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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The territories of modern Kazakhstan have historically hosted many civilizations and is still located at major transportation routes. Kazakhstan has long been a home to many nations with its significant cultural backgrounds. Today, it is the tenth largest country in the world with 2,72 square kilometer and its population is more than 18 million.

With the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) on December 25th, 1991, fifteen nation-states have been established and become independent overnight. Since the independence, Kazakhstan has been struggling to achieve two main agendas: to build a common national identity and to strengthen the country's place in the global area. While its constitution and political system continued to evolve until 1995, Kazakhstani government has improved its capacity to establish and maintain political and economic relations with a variety of other countries.

While Kazakhstan was experiencing difficulties in the early years of independence, Nazarbayev, the first President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, has been trying to maintain economic and political stabilization along with pursuing a “multi-vector” foreign policy to avoid excessive dependence to any foreign partner, especially to Russia. The main instrument for achieving the multi-vector policy is to maintain good relations with various countries and active membership in various international organizations. Cooperation between close or distant countries and organizations has been greatly affecting the country's policy decisions in terms of economy, security and politics. For this purpose, Kazakhstan has been pursuing a political agenda with various directions containing considerable powers of the world, which ensures that the

stable development of the country by preserving its sovereignty and reaching more distant markets in the global economy. As a sub-branch of integration, the concept of regionalism has also been an essential part of Kazakhstan's foreign policy approach after independence. To this end, Kazakhstan became a member of or initiated various international and regional organizations. The main aim of this research is to analyze and understand the logic behind participating in regional integration organizations through possible benefits that help Kazakhstan to pursue a stable economic and political agenda in its foreign relations as an independent country.

In this thesis, I focus on the effectiveness of Kazakhstan's regional integration efforts in terms of its foreign policy strategies. When I reviewed the existing literature, I realized that there are limited number of studies regarding regionalism and regional integration in Eurasia. The studies and debates in the literature are mostly related to the European Union and its development. However, there is limited literature regarding regional integration efforts in the post-Soviet era. Hence, this study aims to contribute to the literature by discussing the relation between Kazakhstan's foreign policy and its policy decisions towards regionalism and analyzing the impact of its regional integration efforts.

In the process of writing the thesis, I have mainly used the documentary research method. Documentary research generally consists of the use of published literature and academic resources, such as books, articles, periodicals, reports and newspaper articles. Besides that, official websites of the organizations, speeches made by official figures and other Internet sources were used.

This thesis contains five chapters. In the first chapter, I introduced the study, its methodology and the organization of the thesis. In the second chapter, I will discuss regional integration in terms of its historical development and main types and reasons of regionalism in terms of political regionalism and economic regionalism. In the third chapter, I will analyze Kazakhstan's foreign and economic policies in the period before and after independence. In the fourth chapter, I will examine international organizations that Kazakhstan has been a member since the organizations' foundations. I will examine the following organizations with a particular discussion of

Kazakhstan's place within them: the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). The last chapter is the conclusion.

CHAPTER 2

REGIONAL INTEGRATION

While the number of regional integration agreements and studies regarding regionalism have been increased in the recent past, the notion of regional integration in the areas of trade, money, and politics has a much longer history. In this chapter, I will analyze the history of the regional integration under four sub-titles: Earlier Integrations, the First Wave, the Second Wave and the Third Wave. In addition, I will also discuss the main types of regionalism: political regionalism and economic regionalism.

2.1. REGIONALISM IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

2.1.1. Earlier Integrations

According to Schiff and Winters (2002), in 1664, a customs union was suggested between the provinces of France. Also, during the 18th and 19th centuries, Austria and its five neighbors had signed free trade agreements. On the other hand, Mattli (1999) claims that regional integration agreements first emerged in the 19th century. For instance, in 1828, a customs union was signed between Prussia and Hesse-Darmstadt in Europe. After that, Bavaria Württemberg Customs Union and the Middle German Commercial Union were established. In 1834, with the participation of all German states to Prussia and Hesse-Darmstadt Customs Union, German Zollverein had been founded. German Zollverein was the main economic foundation for the political unification of Germany. Between the years 1834 and 1854, the North German Tax Union, the German Monetary Union and the German Reich had been established. With the spread of integration, in 1848, Swiss political and economic union and then Italian political and economic union were built. Latin Monetary Union in 1865 and

Scandinavian Monetary Union in 1875 with the participation of Sweden, Denmark and Norway had followed (Mattli, 1999).

2.1.2. The First Wave: 1945- 1965

With the end of the Second World War and the new international institutions, such as United Nations and the Bretton Woods/ General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) system in the world, regionalism started to strengthen. According to Fawcett (2008), there were three main types of regional institution for the first wave of regionalism:

- *Multipurpose Institutions:* The League of Arab States (LAS), the Organization of American States (OAS), successor to the Inter-American system and the Organization of African Unity (OAU).
- *Security Alliances:* the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Warsaw Pact, the Rio Pact, the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) and the Australia, New Zealand, United States Security Treaty (ANZUS).
- *Economic Institutions:* the early European institutions (pp. 5-6).

As Fawcett (2008) mentions, integrations of the first wave of regionalism mostly involved economic cooperation. In the 1960s, the first wave of regional institutions outside Europe had mostly failed.

