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Kazakhstan Offers to Act as Logistics Hub on Eurasian Transport Corridors



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Kazakhstan plays a unique and pivotal role in the Eurasian transport corridor, positioning itself as a reliable logistics hub. Kazakhstan is aiming to reduce business costs and increase population mobility through enhanced transport and economic connectivity. The initiative to act as a logistics hub, articulated by Kazakhstan Prime Minister Olzhas Bektenov at the Eurasian Intergovernmental Council (EIC) meeting in Nesvizh, Belarus, on June 3–4, 2024,



underscores the country's strategic vision and role in regional and international trade. The meeting was attended by the various heads of government from the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) member states such as Belarus, Kyrgyz Republic, Russia, the observer state of Uzbekistan, and the invited state of Azerbaijan and focused on various aspects of economic cooperation, including transport infrastructure, industrial cooperation, agriculture, customs and technical regulation, competition, and digitalization.

The EAEU, with a market population exceeding 185 million, offers significant opportunities for economic integration and development. As transit times become shorter and logistics more efficient, businesses can guarantee the availability of goods precisely when needed, while electrified rail services contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Kazakhstan is developing various plans to enhance the Middle Corridor route,



which will speed up necessary infrastructure developments to support increased trade volumes.

The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in various sectors is another critical aspect of Kazakhstan's development strategy, as sharing AI experiences can drive economic progress and innovation, particularly in medicine, education, and creative industries, which are undergoing significant global transformations. Kazakhstan is experiencing positive trends in digitalizing public and financial services, with non-cash payments reaching 88 percent by the end of 2023.

Kazakhstan envisions creating an extensive network of roads to enhance national and regional connectivity, as road transport is the largest freight sector in the country. Fostering transportation efficiency has been a key priority, as demonstrated by Kazakhstan's pilot project on railway transit automation, which has significantly reduced train processing times and automated transit declarations for goods on the China-Central Asia and China-Europe routes, marking a substantial step forward in the country's transportation infrastructure.

Kazakhstan's vast Railway Projects

Kazakhstan is actively working to enhance regional connectivity and integration through its vast railway network, one of the most extensive in the region. As part of its mass-scale railway projects under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), Kazakhstan is significantly bolstering its transport infrastructure, such as the reconstruction of railways on the Orsk-

Kandyagash, Makat-Sagyz, and Shalkar-Beineu routes. Additionally, construction has begun on four sidings on the Makat-Shubarkudyk route, and existing tracks on the Mangystau-Beineu and three sidings on the Mangyshlak-Uzen routes are being extended.

Modernizing and expanding the transport and logistic infrastructure is a top priority for Kazakhstan, as demonstrated by projects like expanding the Dostyk-Moiynty railway line and constructing new sections such as Bakhty-Ayagoz and Darbaza-Maktaaral, which will enhance connections with neighboring countries like China and Uzbekistan. The development of comprehensive maritime infrastructure is another focus, with plans to turn the Kuryk port into a full-fledged logistics center similar to Aktau. Additionally, creating a container hub in Aktau will expand Kazakhstan's maritime capabilities. The country also plans to build a railway bypass around Almaty to reduce congestion, improve efficiency, and diversify access to sea routes.

Kazakhstan is actively involved in the development of the International North-South Transport Corridor, with potential extensions to Europe and Central Asia, which provides access to sea routes. Modernizing the Kazakh section of the Bolashak-Chelyabinsk



railway line is part of this effort, paving the way for expanded connections and trade



opportunities. The international road corridors will provide access to key international ports, transport hubs, and terminals. The Western China-Western Europe highway is a government priority, set to open new opportunities for Kazakh businesses once completed.

Role of BRI in Eurasian Transport Corridor

Kazakhstan's engagement in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is significant for the Eurasian transport corridor in facilitating global connectivity and delivering public goods. The BRI mega-projects in Kazakhstan align with its "multi-vector" foreign policy, fostering diverse political and economic relations as Kazakhstan significantly contributes to transforming world trade by enabling efficient shipment of goods from China to Europe by rail.

With "11 international transport corridors" passing through Kazakhstan, investments in transport and logistics boost both cross-border and domestic transportation competitiveness in Central Asia and provide Kazakhstan with essential access to regional markets for goods and services.

Kazakhstan, as the crossroads of Europe and Asia, will unlock substantial untapped benefits from growing cargo flows between regions. BRI-led modern transport infrastructure networks and a highly efficient logistics system are integrating into international networks and also providing opportunities to boost regional cooperation in



various sectors, including investment, trade, infrastructure development, digitalization, agriculture, railways, and special economic zones.

The country's commitment to trade facilitation and multilateral cooperation reflects its determination to promote economic development and connectivity in the region. As global trade dynamics evolve, Kazakhstan's contributions will remain crucial in ensuring that the Eurasian trade corridor realizes its full potential as a major conduit for regional and international business, fostering growth and development across regions, and promising a more interconnected and prosperous future for Eurasia.