

# On the Issue of Kazakhstan's Policy Towards Afghanistan

Nuriddin Sultanmuratov✉

Institute of Asian Studies. Almaty, Kazakhstan

Nuriddin.sultanmuratov@gmail.com, <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3711-4303>

**Abstract.** The Afghan direction has always played an important role in the foreign strategy of independent Kazakhstan, which is due to the overall regional security. Instability in Afghanistan, the associated risks for the Central Asian countries, historically determined the policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan. From the very beginning, the Kazakh authorities sought to actively participate in stabilizing and strengthening peace in Afghanistan, including providing direct humanitarian and economic assistance to Kabul. This created conditions for the development of cooperation at the interstate level, which led to the gradual expansion of trade relations. Now Afghanistan is considered as one of the important markets for Kazakh producers. It should be emphasized that Kazakhstan has always been guided by political pragmatism. This manifested itself after the events of 2021, which led to the formation of a new Afghan government by representatives of the «Taliban»<sup>\*1</sup> movement. Despite the non-recognition of the new Afghan authorities in accordance with international requirements, Astana continued its dialogue with Kabul on the most important topics, especially those related to supporting the Afghan population in order to prevent a sharp deterioration in the situation in the country. This is in the interests not only of Afghanistan itself, but also of regional and international forces.

**Keywords:** Kazakhstan, Afghanistan, foreign policy, Central Asia, security, economy

**Acknowledgments:** The article was prepared as part of an initiative project of the Center for the Study of Modern Afghanistan (Russia, Moscow)

**For citation:** Sultanmuratov N. On the Issue of Kazakhstan's Policy Towards Afghanistan. *Russia & World: Scientific Dialogue*. 2023; 2(8): 94-108, [https://doi.org/10.53658/RW2023-3-2\(8\)-94-108](https://doi.org/10.53658/RW2023-3-2(8)-94-108)

<sup>1</sup> \*The organization has been recognized a terrorist organization by the Russian Supreme Court. Unified federal list of organizations, including foreign and international organizations, recognized as terrorist in accordance with the legislation of the Russian Federation (as of June 25, 2023). Available from: <http://www.fsb.ru/fsb/npd/terror.htm> (accessed: 25.06.2023);18+



## Introduction

The situation around Afghanistan remains one of the hottest topics for the world community, especially given the latest socio-political developments in that country. Although the pessimistic forecasts of many experts related to the withdrawal of the American military contingent in 2021 and the subsequent coming to power of the representatives of the «Taliban»<sup>\*</sup> movement did not materialize on the whole, however, the security risk is high. This is not only about traditional military threats, but also about the potential transformation of internal contradictions between the new administration and its opponents into full-scale armed clashes with all the consequences for the surrounding region.

Today, no less pressing issue is the economic prospects of Afghanistan, which is now going through a severe crisis. Due to a sharp drop in incomes of citizens and a reduction in budget revenues, a huge number of people were on the verge of starvation. According to various estimates, up to 19 million Afghans will face severe food insecurity in 2023<sup>2</sup>. A significant deterioration in the financial situation of local residents creates a threat of a humanitarian catastrophe in a state of 40 million people, which can lead to a large number of refugees, can provoke a new wave of forced migrants to other countries. In recent years, the topic of migrants from disadvantaged areas of the world has been actively discussed at the global level. A prime example is the flow of refugees from the Middle East due to the ongoing war in Syria. Against this backdrop, a more populous Afghanistan is an even bigger challenge.

One way or another, any scenario of destabilizing Afghanistan will inevitably have a negative impact on the economy and security of neighboring regions. Naturally, this will directly affect the interests of the countries of Central Asia due to cultural, historical and geographical factors; first of all, these are neighboring Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan, which have long been associated with Afghanistan. Groups of kindred peoples live on its territory, which in certain periods of its history played the role of influential Diasporas. Kazakhstan is located relatively far from the Afghan borders. The republic does not belong to the line of Border States of Central Asia, which directly border on Afghanistan, and it has no kindred peoples on the territory of this country.

