer exists and so, the issue of inter-states security is not of primary importance. However, this new threat consideration was not reciprocated in the same way from the respect of the Russian Federation. As a result of the non-confidence environment that emerged as upon new expansion intentions of NATO towards borders of the Russian Federation and the agreement for deployment of the radars belonging to missile defense system that was signed by the Czech Republic and Poland with USA in July-August 2010 and that will become

² OSCE, *Facts and Figures*, <http://www.osce.org/about/19298.html>, (Access Date: 5 April 2010)

³ Mary M. McKeznie, Richard E. Rupp, The promise and reality of European security cooperation: states, interests, and institutions' içinde, Mary M. McKenzie, Peter H. Loedel, (ed.) *The Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe: Institutional Reform and Political Reality*, (USA: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1998), s.119

⁴ Maria Raquel Freire, 'The OSCE's post-September 11 agenda, and Central Asia', *Global Society*, Vol. 19, No. 2, April, 2005, s.189-190

⁵ Center for Strategic & International Studies/Institute for New Democracies, 'Policy Brief Nr.5: Kazakhstan and the OSCE Human Dimension', *Report by Margarita Assenova; Natalie Zajicova; Januzs Bugajski; Ilona Teleki*, 19 November 2009, s.2

⁶ David Chandler, 'Ethnicity and Democracy in the New Europe' içinde Karl Cordell, (ed.) *The OSCE And The Internationalisation of National Minority Rights*, (London: Routledge, 1999), s.62

⁷ *Ibid*, s.63

operative in 2012⁸, Russia has ultimately declared in 2007 to have suspended the **“Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe”** aimed at decreasing reciprocally the conventional weapons in Europe, which was signed between the Soviet Union and NATO countries in 1990 and renewed in 1999 following collapse of the Soviet Union.⁹

The conflicts that occurred in the Caucasus after that date revealed that the security was very susceptible in Europe; geopolitical problems prevented compromising on a common ground in regard to security in Europe due to “reciprocal non-confidence”. This was put forward on June 28, 2009 by Bakoyannis, the Greek Minister of Foreign Affairs, who chaired the session at the first Unofficial Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and it was expressed that “a new incentive” was needed for planning the security of Europe in the future.¹⁰ The final development about this was experienced at this OSCE foreign ministers meeting on the Greek Island of Corfu, where the ministers discussed the issue of European security challenges by taking concrete steps in order to restore confidence, which is also known as “Corfu Process”. The Corfu Process was important as it was at this venue that the ministers of foreign affairs from OSCE countries met to discuss the issues relating to current challenges and future perspectives of the common, indivisible, comprehensive and cooperative security.¹¹ The ministers concurred that traditional security problem along with new challenges and threats like protracted conflicts, ethnic tensions, protection of fundamental principles of human rights, economic crisis, energy security, etc. should be dealt with in a comprehensive, coherent and cooperative manner. The participating states in Corfu Process committed themselves to ensuring a predictable, reliable, economically acceptable, commercially sound and environmentally friendly energy supply, achieved by means of long-term contracts. The Corfu Process has built a platform for stock taking purpose wherein participating states can rebuild their trust, discuss the issues related to security of members of OSCE in Europe and other energy-related issues.¹²

⁸ Serdar Erdurmaz, ‘Bir Yıldır Toplanamayan NATO-Rusya Konseyi Haziran Ayında Yeniden Toplandı: NATO, Rusya ile Uyum Sağlayabilecek mi?’, <http://www.turksam.org/tr/a/1704.html>, (Access Date:1 April 2010)

⁹ Voice of America, ‘Rusya Silah Anlaşmasını Askıya Aldı’, <http://www1.voanews.com/turkish/news/a-17-2007-12-12-voa22-88058667.html?moddate=2007-12-12>, (Access Date: 1 April 2010)

¹⁰ OSCE, ‘The opening remarks of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Greek Foreign Minister Dora Bakoyannis, at the Corfu Informal Meeting of OSCE Foreign Ministers’, http://www.osce.org/documents/cio/2009/06/38506_en.pdf, (Access Date: 3 April 2010)