2.1.3. The Second Wave: 1965-1985

In this period of history in the world, the Cold War was continuing with its third decade. According to Fawcett (2008), the second wave of regional integration had been mostly among developing countries and due to security reasons unlike the first wave of regionalism. The author argues that the developing countries had acted against the domination of great powers.

For the second wave of regional integration, there are some institutions that Fawcett (2008) emphasizes:

The Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the South African Development Community (SADC), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) and Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) (p. 7).

2.1.4. The Third Wave: 1985- Present

With the end of Cold War, the world politics and economy have started a new era, called the post-Cold War period. Fawcett (2008) believes that after the Cold War, local security problems gained importance. Non-European institutions began to improve quickly. The economic focus of the European Union and other cooperation efforts started to shift to a political and security perspective with the end of the Cold War in the world.

As Fawcett (2008) indicates, only a few regions have not joined the third wave of regionalism. Participating regions constitute a variety of forms and cooperation areas. Some of the organizations are new institutions and renamed/reformed institutions in the post-Cold War period. As new regional institutions, the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC) in the Asia-Pacific region; the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR) in the Americas; and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in the Eurasia region were established. Moreover, with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), China became a part of regional security integration for the first time. On the other hand, already existing institutions realized some reforms, adopted additional protocols, treaties and conventions and made slight changes in these names to reflect these reforms.

Along with an increase in the number of regional integration agreements, the organization and structure of these institutions changed and improved over the years. The earliest integration efforts reflect some of the important starting points of agreements in the history of regionalism. Then, with the first wave in the period of the post-Second World War (1945-1965), we observe main types of regionalism, as multipurpose institutions, security alliances and economic institutions. With the second wave of regionalism in the years of 1965-1985, mostly the security issues of

developing countries appeared. Finally, the third wave covers the years after 1985, the end of Cold War. There is an obvious increase in the number of the regional institutions and participating areas. Considering all the information gathered, it would not be wrong to conclude that various alterations in the global system trigger the demand for regional integration among states.

2.2. WHY DO STATES INTEGRATE?: REGIONALISM IN GLOBAL POLITICS

In order to have a complete understanding of regionalism, we should explain the main types of regionalism and motives behind them. According to Kubicek (2009), regionalism and other types of international cooperation emerge because of common problems of states and organizations. Regional integration agreements among states are usually conducted due to political and economic reasons. Hence, in this part, I will examine the two main types of regionalism: political regionalism and economic regionalism.

2.2.1. Political Regionalism

While analyzing the main types of regionalism, the first aspect I will discuss is the political regionalism. It is important to mention the political aspect of regional integration process because policies that governments pursue are one of the main topics affecting a region and the countries within. According to Schiff and Winters (2002), there are many factors that can be discussed. Among political benefits, the authors mention:

- Governments' wish to bind themselves to better policies - including democracy- and to signal such bindings to domestic and foreign investors;
- Governments' desire to maintain sovereignty by pooling it with others in areas of economic management where most nation-states are too small to act alone;
- A desire to help neighboring countries stabilize and prosper, both for altruistic reasons and to avoid spill overs of unrest and population;

- The fear of being left out while the rest of the world swept into regionalism. (Schiff & Winters, 2002, pp. 6-9)

Schiff and Winters (2002) explain that even though there are some political benefits of regional integration, it still might be speculative whether the states genuinely have those desires in our real competitive globalization process.

Moreover, since the states and organizations have not been able to create a globally-accepted system which will be effective for solving the conflicts, the quest for international security still continue. According to Stadtmüller (2005), “a region could be an intermediate stage between the interest at the state and global level” (p. 109). Also, with regional integration agreements, interactions and interdependency between countries are expected to increase. Thus, according to Kritzinger-van Niekerk (2005), a senior economist at the World Bank, regional integration agreements are to “build trust, raise the opportunity cost of war, and hence reduce the risk of conflicts between countries” (p. 3) in terms of security.

Gleason and Shaihtudinov (2005) claim that there are two forms of international security cooperation. The first one is to improve the international security among member states by establishing some regulations, which is called a classical collective security organization. According to Buzan (2003), this structure can also be called a regional security complex, which is “a group of states whose primary security concerns link together sufficiently closely that their national security cannot realistically be considered apart from one another” (p. 44). The second form is a defensive security organization that can be established to protect a number of states against the threats emerging from the third countries or group of countries. Moreover, According to Hettne (2008), regional consequences of local conflicts are another link between security and regionalism, implying that conflict management role of the regional security bloc is essential to have stabilization in the region.

According to Akin (2009), Barry Buzan’s aforementioned theory of Regional Security Complex focuses on post-Cold War period. Buzan’s theory mainly challenges the state-centered and military-based security understanding which is the traditional security approach. The author suggests that in the post-Cold War period, there are

various nontraditional challenges to shape the regional security, such as “international terrorism, ethnic strife, environmental degradation, food and energy scarcities, drug trafficking, population growth, uncontrolled migration, and organized crime” (Akin, 2009, p. 28).

Considering the authors’ point of view, regional integration agreements have an important place for security and political issues of the countries in the world. According to Brou and Ruta (2007), even though the previous literature suggests that “political integration as an alternate way of increasing the size of the economic market”, the authors indicate, “economic and political integration can function as complementary institutions” (p. 23). In the following part, I will discuss the economic regionalism as the second type.