Despite this, official Astana has long been pursuing an active policy towards Afghanistan and is participating in every possible way in the processes of stabilization of this country. There is a high interest in the Afghan topic within the Kazakh expert community. The situation in this country often becomes the subject of public discussion. Therefore, it is important to analyze the foreign policy steps of the Republic of Kazakhstan in relation to Afghanistan.

<sup>2</sup> Afghanistan. Latest developments. 01.02.2023. Available from: <https://www.acaps.org/country/afghanistan/crisis/complex-crisis>



The works of various authors on this issue should be mentioned: the works of S.Akimbekov, in particular his books "The History of Afghanistan" and "The Afghan Knot and Security Problems in Central Asia". The issue of bilateral relations between Astana and Kabul is touched upon in the article "Between strategic and material interests: Kazakhstan as a source of stability in Afghanistan" by S.Mayer. It is necessary to note the monograph by R.Mukimdzhanova "Countries of Central Asia: the Asian vector of foreign policy" [6] and the work by D.Malysheva "Post-Soviet Central Asia and its Asian neighbors" [5]. In addition, the works of M.McCauley "Afghanistan and Central Asia: a modern history" [8], A.Saikal and K.Nourzhanov "The spectrum of Afghanistan: security in Central Asia" [9], K.Collins "The limits of cooperation: Central Asia, Afghanistan, and the new Silk Road" [7] also helped to reveal the topic of the study.

The purpose of the article is to identify the main directions and factors in the evolution of Kazakhstan's foreign policy towards Afghanistan from the moment of independence in 1991 to the present.

## Materials and Methods

Books, articles, reports, official statistics, information from Internet resources were used as sources in the article. The study was conducted based on the principle of historicism. In addition, a system-structural approach was applied.

## Results

### History of Kazakh-Afghan relations

Diplomatic relations between Astana and Kabul were established in February 1992. Later, in 1993, an Afghan embassy was opened in the Republic of Kazakhstan. However, due to the inability to ensure the safety of employees, the Kazakh diplomatic mission in Afghanistan began to work only in 2002 - immediately after the military intervention of the international coalition led by the United States in Afghanistan, which led to the overthrow of the «Taliban»\*. After creating more favorable conditions in 2003, the representation of the republic was transformed into a full-fledged embassy.

Since the formation of an independent state, Kazakhstan's interest in Afghanistan has been linked to the issue of security in the south. To do this, Kazakhstan sent in the early 1990s. border guards to the Tajik-Afghan border as part of the formed contingent of peacekeeping forces, which consisted of several CIS countries: Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Russia and Kyrgyzstan.

The Kazakh military took part in the operation to protect the Tajik border from 1993 to 2001. During this mission, a well-known incident occurred when on April 7, 1995, in the Pshikhavr Gorge of the Pamirs, soldiers of the Republic of Kazakhstan lost 17 people killed

and 33 wounded in battle. At the same time, for the entire time on the Tajik border, the total losses of the Kazakh side amounted to 46 people.<sup>3</sup>.

The conclusion in 1992 in Tashkent of an agreement on collective security was due to the Afghan factor. The creation of this organization was based on the desire of the states of the former USSR to coordinate efforts in relation to Afghanistan, where in April 1992 the government of Najibullah fell. This caused the concern of the countries of Central Asia and Russia, which forced them to jointly respond to the new situation. In this regard, the CSTO appeared as a mechanism to counter external threats. Within the framework of the agreement signed by Russia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, these countries "undertook to take part in the protection of the external borders of the former USSR in the southern direction, bearing in mind, among other things, the borders of Tajikistan with Afghanistan" [1:179].

