



中國傳媒大學  
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Institute for a Community  
with Shared Future  
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## New Kazakhstan on the Path of Modernization under President Kassym Tokayev



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***The people do not need abstract ideas and promises, but tangible changes  
for the better"***

(President of Kazakhstan, Kassym-Jomrat Tokayev)

A robust leadership comes from a rational policymaking strategy. In today's world, some leaders have emerged as visionary statesmen due to their significant reforms and prudent strategy for the country. In this aspect,



the President of Kazakhstan, His Excellency Kassym-Jomrat Tokayev, has gained much popularity because of his successful policies to handle civil chaos in the country and introduce grand reforms. All these policy initiatives are worth praising. Since the last decade, Kazakhstan has evolved by every leap and bounds in the realm of international politics. Under the leadership of President Tokayev, Kazakhstan presents a great model of successful policies for other countries to follow.

The recent profound reforms by the Kazakh government and drastic structural transformation have provided a new impetus to the country to pursue its future aspirations. New Kazakhstan is on the path of modernization, openness, and unity. On 16<sup>th</sup> March 2022, His Excellency Kassym Tokayev has addressed the nation and introduced major reforms in every sector of the country. In his recent address, he stated:

*Political transformation is aimed at creating fair and just 'rules of the game', eliminating favoritism and monopolies in all spheres of life".*

In this aspect, the historic reforms have indeed provided a new roadmap to achieve set goals and targets for the future. It has been anticipated that the new strategies are likely to bring constructive outcomes and milestone developments in every sphere of life for the people of Kazakhstan. Moreover, the roadmap unveiled an extensive list of far-reaching reforms to be initiated throughout Kazakhstan's political establishment and civil society.

The Presidential Program of Reforms symbolizes the beginning of a new era in Kazakhstan's political development by promoting democratization, accountability, and sustainability



in the management of the state. With the aim of transitioning the country from a super-presidential form of government to a presidential republic with a strong parliament, the Program includes a fundamental review of key institutions of the state, including the office and powers of the President, the functioning of the Parliament and local self-government, as well as the political party, electoral, judicial, and law enforcement system.

The visionary government of Kazakhstan has formulated following consultations with expert opinions and civil society thought leaders, including academics and public



figures. It is worth acknowledging that recommendations were also taken from Members of Parliament, the Constitutional Council, the Central Election Commission, and the Supreme Court while launching the robust policies.

### **Highlighting the Key-Reforms for New Kazakhstan:**

Following are the significant aspects of the new reforms introduced in Kazakhstan:

#### **i. Comprehensive Modernization of the Political System:**

- The transition from a super-presidential form of government to a presidential republic with a strong parliament. Such a system will provide an optimal balance of power for institutions and will contribute to the sustainable development of the country.
- Legislation that obliges the President to terminate membership in the party for the period of his powers. This norm will increase political competition provide equal conditions for the development of all parties.
- A legislative ban for the closest relatives of the president from holding positions of top-level civil servants and managers in the quasi-public sector.
- Increase the independence of governors. For example, currently the President has the right to dismiss district and rural akims. Such legal provisions should be abolished.
- Procedures for registration of political parties will be greatly simplified. For example, the registration threshold will be reduced from 20,000 to 5,000 people
  - a fourfold reduction (eightfold over the last three years), in regional branches
  - from 600 to 200 people.



The rights and obligations of observers of electoral legislation should be clearly defined.

- Establishment of a Constitutional Court. The Prosecutor General and the Commissioner for Human Rights will be given the right to appeal to the Court, in addition to the President and the Parliament.

ii. Specific Reforms in the Parliamentary and Local Government System:

- Reduction of the quota for presidential appointments in the Senate from 15 to 10 members to give more voice to social groups that are under-represented in parliament.
- The right of the Senate should only be to approve or reject the laws already adopted by the Mazhilis. Consequently, the Mazhilis is vested with the right to pass laws.
- Parliament should strengthen control over the quality of execution of the state budget. The Supreme Accounts Chamber will be created instead of the Accounts Committee for Control over the Execution of the National Budget.
- The system of election of deputies of the Majilis will be reformed the following way: 70% of MPs will be elected on a proportional basis, while 30% will be elected on a majoritarian basis. In addition, a mixed model will be introduced in the elections of maslikhats (local parliament) of regions and cities of national significance. This will pave the way for individual non-party candidates to run for a seat in the Parliament and increase both political competition and the citizens' direct engagement with their elected MPs.

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Proposal for the President to submit at least two candidates for the positions of akims of regions and the cities of national significance to the maslikhats, local representative and consultative bodies, which will be a kind of “indirect election,” based on the results of which akims will be appointed.

iii. Judicial Reforms:

- Study the issue of toughening punishment for violence against women and children.
- Expand the categories of cases heard by jury trials beyond the most serious crimes.

iv. Additional Reforms:

- Wider involvement of public organisations and activists in the preparation and implementation of reforms.
- Revision of the law “On Mass Media” . The media should have opportunities to be more competitive and independent.
- Establishment of new regions – 1. Abai region (city of Semey will become its centre), 2. Ulytau region on the territory of the former Zhezkazgan region (Zhezkazgan will again become a regional centre), 3. Almaty region will be divided into two regions: Zhetysu and Almaty regions (Qapshagay - centre of the Almaty region, Taldykorgan - centre of the Zhetysu region.)
- A decree on further de-bureaucratisation of the public sector will be adopted.
- Elaboration of a new package of structural reforms in the economy and public administration, taking into account the political modernisation strategy.

## Robust Determinants of Structural Reforms and Prospects:

The new reforms and transformative policy measures are the clear manifestation that Kazakhstan has left no stone unturned to begin a voyage of robust economic development and pursue the goal of a welfare state. Under the dynamic leadership of His Excellency president Kassym Tokayev, Kazakhstan has been experiencing prosperity. By launching such profound reforms, Kazakhstan has set an excellent example for other countries to follow. The visionary government is fully aware that the active participation of their citizens vis-à-vis implementing new laws will pave the way for the socioeconomic and political transformation of Kazakhstan.