¹¹ OSCE Press Release, ‘Corfu Process’ launched to take European security dialogue forward, says OSCE Chairperson’, <http://www.osce.org/item/38493.html>, (Access Date: 3 April 2010)

¹² OSCE, ‘Corfu Informal Meeting of OSCE Foreign Ministers on the Future of European Security Chair’s Concluding Statement to the Press’, 2009, s.1-2

KAZAKHSTAN AS CHAIRMAN-IN-OFFICE: REASONS

In such period during which important decisions were taken in regard to expanding the activity field of the organization, Kazakhstan has assumed the term chairmanship of the OSCE by January 1, 2010. Though Kazakhstan is indicated as the leader country of Central Asia with the economical growth it has shown since it has gained independence and with its multi-laterality policy in diplomatic relations it has been following, the country is struggling with a lot of social and political problems caused by all these positive developments as well as by the sharp transformations experienced in the economical life. However, the stable environment promoted by both the economical development based on energy exportation and the relatively libertarian political life allowing a certain movement area to the opposition parties and multi-party order contrary to other Central Asian countries as well as Kazakhstan's attitude open to developing the regional cooperation has spaced the gate of a diplomacy movement extending to the term chairmanship of OSCE.¹³

Kazakhstan sought the position of OSCE Chairman-in-Office for various reasons including enhanced security and national prestige as it is the first post-Soviet country and the first predominantly Muslim country and the first in the Central Asia to be entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring security to all the member countries of OSCE. Astana adopts an agenda which reflects Eurasia's multiple security threats and OSCE's capacity to serve as an effective security organization. Kazakhstan sought this position in order to alleviate the threats to its own security and at the same time to enhance the security of both Central Asia and Europe. With regard to the close proximity to Asian countries, as it is situated in Central Asia, the country would be able to negotiate with the countries posing challenges and security threats to the member states of OSCE through transnational organized crime and drug trafficking.¹⁴ Kanat Saudabeyev, Secretary of State/ Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, while speaking as Chairman-in-Office, stated that the nation would make efforts to contribute to the resolution on protracted conflicts, strengthening of coordination between the Turkmenistan-based United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia and OSCE field presence, involvement of OSCE in stabilization of Afghanistan by focusing its attention on the country's border with its Central Asian neighbors were the top priorities during their term of chairmanship in the office. However, it is assumed that dealing with Afghanistan would not be easier to the European countries and the issue favors Kazakhstan as it is capable of negotiating terms with its Muslim neighboring countries.

Further it is understood from the statement of future Chairman-in-Office, Mr. Kanat Saudabeyev, that it is capable of mobilizing funds and support

¹³ Haluk Alkan, 'Kazakh Political System Between the Elites' Competition and Authoritative Institutionalisation', *Central Asia an Caucasia Studies*, Vol:2, No.4, 2007, s.1-2

¹⁴ CSIS Policy Paper of the US Kazakhstan OSCE Task Force, 'Kazakhstan's OSCE Chairmanship; Challenges and Opportunities', Report by Margarita Assenova ve Janusz Bugajski, 2009, s. vi-1

from the OSCE nations to help Afghanistan, which is a terror-struck country, in areas such as the provision of fertilizer as well as agricultural and construction equipment. It is further stated that Kazakhstan intends to put full use of its capabilities coupled with the potential of OSCE nations. The nation sought the chairmanship as it intended to tolerance and intercultural dialogue as on the major priority on the basis of its experience in ensuring lasting peace and accord in its multi-ethnic and multi-faith country. The reason for bidding for the position, though it had earlier made a bid, in vain; as it had more fitting definition of the country's focus during its term in the office that is based on four T's – trust, traditions, transparency and tolerance.¹⁵