2.2.2. Economic Regionalism

I will explain and analyze the economic regionalism in this part of the chapter. Of course, for all economies, mostly the main aim is to increase the average welfare of the state. Bearing this aim in mind, it would be right to conclude that economic integration among countries might have effects to improve those countries’ welfare directly and indirectly. According to Jovanovic (2006), in today’s global economic world, interdependence of national economies is becoming a matter of international concern.


There are some benefits that regional economic integration provides to the states. These are:

- Secure access to the market of partner countries;
- Increased investment opportunities;
- An elimination of trade barriers reduces the cost of trade;
- Competition forces firms to apply new ideas and technologies;
- Increased competition on internal market puts down a pressure on prices;
- Facilitation of exchange of technical information;

- Improved efficiency in the use of resources;
- Potential for coordination of certain economic policies in order to increase their effectiveness;
- Improved and strengthened bargaining position with external partners (Jovanovic, 2006, pp. 192-193).

According to Hancock (2009), it is possible to categorize economic integration in terms of trade and money as it seems in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Depth of the Integration

Depth of Integration 	Political Union	
	Economic Union	
	Common Market	Moneraty Union
	Customs Union	
	Free Trade Area	Currency Board
	Preferential Trade Area	Pegged Currency
	High Trade Levels	High Levels of Foreign Currency
	<i>Trade</i>	<i>Money</i>

Source: Regional Integration: Choosing Plutocracy, Kathleen J. Hancock (2009).

In Table 1, depth is arranged from superficial to deep integration. With an agreement among countries, elimination of all kind of tariffs and quantitative restrictions construct a free trade area between those states. For the countries outside the free trade area, the original tariff rate and regulations are preserved as it is by the participating countries. A customs union is an agreement among countries which provides elimination of all tariffs, quantitative restrictions on internal trade and, also a common external tariff for the third countries in international trade. The countries establishing a customs union participate international negotiations regarding trade and tariffs as a single entity. According to Jovanovic (2006), customs union might be beneficial as opposed to countries implementing their own tariff rate. A common market is a customs union plus free movement of factors of production, such as labor, capital or sometimes technology. There are still regulations regarding the mobility of factors of

production for the third countries. With the economic union, participating countries have common market plus the unity of fiscal, monetary, industrial, regional and the other economic policies. For instance, one of the most obvious applications of an economic union is to create a single currency area among member-states. Finally, a political union is the deepest type of integration in the Table 1. It can be roughly defined as economic union plus applying common policies among member-states (Jovanovic, 1992).

In this chapter, I first examined different stages in the development of regionalism from a historical perspective: Earlier Integrations, the First Wave (1945-1965), the Second Wave (1965-1985) and the Third Wave (1985 to present). In the same chapter, I have also analyzed the main types of regionalism, which are political regionalism and economic regionalism. Economic and security related factors are highlighted as the key ones explaining states' motivation to integrate. Such efforts may also be followed by political integration at later stages. Based on this historical and conceptual framework, I will discuss various motives for Kazakhstan to be involved in regional integration efforts in the next chapters.

CHAPTER 3

KAZAKHSTAN'S FOREIGN POLICY FROM A REGIONAL INTEGRATION PERSPECTIVE

In the third chapter of this study, I will examine Kazakhstan's foreign policy in the post-independence period through a regional integration perspective. In order to better interpret Kazakhstan's foreign policy and country's desire for participation in international organizations in this period, I will first provide a historical analysis of political developments in Kazakhstan in the pre-Soviet, Soviet and Soviet periods. Then, I will discuss the Kazakhstan's foreign policy after independence.

3.1. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1.1. Kazakhstan in the pre-Soviet Period

According to Olcott (1995), there is no agreement on or record about how the Kazakhstani people were formed in the history. However, the agreement on their emergence is that Kazakh nation had started to form in the mid-15th century.

After the second half of the 15th century in Kazakhstan region, a consolidation process was started among nomadic people living in the region. Shortly thereafter, a united Kazakh nation had started to appear in the early 16th century. The Kazaks, known to have lived in the geography of Kazakhstan since the years before Christ, established their first political unit by establishing the Kazakh Khanate, which was territorially integrated with a legal system, stating the rule of nomadic life among population and the relationship between them (Bastas, 2013).

Tsarist Russia's interest in Kazakhstan began to increase as of the second half of the 15th century. Russian Tsar Ivan IV. captured some of the Kazan Khanates and built

fortresses in the Kazakh border regions. A socio-economic structure was established in a short time around these castles and the Kazakh traditions were distorted. In such an environment, it is seen that Kazakh Khan used China as a balancing actor against Russia. However, after 1820s, the Russian policies became harsher against the Kazakh Khanates. The relative success of the Kazakh Khan's equilibrium policy became inadequate for long-term Kazakh interests and the necessity of a new foreign policy design emerged. This requirement was made clear by the fact that Russia entered into a phase of massive exploitation of the Kazakh territory and enacted laws supporting its assimilation. When reactions against the Tsarist regime increased among the Kazakh people, Abdüllay Khan's grandson Kenasary organized a rebellion against Tsarist Russia and proclaimed his Khanate. Kenasary Khan, the last Kazakh Khan, delayed the Russian invasion for a while, but finally was killed in a battle. After that, the Russian invasion of the Kazakh territories continued in a faster pace. Kazakhs could not show much success against the invasion movements, they became weaker and weaker in time and remained in a life-and-death cycle (Çağlar, 2018).

