

**Statement at the Round Table in Warsaw  
on March 28, 2023**

Good afternoon, Ladies and Gentlemen! It is a great pleasure to take part in the round table discussions arranged by the Kazakh embassy in Poland. My warm greetings to all the Polish friends participating in the event and individually to Ambassador Alim Kirabayev, Ambassador Vladyslav Sokolovski and Dr Edji Olendzkiy, with whom I have met recently in Astana when he visited Kazakhstan as an international observer of our parliamentary elections.

The participants of the round table speaking before me quite extensively covered topical issues of political and socio-economic reforms initiated by President Kassym Jomart Tokayev with the aim of creating New, Fair Kazakhstan. My impression is that we can summarize a conclusion on the outcome of the Majilis elections as “a step forward”. A step consistent with the commitment of the head of our state to promote the rule of law and abide by provisions of the revised Constitution of the Republic introduced as a result of the national referendum of 2022. As you are aware, President Tokayev pledged modernization of Kazakhstan according to a founding formula “Strong President, Influential Parliament, Responsible Government”. So the snap elections of 2023 were intended to further develop parliamentarism, to strengthen political competition by giving different political movements, associations and groups of collective interest previously unavailable opportunity to advance their candidates. Thus a new generation of Kazakh politicians was able to present their views on what is necessary to change in order to modernize our country.

I would like to emphasize one important thing to bear in mind. The presidential elections of 2022, the parliamentary elections of 2023 were integral parts of the overall strategy of political transformation aimed at building among the citizens confidence that the destiny of the Republic is in their hands and that it is the government that serves the people, not vice versa. Otherwise, the concept of a listening, hearing, reacting,

responding state, where there is a national accord, a constructive partnership between government and society.

The final report of the OSCE Office of Human Rights and Democratic Institutions is due to be issued later, but the preliminary report published days ago indicated some positive changes. One may expect that in the final document there will be a mention of some irregularities and shortcomings. Well, we do not claim to be perfect (but who is?), what is important is the overall trend and firm commitment. I remember that in the later part of 1990 there were heated discussions with our Western partners, especially with our American colleagues, on the ways and methods of building democracy in Kazakhstan. Sometimes the Western assessments of the state of democracy and transparency of election process were straining bilateral relations with our critics. We were always calling to compare process taking into consideration ground realities of a young country which just recently denounced its totalitarian past. Our Polish friends understand pretty well what I am talking about. It's arguable that it's really justifiable to criticize a country which was well ahead of other Central Asian states both in political reforms and structural economic adjustments. Kazakhstan in 1990-s and nowadays is an anchor of stability and political progress in the region. President Tokayev in one of his earlier interviews pointed out that good state of internal affairs was the best foreign policy. Indeed, those countries that have failed internally cannot carry an effective external policy. The better things are at home, the easier it is to advance your country's interests abroad and vice versa. By pursuing a well balanced internal policy Kazakhstan has been able to join the international community as a respected, predictable, responsible partner to all, those who are nearby, or far away. We will stay the course irrespective of internal and external challenges and circumstances.

Thank you. Dzenkuyu barzo.