At the first stage of independence, Kazakhstan's policy towards Afghanistan was not clearly defined. On the one hand, because in the first half of the 1990s, the processes of state building and reforms in the economy were intensively going on in the republic, the authorities were concentrated on solving internal problems, Kazakhstan then did not have sufficient financial resources to actively participate in the affairs of Afghanistan. On the other hand, in Afghanistan itself at that time there was a situation of general instability, which hampered the development of bilateral contacts. In a situation of civil war and the absence of a single central government in Afghanistan, the most reasonable strategy for Kazakhstan was non-intervention and observation from the outside.

When the «Taliban»\* occupied Kabul in 1996, it caused serious concern in all countries of Central Asia, including Kazakhstan. The risk of the conflict spreading to the territory of the region increased. Then, in 1996, an emergency meeting of the heads of state of Central Asia and Russia was held in Almaty<sup>4</sup>. A possible breakthrough by extremist and terrorist groups was more of a concern to the "front-line states" – Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. In contrast, the Republic of Kazakhstan had no direct interests in Afghanistan. Astana's strategy at that time can be characterized as following in the wake of the common interests of the countries of the region within the framework of the CSTO. Since "the degree of relevance of the Afghan settlement for the national interests of individual Central Asian states is not the same" [6:107].

At the same time, the so-called Northern Anti-«Taliban»\* Alliance was formed within Afghanistan itself. This formation consisted of various ethnic groups of the country who opposed the ««Taliban»\* government. The «Taliban»\* as a whole represented the interests of the local Pashtuns, the most numerous people in the country. At the same time, the

<sup>3</sup> Isenov T. The Forgotten Battalion: the first peacekeepers of the Republic of Kazakhstan still do not have the status of participants in hostilities /15.06.2019/. Available from: <https://liter.kz/3415-zabytyy-batalon-pervye-mirotvortsy-rk-do-sih-por-ne-imeyut-statusa-uchastnikov-boevyh-deystviy/>

<sup>4</sup> Speech by the first President of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev at the Conference of Foreign Ministers of the participating countries of the Istanbul Process /26.04.2013/. Available from: [https://www.akorda.kz/ru/speeches/external\\_political\\_affairs/ext\\_speeches\\_and\\_addresses/vystuplenie-prezidenta-kazahstana-nazarbaeva-na-konferencii-ministrov-inostrannyh-del-stran-uchastnic-stambul'skogo-processa](https://www.akorda.kz/ru/speeches/external_political_affairs/ext_speeches_and_addresses/vystuplenie-prezidenta-kazahstana-nazarbaeva-na-konferencii-ministrov-inostrannyh-del-stran-uchastnic-stambul'skogo-processa).

Northern Alliance was supported by Russia and Iran. Its participants relied on local Tajiks, Hazara Shiites and other minorities. The northern border areas of Afghanistan were to act as a buffer zone.

The turning point came in the late 1990s. First, in the spring of 1999, Uzbekistan ceased its membership in the CSTO<sup>5</sup>, after which it immediately joined the regional organization GUAM. Against this background, the so-called Batken events of 1999 take place. Then separate detachments of militants of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan\*<sup>6</sup>, hiding in Tajikistan, went to the Osh region of Kyrgyzstan in order to reach the Uzbek border. In response, Tashkent launched a large-scale counter-terrorist operation, including the use of combat aircraft [8:103]. This incident sharply actualized the problem of security on the southern borders of Central Asia.

This episode was the impetus for greater involvement of external actors in regional processes. There has been a noticeable increase in the role of Russia in ensuring security in Central Asia. Moscow initially considered the region as a "soft underbelly". Naturally, the destabilization of the countries of Central Asia was seen as a direct threat to Russia's national interests. The Afghan factor acted as a convenient mechanism for strengthening Russia's position.