Kazakhstan which is a Central Asian country, the first nation to be appointed as Chairman-in-Office from this region has close proximity to the other Muslim countries like Pakistan, Afghanistan, etc. where terrorist operations and human trafficking are high. And as the OSCE promotes three baskets targeted towards security, humanitarian and environmental issues, Kazakhstan sought the position on basis of its capabilities to enter into negotiations with the Muslim countries and provide aid and assistance in these regions.¹⁶

KAZAKHSTAN'S APPOINTMENT – CIRCUMSTANCES

The appointment of Kazakhstan has been questioned by many in view of its failed attempts to bid for the office. Although the OSCE decision to award the chairmanship to Kazakhstan in 2010 underscores a growing recognition of the country's regional and continental importance which is a strategic linchpin in the vast Central Asia, a region which is rich in energy resources and potential gateway for commerce and communications between Europe and Asia, the appointment of Kazakhstan as Chairman-in-Office was still a controversial one.¹⁷ According to Human Rights Watch (HRW), the decision to appoint Kazakhstan was controversial because of its poor performance in adhering to the OSCE principles of human rights, which was also the reason for its failed bids earlier in 2005 and 2006. It is further stated that the government has showed no signs of improvement and additionally events of continuous deterioration were reported and documented by HRW. And moreover, the Kazakh government rejected the efforts of human rights groups and political opposition to press for expanded human rights and freedoms guaranteed by the international agreements and Kazakhstan's own constitution. The government has also ignored criticism and ideas submitted by civil society with regard to legal reforms and had failed to introduce meaningful reforms guaranteeing rights in key areas such as freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, freedom of religion and access to legal counsel. The

¹⁵ United Nations Security Council Department of Public Information, *'Stronger Role in European Security, Better Cooperation with United Nations among key priorities for Regional body, Incoming Chair Tells Security Council'*, New York, 5 February 2010-SC/9857

¹⁶ Assenova ve Bugajski, *'Kazakhstan's OSCE Chairmanship; Challenges and Opportunities'*, s.7

¹⁷ *Ibid*, s.vi

participating states showed concern over the human rights and freedom of media in the region as media outlets and journalists are faced with constant threat of lawsuits and crippling defamation penalties. Though the government had made certain amendments for media reforms, they did not address the broader problems of domination by government loyalists, threats and harassment against independent journalists, prohibitive penalties for defamation, etc.¹⁸ The member states differed on their opinion with regard to the appointment of Kazakhstan as Chairman-in-Office for the next term with United States and European Union expressing concern over the Kazakhstan's capability and feared that it might compromise on the OSCE's support for democratic principles based on three baskets.¹⁹ HRW reports that international actors in OSCE including United States, European Union and the OSCE's representative on freedom of the media, expressed concerns regarding the adoption of the internet law, the sentencing of the journalists, and fair trial violations.²⁰ However, Kazakhstan received strong support from Russia who threatened to effectively unravel the OSCE if it was not selected for the chairmanship.²¹ Lavrov, Russian Foreign Minister, vigorously targeted the negative tendencies in the evolution of OSCE which happened at the crucial time in the European history addressing the common security problems of Europe. The minister outlined the problems of Kosovo and the treaty on conventional arms in Europe and highlighted the application of Kazakhstan, whose application for the promotion to chairmanship was backed by all the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) countries constituting one fifth all the OSCE countries and encountered the approach promoted by certain member states to defy the selection of Kazakhstan that led to violation of OSCE's principle of equality. The Russian government represented by Lavrov, strongly advocated for the selection of chairmanship of Kazakhstan.²²

But in this case the problem cannot be defined as violation of OSCE's principle of equality. For instance as Daniyar Kanafin cited, the document of OSCE conference on the human dimension adopted in Moscow on October 3, 1991 specifically states that the participating states will respect the internationally recognized standards relating to the independence of judges and legal practitioners ensuring its guarantee and enshrined in the constitution or the law of the country.²³ But unfortunately, the independence of judicial

¹⁸ Human Rights Watch, *Ten Questions of Kazakhstan and the OSCE Chairmanship*, 25 Kasım 2009, <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2009/11/25/ten-questions-kazakhstan-and-osce-chairmanship>, (Erişim Tarihi: 1 Nisan 2010)