As of the first half of the 19th century, more and more Kazakh people transformed from the nomadic culture into a settled way of life and started to cultivate the land. Kazakh nomads, stuck between China and Russia, were exploited both economically and politically. The colonialist understanding of the Russian rule led to the resistance of the Kazakhs in the area, and therefore it took 130 years for the Russians to completely dominate the territory of Kazakhstan (Başaran, 2017). The fertile lands of Kazakhstan had been expropriated by the Russians and were offered to Russian peasants. Gradually, Kazakhstan's economy increasingly integrated into Russia's economic plan. Various industries, transportation means, and trade have been developed in the territory of Kazakhstan. Consequently, working class and intelligentsia have started to emerge in the country (Bastas, 2013). Even under Tsarist Russia, Kazakhs maintained their identity and revolted from time to time despite Tsar's activities of Russification and being exiled (Başaran, 2017). Although they revolted against the Tsar, Olcott (1995) suggests the Kazakh people have proven to be adaptive. They had participated more in Tsarist Russification and integrated better to the Sovietization policy than any other Central Asian country (Olcott, 1995).

The Bolshevik Revolution, which resulted in the deposition of Nicholas II in 1917, led the Kazakhs to embrace the hope that they could establish an independent state. To this end, intellectuals such as Alihan Bökeyhanov, Ahmet Baytursunov and Mir Yakub formed the Alash Party and the Alash Orda Government. This team, aiming to form a national state, fought against the Bolsheviks until they realized that the Bolsheviks would not allow the Kazakhs to establish a state. However, the government of Alash Orda, founded on December 13th, 1917, could not withstand the pressure and collapsed in late 1920 (Başaran, 2017).

3.1.2. Kazakhstan under the Soviet Rule

The beginning of the 20th century was a period of great disasters for the Kazakh nation. With the World War I, the revolutions of 1917 and the Civil War that followed, Kazakhstan's economy and production capacity extremely weakened. Consequently, Kazakh people faced a famine and could not recover till the end of the 1920s (Bastas, 2013).

In the beginning of 1900s, many people lost their lives due to hunger and accompanying diseases. People in the regions massively affected by the famine and hunger migrated to other countries where they could find food for survival. As a result, there was a significant reduction in the population of the country. The population of the country, which was 4,811,662 in 1914, fell to 3,795,963 in 1922 (Hekimoğlu, 2018, p. 218).

However, new policies implemented in the field of economy and aid from Russia seemed to be a solution for the hunger and poverty in Kazakhstan. Considering the devastated economy, the USSR government started to implement some actions for the economic development in Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan became a Union Republic of the USSR in 1936. During the Soviet era, economic structure of the Union was based on a planned economic model. Kazakhstan's agriculture, metal industry and railroads had been developed exceptionally well by the 1930s thanks to the USSR's economic plans (Bastas, 2013).

Unfortunately, the policies implemented by the communist administration were not compatible with the traditional lifestyle of the Kazakhs. This situation led to new troubles and disasters. While the Communist Party claimed to overcome the inequality between the rich and the poor by the nationalization of the wealth of the rich, the Sovietization of the villages, resettlement of the Kazakhs and the establishment of collective farms, turned out to be the cause of a new disaster in the 1930s. Collectivization integrated small enterprises, which were previously owned privately, in order to make them joint enterprises of society, that is, to establish cooperatives from these small enterprises. In other words, it is a form of socialist re-establishment of village enterprises in the period from capitalism to socialism (Hekimoğlu, 2018).

Between 1930 and 1933, the famine had cost the lives of 1.5 million people in Kazakhstan, of which 1.3 million were Kazakhs (Hekimoğlu, 2018, p. 224). Thus, more than a quarter of the population was lost, and the demographic structure of the region was changed. Before the famine, the Kazakhs constituted the majority of the total population and many of them were nomadic, whose way of life was a central feature of their identity. After the disaster, the Kazakh people lost their demographic superiority in their homeland. According to Bastas (2013), it is a unique case considering the natives being minority in their own country (Figure 1).