Given the historical problem of separatism in Xinjiang, China's activation was natural. The logical outcome of Beijing's desire to become more actively involved in Central Asian security issues was the creation of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in June 2001. The basis for the new structure was the previously operating "Shanghai Five", which Uzbekistan now joined. It is not surprising that the fight against terrorism, extremism and separatism was proclaimed the priorities of the new association. In 2002, the members of the SCO signed an agreement on a regional antiterrorist structure as a permanent body within this organization.

Despite the emergence of the SCO, Russia retained the status of the main player in the military defense of Central Asia, and the presence of China became an additional element in ensuring the security of Central Asia. Kazakhstan has worked closely with Moscow on the strategy for Afghanistan, providing all possible support to its initiatives.

In 2001, after the September 11 attacks, an international antiterrorist coalition was formed under the leadership of the Americans. The fight against the «Taliban»\* movement has become one of the main goals of the international security assistance forces. Shortly after the intervention, the «Taliban»\* government was overthrown. Under US control, the situation in Afghanistan gradually began to stabilize. Washington and other Western donors began to directly finance the Afghan budget, which contributed to the process of economic recovery and a general settlement of the situation. Against this background, for

<sup>5</sup> Sarkorova A. CSTO explains the reasons for Uzbekistan's withdrawal from the bloc /30.06.2012/. Available from: [https://www.bbc.com/russian/international/2012/06/120629\\_uzbekistan\\_odkb\\_exit](https://www.bbc.com/russian/international/2012/06/120629_uzbekistan_odkb_exit)

<sup>6</sup> \*The organization has been recognized a terrorist organization by the Russian Supreme Court 04.02.2003. Unified federal list of organizations, including foreign and international organizations, recognized as terrorist in accordance with the legislation of the Russian Federation (as of June 25, 2023). Available from: <http://www.fsb.ru/fsb/npd/terror.htm> (accessed: 25.06.2023);18+

Astana, the topic of Afghanistan fades into the background due to the reduction of security risks.

As a contribution to strengthening peace in the region, since the second half of the 2000s, Kazakhstan, within the framework of an international initiative, has stepped up humanitarian and technical support to Afghanistan. In 2007, the authorities of the republic adopted a special plan to assist this country<sup>7</sup>. In accordance with this program; for example, it was decided to provide state grants for the education of 1,000 Afghan students in Kazakhstani universities. For these purposes, \$50 million were allocated. In addition, Kazakhstan donated funds for the construction of infrastructure facilities: schools, hospitals, roads, etc. In general, as of 2019, the total assistance of Kazakhstan amounted to more than \$80 million<sup>8</sup>.

It is important to note that at the first stage of the presence of coalition troops, the competition between the US and Russia in the region was important. This was also manifested in the situation with military bases in Kyrgyzstan. Washington has been using Manas since 2001 as a transit hub for operations in Afghanistan, while in 2003 Moscow signed an agreement with the Kyrgyz authorities to station its own aviation unit in Kant as part of the CSTO. Nevertheless, this rivalry did not turn into a sharp conflict.

In general, until 2014, relations between Russia and the United States were relatively even, which had a positive effect on the coordination of efforts to stabilize Afghanistan. Among other things, the Russian government allowed its airspace to be used to transport military goods to Afghanistan. From the point of view of Kazakhstan's multi-vector foreign policy, this situation seemed quite favorable. Astana was relatively free to act, including offering various mediation efforts. But after the start of the Russian-Ukrainian military conflict in 2014, relations between the two powers deteriorated sharply. This immediately affected the position of the Russian Federation regarding cooperation with the West in Afghanistan. As a result, in 2015 Russia banned the transit of US military supplies through its territory<sup>9</sup>.