¹⁹ Assenova ve Bugajski, '*Kazakhstan's OSCE Chairmanship; Challenges and Opportunitie*', s.vi

²⁰ Human Rights Watch, '*Ten Questions of Kazakhstan and the OSCE Chairmanship*'

²¹ Assenova ve Bugajski, '*Kazakhstan's OSCE Chairmanship; Challenges and Opportunities*', s.vi

²² Vremya Novostei, *How Kazakhstan became the OSCE Chairman*, Central Asia News, 03 December 2007, <http://enews.ferghana.ru/article.php?id=2253>, (Access Date: 17 Mayıs 2010)

²³ Daniyar Kanafin, 'Criminal Justice Reform in Kazakhstan and OSCE Commitments', *Security and Human Rights*, No.1, 2009, s. 56

system in Kazakhstan is exploited with regard to criminal procedures, the representatives of the judiciary are suppressed by political powers and have several complains pertaining to minimal working conditions, low salaries, poor social benefits, insufficient retirement benefits, financial challenges, etc. However assuming that values of developed countries will impact positively on the Kazakh government, Chairmanship of OSCE is a historic chance which provides Kazakhstan an ultimate opportunity to build a fair and law-governed state where independent, objective and impartial courts will be guarding human rights and democratic freedoms.²⁴

Responding to the concerns of OSCE participating states, Kazakhstan Foreign Minister Marat Tahzin, while bidding for the chairmanship for 2010, pledged that Kazakhstan would take several reform steps in all the three baskets of OSCE before assuming the chairmanship which included the amendment of media law, reforms in election law, and liberalization of registration process for political parties.²⁵

Furthermore, as mentioned in the article of Nursultan Nazarbayev published on the news portal NewEurope, Kazakhstan has put in place the “National Human Rights Action Plan 2009-2012”²⁶ in order to enable implementation of the democratic values concordant with the fundamental values of OSCE. Within the framework of this plan, it is proposed to modernize the legal arrangements in Kazakhstan in connection with mass communication, local governments, political parties and elections in accordance with the “Human Rights”-related expectations of OSCE.²⁷ In addition, Kanat Saudabayev, the Term Chairman of OSCE and also the Kazakh Minister of Foreign Affairs, declared in the statement he made following taking over the duty that the Corfu Process prescribing to expand the responsibility of OSCE will be continued; and indicated that the struggles for increasing tolerance and mutual sympathy and that the balance will be ensured between the three pillars - Military/Political, Economical/Environmental and Human Dimension – which determine the activity fields of OSCE.²⁸

As a result of these latest advances, European nations supported the appointment of Kazakhstan as Chairman-in-Office at OSCE. At the UN 6268th Security Council Meeting Austria welcomed the Kazakh’s chairmanship that intended to advance to OSCE’s contribution to non-proliferation in connection with the sanctions regime set out in Security Council resolution and to the

²⁴ *Ibid*, s.60-61

²⁵ Andrea Berg, *Kazakhstan, an Atmosphere of quiet Repression: Freedom of Religion, Assembly and Expression in Kazakhstan*, (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2008), s.5

²⁶ Planın tam metni için bkz. OSCE Kazakhstan 2010, *National Human Rights Action Plan of the Republic of Kazakhstan 2009-2012*, <http://www.kazakhstan-osce.org/content/national-human-rights-action-plan-republic-kazakhstan-2009-2012>

²⁷ Nursultan Nazarbayev, *The destiny and potential of the OSCE*, New Europe, 7 March 2010, <http://www.neurope.eu/articles/99483.php>, (Access Date: 24 March 2010)