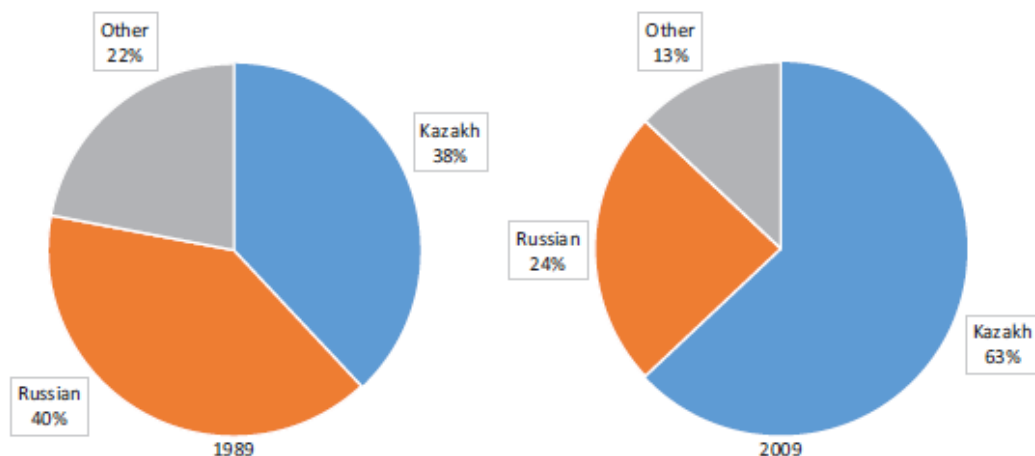


Figure 1. Kazakhstan's Ethnic Demography, 1989-2000

Source: Central Asia in a Reconnecting Eurasia: Kazakhstan's Evolving Foreign Economic and Security Interests. Kuchins, Mankoff, Kourmanova & Backes (2015).

Moreover, Stalin's policies of collectivization not only forced the Kazakh nation to settle in towns or collective farms and give up their historical traditions, but also constituted the main cause of the 1930-1933 famine in the republic. According to Cameron (2016), Kazakh famine has distinctive features compared to other Soviet collectivization induced famines. Because of the nomadic nature of Kazakh people, the victims were mostly nomads instead of peasants. This brought much greater migration because of the knowledge of the nomadic people regarding seasonal migration routes. Thus, the effect of the famine became catastrophic. It is known that approximately 40% of the Kazakh people perished during the years of collectivization. When the people who migrate to other countries, especially China are calculated, this ratio increases even more. In Kazakhstan, the Kazakh population began to rise again in 1972, 40 years after the disaster (Nurtazina, 2012).

When it came to the years between 1970-1980, the USSR experienced general economic, political and social problems, and Kazakhstan was inevitably affected by this crisis. The Kazakhs, who objected to the Russians' continued migration to the territory of Kazakhstan in 1978, held a demonstration in Almaty considering that their educational opportunities were limited because of these migrations and demanded an increase in the quota for Kazakhs in Kazakhstan's universities. The culmination of the nationalist reactions that the Kazakhs developed against the Sovietization policies in order to determine their own future was the uprising in Almaty in 1986 with the slogan "*Kazakhstan belongs to the Kazakhs*" and "*Kazakhstan should be represented in the United Nations*" (Başaran, 2017). A rigidly planned economic system hampered Kazakhstan's economic growth and social development. Even though Kazakh people supported *perestroika*, the reformist policy of the USSR, for a very short period of time, they started to lose faith in the USSR because of the brutal interventions to the protesters (Bastas, 2013).

Consequently, the emergence of independent Kazakhstan, according to Başaran (2017), is related to the Kazakhs' tradition of independent living based on the Kazakh Khanate and the result of the fact that they managed to protect their identities against the assimilation policies implemented during the USSR period. The main reason for

the development of nationalism among the Kazakhs was that the Soviet Union's attempt to create a socialist culture consisted of a formalist rhetoric, because the Kazakhs learned that the system of specialization in the USSR was a system that exploited and impoverished them.

3.2. THE POST-SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY OF KAZAKHSTAN

Kazakhstan declared its independence on December 16th, 1991. In terms of its economy, in the initial years of independence there was economic instability and a decline in GDP leading country to an economic crisis (Bastas, 2013). With these difficulties of the early years of independence, President Nazarbayev was not only trying to establish close ties with Russia in order to provide stabilization economically and politically, but also pursuing a multi-vector policy to avoid excessive dependence on any foreign partner (Kuchins, Mankoff, Kourmanova & Backes, 2015). According to Kuchins et al. (2015), main feature of Kazakhstan's foreign policy is pragmatism along with ensuring sovereignty and economic diversification. In order to achieve that, Nazarbayev successfully pursued the multi-vector foreign policy, maintained good relations with especially major investors of Central Asia and avoided overreliance on a foreign partner. With the multi-vector policy, Kazakhstan also aims to ensure the stable development of the republic by preserving the country's sovereignty and reaching more distant markets in the global economy (Kuchins et al., 2015). There are three major rationales, according to Hanks (as cited in Ayazbekov, 2014), in order to develop multi-vector policy in Kazakhstan. Firstly, while maintaining a functional relationship with Russia, republic's policy requires to balance the dominance of Russia in the region as far as history and geography permit. Secondly, being a means of consolidating the nation is another aim of country's foreign policy by promoting a multi-ethnic identity. Thirdly, Kazakhstan needed a diversification regarding its external economic relations. Thanks to the valuable policies Nazarbayev maintained, according to Gleason and Jiadong (2008), Kazakhstan has developed faster and more extensively than its neighbors.