Characteristically, the changes that have taken place in relations between Russia and Western countries have had an impact on Moscow's position on that part of the transit of goods to Afghanistan, which was carried out through the territory of Kazakhstan. Some Russian media even put forward a version of the creation of a US military base in the Caspian Sea for the transportation of goods. In response, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan denied such allegations in its official statement<sup>10</sup>. Obviously, between Kazakhstan and Russia there was a misunderstanding at the official level on the

<sup>7</sup> The first OSCE Summit in the new millennium will be held in Astana – the head of Kazakhstan /20.11. 2010/. Available from: [https://www.inform.kz/ru/v-astane-sostoitsya-pervyy-v-novom-tysyacheletii-sammit-obse-glava-kazahstana\\_a2324353](https://www.inform.kz/ru/v-astane-sostoitsya-pervyy-v-novom-tysyacheletii-sammit-obse-glava-kazahstana_a2324353)

<sup>8</sup> Kazakhstan continues to develop a program aimed at the education of Afghan students /09.10.2019/. Available from: [https://www.inform.kz/kz/kazakhstan-prodolzhaet-razvivat-programmu-napravlennoyu-na-obrazovanie-afganskikh-studentov\\_a3573522/amp](https://www.inform.kz/kz/kazakhstan-prodolzhaet-razvivat-programmu-napravlennoyu-na-obrazovanie-afganskikh-studentov_a3573522/amp)

<sup>9</sup> Russia has stopped the transit of NATO military cargo to Afghanistan /18.05.2015/. Available from: [https://www.bbc.com/russian/international/2015/05/150518\\_russia\\_nato\\_afghanistan](https://www.bbc.com/russian/international/2015/05/150518_russia_nato_afghanistan)

<sup>10</sup> The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan denied the statements "about military bases in the Caspian Sea" /07/09/2018/. Available from: <https://rus.azattyq.org/a/29352744.html>

issue of transit of goods to Afghanistan, as evidenced by the discussion of this issue at an informal level in the media. But the problem was settled after the statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

When the US announced its withdrawal from Afghanistan, Kazakhstan was generally reserved about developments. Although some experts even before pointed out the existing risks for the countries of Central Asia [5:26]. But this still applied more to the states of the region directly bordering Afghanistan. In August 2021, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan issued a statement:

Kazakhstan calls on all parties involved to ensure the peaceful transit of power as the main prerequisite for internal stabilization. We support the statement of the UN Security Council on the establishment of an inclusive and representative government... The implementation of these provisions should be a necessary condition for starting a dialogue with the new government of Afghanistan<sup>11</sup>.

In forming its own position on Afghanistan, the Kazakh government is guided by pragmatism. Since the main task is to prevent another round of civil war, the establishment of the power of the «Taliban»\*, which would provide relative stability within the country, was considered by Astana as a more acceptable scenario compared to the alternative of starting an internal conflict.

In addition, a number of other factors should be noted. First, in recent years there has been a development of economic and trade ties between Astana and Kabul. Afghanistan has become an important market for goods for Kazakh producers. Thus, in pre-crisis 2020, bilateral trade reached \$624 million, up 55% year-on-year. At the same time, more than 90% is accounted for by Kazakhstani exports<sup>12</sup>. Accordingly, Astana is interested in maintaining established supply channels.

It is also necessary to note the transit potential of Afghanistan. This aspect has long been discussed in expert circles as an important factor in rapprochement and economic cooperation between Central Asia and Kabul. By 2020, the tasks of creating transport corridors through Afghanistan were formulated. From the countries of the region, this idea is actively supported by Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. Kazakhstan is more reluctant to support this idea because, unlike these two border states, Kazakhstan is not as economically dependent on the southern route. For Tashkent and Ashgabat, it is extremely important to reach seaports and sales markets in South Asia, while for Astana, Europe-China is traditionally the main transit route. At the same time, the prospects for the development of the Afghan direction are not very clear. But the realization of the country's transit

11 The Foreign Ministry issued a statement on the situation in Afghanistan /19.08.2021/. Available from: <https://kapital.kz/gosudarstvo/98035/mid-opublikoval-zayavleniye-po-situatsii-v-afganistane.html>

