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## Kazakhstan's Significant Role in Middle Corridor



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The Middle Corridor is the shortest route from China's Pacific coast to Europe, running through Central Asia and Kazakhstan across the Caspian Sea into South Caucasus region

further into Europe. In 2022, the traffic volume of transit cargo on this route increased two and a half times up to almost 1.5 million tons which is an absolute record for the corridor becoming its



growth potential indicator. Although the Corridor offers a shorter transit time and lower emissions than the ocean, it has less capacity at higher costs compared to its alternative.

On this path, Kazakhstan acts as a transit country due to its geographical position between Europe and Asia. The country has a well-developed transport infrastructure consisting of railways, roads, ports, and air transportation which allows moving goods across the territory as another solution for Silk Road implementation between East and West.

### **Kazakhstan as a Bridge**

The transit potential of Kazakhstan is especially relevant for the transportation by land and water routes, from Central Asia to international markets energy resources – oil and gas as well as agriculture and food products machinery chemicals, etc. The significance

of geographical location between East and West is shown with Kazakhstan's main export/import partners – China, Italy, Russia Korea Netherlands Germany.

Some of the export cargo, to Germany and rest of Europe is transported over 1700 kilometers railroad network in Kazakhstan. The first half of the year, that rail network carried more than 202 million tons cargo which generated total turnover over 162.99 billion tone-kilometers.

When the rail network of Kazakhstan terminates at the Caspian Sea, cargo moves along with Middle Corridor route via feeder service into Baku in Azerbaijan where it continues to travel across Azerbaijan and Georgia until reaching Black sea port . The Corridor saw a 63.7% increase in the rail transport sector during the first quarter of 2023; however, further development agreements such as block train agreement and multimodal across Caspian Sea are planned for years to come.

Middle Corridor which is also known as Trans-Caspian International Transport Route provides a basis to geopolitical balancing strategies in the region.

Many states in the Eurasia region rely on transiting through the Middle Corridor as it is a corridor so important that the geopolitical



balancing strategies multi-vector foreign policies between regional powers are based on its functionality.

The Middle Corridor is an inter-regional transportation and economic corridor linking Asia with Europe, passing through a number of states in the region. It is an alternative route to the conventional Northern Corridor and Southern corridor. Economic growth and logistics performance are interdependent to ensure import of goods required for production and consumption as well as export of goods into foreign markets; a country's logistic infrastructure, including its providers need to develop resilience reliability in order become true drivers economic development.

In order to support growth and supply chain resilience for customers, country is strengthening its commitment towards the countries of Central Asia. With a new rail-sea service announced from Kazakhstan and the Caspian Sea, through Azerbaijan and Georgia to the Black Sea linking China with Europe by Maersk provide customers an alternative connection to ocean. As transit



times become shorter, customers can guarantee the availability of goods on shelves at just the right time and with electrified rail service they are able to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. Kazakhstan is developing various plans that would also benefit the Middle Corridor route by speeding up infrastructure necessary to support trade and increase trading via it.



Kazakhstan leadership have additionally signed numerous agreements in current years to cement trade family members. For example, Azerbaijani Energy Minister Parviz Shahbazov cited in July that the “Comprehensive Program on Development of Cooperation among the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2022-2026,” which is presently in negotiations, will be a roadmap for the development of dialogue between the international locations for the instant future. He additionally invited Kazakhstani buyers to enjoy the investment possibilities and favorable business situations within the Alyat Free Economic Zone.

### **Conclusion**

Kazakhstan is the bridge between Europe and Asia having well-developed transport system and active involvement in international treaties and programs. Kazakhstan’s pledge to trade facilitation and multilateral cooperation reflects its determination in promoting economic development as well as connectivity along the corridor. With global trade dynamics changing, the role of Kazakhstan’s contributions will remain critical in ensuring that Middle Corridor attains its full potential as a major conduit for regional and international business thereby creating wealth and development across continents. Through its involvement with countries and organizations, Kazakhstan has widened economic prospects, security arrangements as well as diplomatic power.