As it is emphasized in "Foreign Policy Concept for 2014 – 2020 Republic of Kazakhstan" (n.d.), the goals of Kazakhstan's foreign policy are as follows:

- 1) Measures that will ensure national security, defense capacity, sovereignty and territorial unity of the country;
 - 2) Strengthening peace through regional and global security;
 - 3) Sustainable international position and positive global image of Kazakhstan;
 - 4) Establishment of fair and democratic world order under the guiding and coordinating role of the United Nations Organization (UN);
 - 5) Further integration into the system of regional and international trade and economic relations;
 - 6) Creation of favorable external conditions for the successful implementation of the Strategy 2050; providing high living standards for the population; strengthening unity of the multi-national society; reinforcing rule of law and democratic institutions; protection of human rights and freedoms;
 - 7) Diversification, industrial-technological development and increased competitiveness of the national economy;
 - 8) Focusing the country onto the green development path and bringing it to the list of the 30 top-developed nations of the world;
 - 9) Saving the national-cultural uniqueness and establishing their own way of development;
 - 10) Protection of the rights of personal, family and business interests of citizens and legal entities of the Republic of Kazakhstan;
 - 11) Support for Kazakh diaspora and Kazakh language overseas.
- (p.1)

According to Gleason (2017), considering the concept of “Eurasian integration”, Kazakhstan has been trying to balance the country’s foreign policy internally and globally. Balancing the country’s interests means that, as a post-Soviet republic, not turning away from Russia, but at the same time blocking the Russian attempts to dominate Kazakhstan’s decision-making process, which obviously requires a careful, balanced policy.

For that purpose, Kazakhstan became a member of or initiated a number of international and regional organizations, such as the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA), the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), that play an important role for the multi-vector policy of Kazakhstan because of the multilateral diplomacy among various countries (Kuchins et al., 2015). Moreover, Kazakhstan has participated in more than 1,300 international and

intergovernmental agreements or contracts all over the world (“The History of Kazakhstan”, n.d.).

The main instrument for achieving the multi-vector policy of Kazakhstan is to maintain good relations with the countries and international organizations. However, according to Gleason (2017), it is also important to mention the fact that by its nature, multi-vector policy is expected to bring multiple commitments, and this carry the risk of becoming entanglements.

In 2018, Yerzhan Kazykhanov, the Ambassador of Kazakhstan to the United States of America, indicated in his interview with “Foreign Affairs Live” that Kazakhstan is actually a “textbook example” of living in peace and stability thanks to its multi-vector policy. The Ambassador also mentioned that the first President of Kazakhstan, Nazarbayev, is a “firm believer in confidence-building measures, dialogue and partnership” (“Foreign Affairs Live”, 2018). Hence, instead of using its resources of nuclear power to pose to the world, Nazarbayev has chosen to implement a comprehensive long-term policy, and made Kazakhstan a reliable global partner.

The foreign policy of Kazakhstan mainly evolved around four directions: the relations with the post-Soviet countries, Asian countries, European countries and the United States of America. Among them, Russia and China are especially important regional powers not only for Kazakhstan but also for Eurasia in a broader sense.

The first direction to mention is the relationship between Kazakhstan and other post-Soviet countries, but especially Russia. After the independence of the former USSR republics, some of them came together and established the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), which aimed to solve the economic and political problems regarding the region on the mutually beneficial terms among participated countries. In that aspect, Kazakhstan has maintained its diplomacy with the Eurasian countries. According to Shibusov, Solozobov and Malyarchuk (2019), there are various aspects that contribute to the Kazakh-Russian relations. These aspects can be listed as old Soviet economic links, geographical, ethnocultural and linguistic ties, military alliance, joint ventures and mutual investments. On the other hand, there also other issues that bar the Kazakhstan-Russia relations, such as low efficiency of

implementation of the adopted agreements, corruption and lobbying of financial and industrial groups, competition in the market of raw materials and semi-finished products. It should be noted that Kazakhstan has always placed Russia at the forefront of foreign economic relations since its independence. This is, according to Çağlar (2018), due to its dependence on Russia to transport its oil to world markets. Weitz (2008) states that Kazakhstan needs Russia to access energy pipelines to reach Europe market while Russia needs Kazakhstan to be able to import Central Asian gas to meet its domestic and export demand. Weitz (2008) also emphasizes that Russian relationship is unique for Kazakhstan because of two factors. The first one is that Kazakhstan has the largest Russian population compared to other post-Soviet republics. The second factor is the longest border Kazakhstan and Russia share among the Central Asian countries. Also, Russia is an important geostrategic ally for Kazakhstan against possible Chinese threats. Likewise, Kazakhstan and Central Asia is essential for Russia to maintain its power. In the early years of independence, Kazakhstan had close ties with Russia in contrast to other former SSRs, and Russia officially recognized Kazakhstan on December 17th, 1991 (Guler, 2007). Gleason and Jiadong (2008) suggest that Nazarbayev's diplomatic aim was related to the concept of "Eurasianness" in the early years of his presidential tenure. Nazarbayev has used the term first time in 1994 during an address at the Lomonosov Moscow State University. The concept of Eurasianness indicates close ties between the peoples of the Central Eurasian region. Alima (n.d.) states that Nazarbayev's Eurasianism depends on the classical Eurasianism of early 20th century. Nazarbayev's aim is to establish an alternative ideology of integration, foreign policy and foreign economic course among former Soviet republics. According to Ametbek (2015), Nazarbayev's Eurasianism has a broader sense compared to integration only with Russia. His idea of Eurasianism includes regional organizations, such as the EEU, CICA and SCO. As Ametbek (2015) mentioned, these 'main locomotive' organizations in Eurasia are formed as Nazarbayev's initiations. From the Kazakhstani Eurasian point of view, integration process should provide benefits and use the resources equally for all member-states. Moreover, it should depend on the voluntary participation, communion of interests and mutual respect in countries' interrelations. Pursuing the idea of Eurasian integration, Kazakhstan's foreign policy followed the path based on