12 The trade turnover of Kazakhstan and Afghanistan amounted to almost \$ 624 million /18.08.2021/. Available from:

<https://jltv.kz/ru/news/business/11614-pochti-624-mln-sostavil-tovarooborot-kazakhstana-i-afganistana>

potential would open up additional opportunities for the Kazakh economy. From the point of view of geography (landlocked country), the development of transport corridors has always been strategically important for Kazakhstan. It is significant that in 2022, the President of Kazakhstan, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, announced the readiness of the republic to participate in the construction of a railway along the Mazar-i-Sharif-Kabul-Peshawar line from Afghanistan to Pakistan. In addition, it was said about Astana's intention to provide construction materials for the construction of this road and rolling stock<sup>13</sup>.

Despite the cessation of the work of banking institutions, Kazakh deliveries to Afghanistan not only did not decrease, but even increased. According to the results of January-September 2022, exports increased by 2.1 times compared to the same period last year and reached a record amount of \$635 million<sup>14</sup>. This reflects the desire to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe inside this country, as this could lead to an increase in refugees. Moreover, one of the main export items of the Republic of Kazakhstan is food. Today, Afghanistan accounts for almost half of all international supplies of Kazakh flour [4:24].

After the departure of the American military contingent from Afghanistan, the issue of regional security has again become topical. From this point of view, the countries of Central Asia, which in the past have already encountered an attempt to infiltrate individual detachments of militants into the region, are of particular concern.

It is important to note the presence of ideological risks:

since August 2021, state building in this country (Afghanistan. - Author's note) has been guided by a fundamentally different model, associated with a much greater role of religion in the organization of the state and society. Such a change in the development model from one that is oriented towards modernism to one that is obviously more archaic in nature can have important consequences. And not only for Afghanistan itself, but for the entire region. In fact, for the first time, supporters of the Deobandi direction in Islam came to power in a single country [2:11].

This form of Islam is distinguished by its radicalism, as the Deobandians call for a return to the historical role of Islam in society, "to a literal reading of the old religious tradition, idealization of the past. Hence the desire to follow the rigid religious practice of the Middle Ages" [3:469]. Given the presence in all societies of Central Asia of supporters of building a state on Islamic principles, the «Taliban»\* model can become a guide for a large category of the population, including in Kazakhstan.

Speaking of potential threats, one should not forget about the potential flow of Afghan migrants. Part of the migrants will go to the north, where the Kazakh territory will be used either as a transit or as a final destination for refugees. Therefore, it is important for Kazakhstan to maintain relative stability within Afghanistan.

13 Vaal T. /Kazakhstan is ready to participate in the construction of a railway from Afghanistan to Pakistan /21.07.2022/. Available from: <https://vlast.kz/novosti/50899-kazakhstan-gotov-ucastvovat-v-stroitelstve-zeleznj-dorogi-iz-afganistana-v-pakistan-tokaev.html>

14 Kazakhstan provides Afghanistan with flour, and in return receives sugary drinks /03.11.2022/. Available from: <https://lsm.kz/tovarooborot-kazakhstana-s-afganistanom>



In October 2021, an official Kazakh delegation headed by the presidential representative for international cooperation, Yerzhan Kazykhanov, traveled to Kabul, where they met with representatives of the new Afghan administration, Abdul Ghani Baradar and Amir Khan Muttaki<sup>15</sup>. This was a signal of Astana's readiness to engage in dialogue with the «Taliban»\* government, although so far the issue of recognizing the movement as the country's legitimate government has not been discussed. Kazakhstan will wait for such a decision from key international actors and only after that act in this direction.

In April 2023, news broke that representatives of the current «Taliban»\* government would receive accreditation to conduct diplomatic activities at the Afghan embassy in Astana. The Kazakh side emphasized that the country “intends to build, first of all, trade and economic relations and provide humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people.” The Republic will not yet establish official diplomatic relations with Kabul in accordance with the position of the UN<sup>16</sup>.