²⁸ OSCE, *Statement by The Chairman-in-office of The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, H.E. Mr. Kanat Saudabayev, Secretary Of State Minister of Foreign Affairs of The Republic of Kazakhstan at The United Nations Security Council*, 5 February 2010, New York, s.2

protection of Afghanistan borders. United Kingdom cited the appointment of Kazakhstan as chairmanship marking a milestone as the position would promote the principles of human rights, fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law in the region and provides an opportunity to the country to prove its leadership in the region. France supported the appointment of Kazakh as chairman for OSCE, too, in view of its efforts in Afghanistan. Turkey stated that election of Kazakhstan was the result of that country's effort to build stable and modern state, thus contributing to regional stability.²⁹ As can be seen however while acknowledging the problems with Kazakhstan's adherence to the principles of liberal democracy, the governments of participating states hope that the appointment as Chairman to the organization will encourage the country towards the standards of liberal democracy as well as lift effectiveness of OSCE's influence in the former Soviet block.³⁰ The participating states of OSCE welcomed the appointment as it promoted opportunities to formulate a European form of development as well as substantial policies for security, energy and human rights in and around Europe along with the Central Asian countries.³¹

KAZAKHSTAN'S CHAIRMANSHIP: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FROM RUSSIAN, EU AND USA PERSPECTIVE

Though the appointment of Kazakhstan as the Chairman-in-Office is a milestone for the country, the position holds great responsibility of ensuring stability and security in the region and in the participating states of the OCSE. The first from the Central Asia, Kazakhstan faces many challenges and opportunities during its chairmanship at OSCE from various corners. Socor mentioned that the challenges are daunting to any chairing country.³² Furthermore, Kazakh government had launched a program named 'Road to Europe' to prepare the country for economic development, political modernization, social security and to strengthen Kazakhstan's international alliances opportunities, that will come along with the OSCE chairmanship.³³ Kazakhstan faces two challenges as it prepares to serve as the Chairman-in-Office which includes developing a compelling agenda for its chairmanship and

²⁹ United Nations Security Council Department of Public Information, *'Stronger Role in European Security, Better Cooperation with United Nations among key priorities for Regional body, Incoming Chair Tells Security Council'*, New York, 5 February 2010-SC/9857, s.3-8

³⁰ Johns Hopkins University Central Asia-Caucasus Institute & Silk Road Studies Program, *'Kazakhstan and the New International Politics of Eurasia'*, by Richard Weitz, July 2008, s.15

³¹ Neil J. Melvin, *The European Union, Kazakhstan and the 2010 OSCE Chairmanship'*, *Security and Human Rights*, Vol. 20, No. 1, March 2009, s. 42-43

³² Vladimir Socor, *'Kazakhstan poised on to step into the OSCE's Chairmanship'*, *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, Vol. 6, No. 117, 2009

³³ Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan News Bulletin, *President Nazarbayev Delivers Annual State-Of-The-Nation Address, Announces Kazakhstan's <Road To Europe>*, 8 February 2008, http://prosites-kazakhembus.homestead.com/NBSspecialissue_3_020808.html, (Access Date: 28 May 2010)

pursuing and consolidating democratic reforms inside the country. However, the chairmanship presents important opportunities to Astana and OSCE countries concerning security, economy and human dimension. It is necessary that security challenges are addressed mainly in Central Asia which is important for the international interests of the United States and its European allies which include Asian security, controlling the Afghan borders, addressing transnational terrorism, organized crime and drug trafficking, energy security, etc..³⁴ According to Melvin, the appointment of Kazakhstan as OSCE chairman is important because apart from being Central Asian country, Kazakhstan's chairmanship will bring new perspectives to the difficulties confronting the organization bringing balance in the OSCE political structure.³⁵

