



**Statement by Mr. Arman Kassenov
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Уважаемые коллеги!

I would like to express my gratitude to the representatives of Asian Development Bank for prepared presentations and provided information on the documents submitted for approval.

1. Firstly I would like to start from update you about the **current state and plans of economic development** of Kazakhstan.

On September 9, 2024, Moody's upgraded the long-term rating of the Republic of Kazakhstan from Baa2 to Baa1, outlook "Stable". The **rating** assigned by the agency is the **highest** for all years of independence of the Republic.

The main points of growth for Kazakhstan will be projects in the manufacturing industry, namely in the medium and high level of processing, natural resources and agricultural goods.

Foreign reserves, National Fund assets exceeded 100 billion US dollars.

We are currently undertaking significant **structural and institutional reforms**. First, this is a major effort to **liberalize the economy and reform public administration**.

In particular, a Liberalization Decree (May 8, 2024) has been adopted to reduce the state's share in the economy and remove barriers to investment.

We have adopted the **National Infrastructure Plan** until 2029, which provides for the implementation of more than two hundred projects worth about \$80 billion in strategic sectors of the economy - energy, water supply, digitalization and transport infrastructure.

Thus, Kazakhstan represents a country with a **high-quality credit rating** and presents new opportunities and huge potential for profitable investments.

2. I would like to propose to consider and discuss several initiatives:

- a) **Central Asian Transport and Logistics Hub.**

Creation of a regional transport and logistics network including **new and upgraded transport corridors** as well as **logistics hubs** that would provide rapid transit between Europe, Asia and the Middle East. In turn, this will **increase volumes of transportation** through our countries. **Reducing logistics costs** and **delivery time** for Central Asian countries will facilitate trade and economic integration. **Attracting investment in infrastructure** (roads, railroads, airports and ports) will **create new jobs** and **boost economic development**.

b) Regional Water and Environment Program.

This initiative will allow us to:

- **develop a regional water management strategy** for Central Asian countries, including protection of transboundary water sources and combating desertification;
- **cooperate to combat environmental problems**, including drought, desertification and pollution of water sources, which is a common problem for the whole region;
- **establish a center of competence** on environment and water resources to coordinate the efforts of CAREC countries.

Now I would like to briefly summarize the vision of the documents under review today.

Midterm Review of the CAREC Strategy 2030.

The midterm review of the CAREC 2030 Strategy demonstrates the impressive progress made over the past six years in regional economic cooperation. I express my full support for the efforts and results that have been achieved through the joint actions of the participating countries and our international partners.

First, there has been a significant improvement in transport connectivity in the region. Over 12,000 kilometers of roads and nearly 2,000 kilometers of railroads have been built or upgraded under the CAREC Strategy 2030. Kazakhstan, as the transit center of the region, particularly appreciates such initiatives.

Second, energy integration. The CAREC 2030 strategy aims to create a regional energy market, and **16 energy projects** worth **\$3.5 billion** have been approved in recent years. These projects facilitate not only increased production capacity but also an integrated energy network.

The midterm review has shown that the CAREC program continues to play a **key role** in promoting regional integration and sustainable growth. Kazakhstan stands ready to further contribute to this strategy by strengthening cooperation with our partners and international organizations to achieve the ambitious goals set for the period to 2030.

Climate Change Action Plan.

The CAREC Climate Change Action Plan is a timely and critical step for our region. **Kazakhstan fully supports it** as it reflects the priority areas of combating climate change, which are important not only for the sustainability of ecosystems, but also for the security of our economies and citizens.

First, water security and flood protection issues. The Action Plan proposes programs on **water forecasting** and **sustainable glacier management**, which are important for all countries in the region.

Second, low-carbon growth. Kazakhstan is actively working to transition to a low-carbon economy, and we see tremendous promise in initiatives to decarbonize CAREC transport corridors and integrate renewable energy into the region's power grids.

Third, regional cooperation and risk management. The Action Plan proposes the **establishment of a CAREC climate platform**, which will be an effective tool for coordinating efforts, sharing knowledge, and developing joint projects. This is particularly important for us, as many climate issues are transboundary in nature.

Kazakhstan reaffirms its readiness to actively participate in the implementation of the Action Plan and work together with our foundation partners. I am confident that this document will become the basis for a sustainable and secure future for Central Asia.

Thank you for your attention.