balancing its interests, which means keeping Russia at a distance, neither too remote nor too close to not to cause Russia to dominate Kazakhstan ever again. Hence, the main goal was to prevent the reappearance of Russian pressure in the country (Gleason & Jiadong, 2008). According to Goldman (2009), Putin intended to be involved in the Kazakhstan's oil reserves after he was elected in 2000. By 2004, Russia signed various agreements with Kazakhstan each covering different areas such as Russian-Kazakhstan border agreement or military-technical cooperation agreement.

I will also discuss Kazakhstan's relations with the Central Asian and other post-Soviet states with regard to the first direction of Kazakhstan's multi-vector foreign policy. Firstly, I examine the relation between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. They established several joint ventures together in Kyrgyzstan in banking, energy and construction sectors. In recent years, more Kyrgyz labor immigrated to Kazakhstan than to Russia to find jobs. Since Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan have established deep economic ties, Kyrgyz leaders would like to use that tie for regional oil and gas projects and increase regional integration (Weitz, 2008). According to Weed (2017), although Kyrgyz-Kazakh relation could be strained occasionally, Kyrgyzstan is determined to pursue good relations with Kazakhstan to protect Kyrgyz migrants in Kazakhstan and secure its economies ties.

Secondly, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, having the largest amount of land in Central Asia, are the most influential countries in the region. For this matter, good relations and deep economic ties between these countries are essential for regional integration of Central Asia. However, according to Weitz (2008), the former Uzbek President Islam Karimov pursued confrontational policies and relations between two countries had been strained. For regional leadership, the countries and their leaders became competitors. While Uzbekistan has the largest population (some 27 million compared to Kazakhstan's 15.4 million), Kazakhstan has the richest natural resources and most powerful economy politics (Weitz, 2008). Also, there was an ongoing border conflict between the two. Some of the Uzbek nationalists claimed the lands in southern Kazakhstan since the lands once belonged to medieval Uzbek Khanates. So, Kazakhstan started to demarcate the Kazakh-Uzbek border in order not to allow trespassing its land and finalized the marking in 2002. On the other hand, Uzbekistan

and Kazakhstan have some common interests, in economy, national security, and regional water management. Kazakh and Uzbek leaders signed cooperative agreements in 2006 on these issues.

Thirdly, the relations between Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan should be mentioned. After the dissolution of Soviet Union, the first President of Turkmenistan, Niyazov, pursued an isolationist policy with limited contact in interstate relations. Thus, Turkmenistan did not join any of the international institutions, such as the CSTO, the CIS or the SCO. After Berdymukhamedov had become the President, the foreign policy of Turkmenistan started to change. In 2007, Berdymukhamedov and Nazarbayev came together to discuss the issue of transportation links between the two countries. In October 2007, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Russia agreed in principle to establish a pipeline for carrying Turkmenistan's natural gas through Kazakhstan to the Caspian Sea. Regarding the issue, Nazarbayev made clear that his will is to make Kazakhstan the leading country of Eurasian commerce, and stated that

Kazakhstan is already building a modern structure in the Caspian zone that will become the central element in the establishment of an international Caspian energy and transport corridor from north to south, which follows up the agreement reached by Russia, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan to build a gas pipeline” (Weitz, 2008, p. 163).

Finally, the relation between Kazakhstan and Tajikistan needs to be looked at. The governments of Kazakhstan and Tajikistan signed an agreement regarding the fundamental principles of the relationship of the countries in 1993. However, that bilateral relation between Kazakhstan and Tajikistan have developed in recent years. The trade volume between countries increased nearly 200% from 2005 to 2006 and Kazakhstan became the third-largest trade partner of Tajikistan among the CIS countries. In 2007, in his visit in Tajikistan, President Nazarbayev offered to establish a bilateral investment fund that will benefit to the Tajik economy. In a gesture of appreciation, Tajik President stated that Tajiks “regard Kazakhstan as a model” (Weitz, 2008).

Besides Central Asian countries, I analyzed some of the other former Soviet republics, especially, the South Caucasus countries. Kazakhstan has the closest ties with

Azerbaijan among the South Caucasus countries. the two states have mostly cooperated in energy sector, and they are both willing to increase economic cooperation between their countries. They both collaborated to increase the security in the Caspian Sea. Also, during a CIS summit in 2001, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Russia have come to an agreement on the partition of the Caspian Sea. Georgia, on the other hand, is a key transit country for Kazakhstan to trade its goods with the Western markets throughout the Black Sea using railway, surface transportation and pipelines. “Despite its close political ties with Russia, Astana has not followed Moscow’s negative line toward Tbilisi. Kazakh officials have always opposed separatism” (Weitz, 2008, p. 181). This is an essential example to emphasize Kazakhstan’s multi-vector foreign policy application for its relations with countries. According to Weitz (2008), Armenia and Kazakhstan could not develop close ties over the years since the dissolution of Soviet Union. Both countries are members of the CIS and CSTO, meaning that their government officials are regularly meeting at the related summits. In terms of economic relation, Armenian-Kazakh trade and investment remained mostly limited and hence, could not promote the ties between the countries to develop relationship. Even so, the governments of two countries have signed a Free Trade Agreement in 1999 and started to improve relations.