According to the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), the major challenge for Kazakhstan would be the future state of the Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) contested by Russia and several CIS participating states.³⁶ Kazakhstan shares good relation with Russia and the candidacy of Kazakhstan was strongly advocated by Russian representative Levrov for the Chairman-in-Office at OSCE. The engagement of Kazakhstan limits the pursuit of Moscow's tough policies towards OSCE. The main challenge of Kazakhstan would be to pacify both the United States and Russian government while chairing the organization and formulating policies for security, economy and human dimension. Moscow hopes that Astana 2010 could add some value from the Russian perspective against the background of the active pursuit by Moscow. The Kazakh government has the opportunity to harmonize its relations with both Russia and Western countries.³⁷ Socor mentioned that Moscow intended OSCE to focus on the NATO's area of responsibility and support for recasting of security arrangements while directing the attention of OSCE towards the West. Russia supported the campaign of Kazakhstan for chairman-in-office threatening the budget process so that it could manipulate the chairmanship to promote the Russian policy objectives in the organization which is an added challenge to Kazakhstan as defying the Russian policy may lead to complications among the bilateral ties between these two countries. As Kazakhstan was already dealing with challenges from Moscow perspectives, United States, which has also supported the contention of Kazakhstan for the position at the Madrid ministerial meeting, although unofficially, made a political bargain with Kazakhstan. Thereby Kazakhstan committed to continue democratic progress and dissociated itself from Russian proposals.³⁸ Although Kazakhstan is an important international partner for the United States - especially a key partner

³⁴ Assenova ve Bugajski, '*Kazakhstan's OSCE Chairmanship; Challenges and Opportunities*', s.1

³⁵ Melvin, *ibid.*, s.45

³⁶ Center for Strategic & International Studies/Institute for New Democracies, 'Policy Brief Nr.2: Challenges to the OSCE Chairman-in-Office in 2010', *Margarita Assenova, Natalie Zajicova Januzs Bugajski ve Ilona Teleki*, 11 June 2009, s.1

³⁷ Andrei Zagorski, 'Kazakhstan's Chairmanship: Challenges and Opportunities from the Moscow Perspective', *Security and Human Rights*, no.1, 2009, s.27-29

³⁸ Socor, *ibid*

on nonproliferation - and the Kazakh government has cooperated with United States for more than a decade on a host of projects to eliminate the weapons of mass destruction from Soviet era, the greatest challenges faced by the Kazakhstan during its term as Chairman-in-Office at OSCE will be international relations due to the difference of attitude between Kazakhstan and United States towards Russia where Kazakhstan's policies are formulated with intent to preserve close relationship with Moscow.³⁹ Regarding European relations, Melvin states that Kazakhstan's growth as an energy supplier and the country's rising profile in the international arena has resulted in more importance to developing relations with Kazakhstan from the EU perspective. Moreover the OSCE chairmanship is regarded as an important event in fostering relations between the two. The chairmanship also offers opportunities for further development in broader relationship with EU countries, but the European Union will need to develop a more proactive engagement.⁴⁰

These challenges also provide opportunities to the Kazakh government to enhance regional cooperation in Central Asia. Kazakhstan as Chairman-in-Office can prioritize enhanced cooperation on anti-narcotics and anti-trafficking activities as well as facilitating cooperation on migration. The challenges will also help Kazakhstan to prove its power and leadership in the region.⁴¹ Kazakhstan's leadership and proactive approach in promoting tolerance will be an added value to its OSCE chairmanship. The chairmanship also provides opportunities to promote gender balance, participation of women, support coordination between the ODIHR and the OSCE and improve the mechanisms for combating human trafficking. The chairmanship also provides opportunity to promote good governance at border crossing, work on migration and energy security, build on and enhance the Corfu process, continue the dialogue on the future of European security, combat illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs, counter terrorism, and other new challenges of the modern age.⁴²

CONCLUSION

Although many academics such as Rico Isaacs mentioned that Kazakhstan, since the collapse of Soviet Union, had faded the hopes of democratization and instead developed authoritarian state control in the country mainly due to cultural legacies such as taking advantage of family bonds and kinship⁴³, in my opinion it was necessary that Kazakhstan got

³⁹ Assenova ve Bugajski, 'Kazakhstan's OSCE Chairmanship; Challenges and Opportunities', s.2-3

⁴⁰ Melvin, *ibid.*, s.42

⁴¹ Margarita Assenova, Natalie Zajcova ve Januzs Bugajski, 'Policy Brief Nr.2: Challenges to the OSCE Chairman-in-Office in 2010', s.1