## Conclusions

In general, today Kazakhstan takes a cautious position on the Afghan issue. From the point of view of security policy, the republic still relies on such structures as the CSTO and the SCO. As recent events show, the Kazakh authorities maintain limited contacts with the «Taliban»\*, which is perceived as a factor in maintaining stability in the country. It is noteworthy that in January 2023, information appeared that Kazakhstan was resuming the educational program for Afghan students<sup>17</sup>. At the same time, Astana is ready to contribute to the opening of a transport corridor from Central to South Asia, as announced by the leadership of the republic.

Kazakhstan supports the international policy on Afghanistan on the issue of inclusive government and women's rights and other topical issues, and at the same time takes into account that these issues need to be addressed from a pragmatic point of view, as, for example, China.

<sup>15</sup> Kazakh delegation and «Taliban»\* discussed humanitarian aid to Afghanistan in Kabul /18.10.2021/. Available from: <https://rus.azattyq.org/a/31515939.html>

<sup>16</sup> Urankaeva Zh. In Kazakhstan, the «Taliban»\* were allowed to occupy the Embassy of Afghanistan /17.04.2023/. Available from: <https://kz.kursiv.media/>

<sup>17</sup> Kazakhstan is going to resume educational program for Afghan students /23.01.2023/. Available from: <https://24.kz/ru/news/social/item/583549-kazakhstan-vozobnovit-obrazovatelnyuyu-programmu-dlya-afganskikh-studentov>

## References

1. Akimbekov S. Afghan knot and security problems in Central Asia. Almaty, 2003 [In Russian].
2. Akimbekov S. Afghanistan and the Taliban\*: from modernism to archaism, from resistance to recognition? // Kazakhstan Journal of Foreign Studies / Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies. 2022; 1-2(3-4):6-21 [In Russian].
3. Akimbekov S. History of Afghanistan. Astana-Almaty: IMEP at the fund of the first president, 2015 [In Russian].
4. Mayer S. Between strategic and material interests: Kazakhstan as a source of stability in Afghanistan // Kazakhstan Journal of Foreign Studies / Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies. 2022;1-2 (3-4):22-37 [In Russian].
5. Malysheva D. Post-Soviet Central Asia and its Asian neighbors //Russia and the new states of Eurasia. 2016; 4:19-30 [In Russian].
6. Mukimdzhanova R. Central Asian countries: the Asian vector of foreign policy. Moscow: Nauchnaya kniga, 2005 [In Russian].
7. Collins K. The limits of cooperation: Central Asia, Afghanistan, and the new Silk Road // Asia Policy. 2014; 17:18-26.
8. McCauley M. Afghanistan and Central Asia: a modern history. London, 2002.
9. Saikal A., Nourzhanov K. The spectrum of Afghanistan: security in Central Asia. London: I. B. Tauris, 2021.

## About the author

Nuriddin SULTANMURATOV. PhD, Leading expert of the Institute of Asian Studies. Almaty, Kazakhstan, <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3711-4303>, Address: 19 of. 119, Kunaeva st., Almaty, Republic of Kazakhstan, [Nuriddin.sultanmuratov@gmail.com](mailto:Nuriddin.sultanmuratov@gmail.com)

## Contribution of the author

The author declares no conflicts of interests.

## Article info

Received: March 2, 2023. Approved after peer review: May 1, 2023. Accepted for publication: May 15, 2023. Published: June 25, 2023.

The author has read and approved the final manuscript.

## Peer review info

«Russia & World: Scientific Dialogue» thanks the anonymous reviewer(s) for their contribution to the peer review of this work.

\* The organization has been recognized a terrorist organization by the Russian Supreme Court. Unified federal list of organizations, including foreign and international organizations, recognized as terrorist in accordance with the legislation of the Russian Federation (as of June 25, 2023). Available from: <http://www.fsb.ru/fsb/npd/terror.htm>. (accessed: 25.06.2023);18+