⁴² OSCE, *Statement by The Chairman-in-office of The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, H.E. Mr. Kanat Saudabayev, Secretary Of State Minister of Foreign Affairs of The Republic of Kazakhstan at The United Nations Security Council*, 5 February 2010, New York, s.3-6

⁴³ Rico Isaacs, 'Informal politics and the uncertain context of transition: revisiting early stage non-democratic development in Kazakhstan', *Democratization*, Vol. 17, No. 1, February 2010, s.1

awarded with the Chairmanship as it would help at least to restore democracy in the state with the implementation of three baskets of OSCE. Furthermore, due to the development that the contention was supported by Russia as well as United States and EU, all of the OSCE members were led to sanction the position to Kazakhstan.

The Kazakh government sought the chairmanship as it had already attempted failed bid earlier in 2005 and 2006 and promised to develop and formulate the policies pertaining to human dimension with regard to freedom of expression and media.⁴⁴

The term chairmanship of OSCE has two further important consequences besides the ability of creating a positive effect towards the fact that Kazakhstan keeps its promises it has given about the internal reforms as an OSCE country. First is that it is the first Central Asian and also a former Soviet Union country which took the office of chairmanship of the organization. Such a development will constitute an evidence for groundlessness of the reproofs as to that the principal of equality between the participating states is occasionally breached, which begun to be expressed frequently by Russia in the recent years. It is also probable that as an eastern state, Kazakhstan brings a different perspective on the problems encountered by the organization.

The chairmanship offers Kazakhstan along with several opportunities also several challenges to tackle. These are the issues relating to human dimensions, economic and environmental challenges and security issues which represent core areas and three baskets of OSCE that aims to provide security to the participating states such as compelling dynamics such as Kosovo, South Ossetia and Abkhazia issues and issues such as Russia's role in Eurasia, expansion of NATO, Afghanistan and global economical crisis.

Threats such as the fact that the member states do not have a common understanding on the role of OSCE in resolving the security issues in Eurasia, that the member states cannot generate common policies towards the separatist movements suffered in the countries in OSCE region, weakness of the democratic structures of the state agencies and societies in the geographical area of the Balkans and old Soviet Union, and different perception of the democracy concept by the countries which are members of the organization may also be added.

Though the OSCE chairmen-in-office do not have the power to put any decision into practice alone by themselves, every chairman-in-office determines the priorities of the yearly studies of the organization. Kazakhstan's priorities for this period⁴⁵ in Political and Military Dimensions are support of particularly the Corfu Process, generation of solutions for regional problems and stabilization of the condition in Afghanistan. In Economical and Environmental

⁴⁴ Human Rights Watch, *Kazakhstan: OSCE Chairmanship Undeserved*, 29 Kasım 2007, <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2007/11/29/kazakhstan-osce-chairmanship-undeserved>, (Access Date: 5 April 2010)

⁴⁵ OSCE, *Statement by The Chairman-in-office of The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, H.E. Mr. Kanat Saudabayev, Secretary Of State Minister of Foreign Affairs of The Republic of Kazakhstan at The United Nations Security Council*, 5 February 2010, New York, s.2-6

Dimensions, it is aimed to improve the transit-transport potential and energy lines of Eurasia and to ensure their security. In the framework of the human dimension, it is aimed to improve in general human rights and fundamental liberties, and striving against intolerance and all kinds of discrimination.

However, Kazakhstan's ability to achieve highlights pointed in its OSCE chairman-in-office agenda will depend on several factors, including the state of the Eurasian economies, Kazakhstan's success in transitioning to a post-Nazarbayev era of political leaders and the policies of the other important countries engaged in Central Asia and the Caspian region like Russia, United States as well as the European Union.

Despite all, Kazakhstan's chairmanship of the OSCE in 2010 will affect the country's aspirations to regional leadership and hopefully Kazakhstan's leading role in Eurasia will serve as an international endorsement of Astana's successful economic and political reforms and their contribution as a bridge between the former Soviet Republics and other OSCE members.

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