I also examined the relationships of Kazakhstan between Ukraine and Belarus. For the case of Belarus and Kazakhstan relations, the diplomatic relations between them were established in 1992. Both countries are full members of the CSTO, CIS and EEU. Especially, Kazakhstan, Belarus and Russia have spent great effort to establish the former Customs Union and Eurasian Economic Union. Moreover, their bilateral cooperation in terms of legal and contractual issues consist of more than 60 international treaties. Also, the government leaders of the two countries exchange visits regularly. For Kazakh-Ukraine relations, it can be mentioned that although they are both members of the CIS, the two countries have chosen different paths in a global area after the dissolution of the USSR. Ukraine is closer to European integration while Kazakhstan established the Eurasian Economic Union. Nevertheless, the economic cooperation between two countries continues to decrease (Gussarova, 2017).

The second direction of Kazakhstan's foreign policy includes Asian countries. The most important country to mention in this respect is China, which has a special interest in Kazakhstan in various areas but more importantly in oil extraction and marketing. Aydın (2000) says that China makes considerable amount of investment in oil-rich countries in the region, especially in Kazakhstan. Also, Central Asian local demand for cheap Chinese consumer products increases. Hence, it is obvious that trade between these countries is flourishing. Moreover, Kazakhstan has good relations with China based on other interests. Kazakhstan intends to utilize relations with China in order to strengthen its hand against Russia and the United States (Goldman, 2009). However, there is a complicated issue regarding Xianjiang Uighur Autonomous Region of China. Xianjiang province is a strategically important and oil-rich region ruled by China and shares a border with Kazakhstan. China is concerned with the possibility that Uighur minority would like to gain independence like their Central Asian brethren in the region and will organize a rebellion. There are Uighur separatists in the region contemplating that as Western Turkestan (Central Asia) gained its freedom, Chinese rule should also be over in Eastern Turkestan considering the share of population in the province. Uighur population is higher than Chinese, and China encourages Chinese people to migrate to Xianjiang to change the share of the population. According to Goldman (2009), from Kazakhstan's point of view, China has been using this province as a pretext to observe Kazakh territory. Moreover, in 2012 during the 25th meeting of the Foreign Investors' Council, former Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev suggested the 'Silk Road' project. With this project, Kazakhstan would be the largest business and transit hub in Central Asia. In 2013 during his Kazakhstan visit, Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed the initiative of the restoration of the ancient 'Silk Road' (Makhmutova, 2016). In that speech, President Xi mentioned five issues that the project would strengthen among China, Central Asia and Europe. Those five issues to strengthen are: policy communication, road connections, trade facilitation, monetary cooperation, people-to-people relations (Szczudlik-Tatar, 2013). According to Schubert (2017), in 2015, China released the official document regarding this initiative. Today the project is also known as *One Belt, One Road* or *Belt and Road Project*. As Makhmutova (2016) emphasizes, with the Belt and Road initiative,

Kazakhstan received significant amount of investment from China regarding natural resources mining and exporting.

Besides China, Kazakhstan's relations with Japan and India started to improve, specifically in terms of economy and security (Goldman, 2009). According to Weitz (2008), Kazakh and Japanese governments signed a memorandum for peaceful use of nuclear powers when Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi visited Central Asia in 2006. Weitz (2008) also mention that even though Kazakhstan and India do not share a border geographically, they have extensive historical ties and in 2002, President Nazarbayev visited India aiming to increase economic relations between Kazakhstan and India. He would like to establish Indian technological and pharmaceutical industries in Kazakhstan by joint ventures. After Nazarbayev's visit to India, the economic relation and trade volume between two countries have been increased. Indian-Kazakh trade from 2002 to 2007 increased more than double.

European countries are the third direction of the Kazakhstan's foreign policy. Kazakhstan has pursued successful relations with European countries which are essential economic partners. According to Cohen (2008), after gaining independence, Kazakhstan invited European energy companies with regard to Caspian oil areas. However, the European countries see Kazakhstan only as part of a regional strategy and energy security in Central Asia. In 1995, Kazakhstan and the European Union have signed Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) regarding their bilateral relations, being effective from 1999. the countries increased their dialogue in terms of transportation and energy issues in 2002. Also, there have been \$28 billion exports and \$9.8 billion imports between Kazakhstan and the European Union in 2013 (Cohen, 2008). Kazakhstan became a member of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). According to Kuchins et al. (2015), Kazakhstan is the largest uranium supplier for the power industries in France. Hence, the country has become a major economical partner for the European countries among the Central Asian states.

As the fourth direction, in the United States case, Kazakhstan officials are aware of the importance of the good relations with the U.S. As one of the great economies in the world, investment and partnership of the United States become essential in the

developing countries like Kazakhstan (Kuchins, 2015). Considering its multi-vector foreign policy approach, and Nazarbayev's wide-ranging 'strategic partnership' policy with the USA, Kazakhstan had become the first Central Asian state to join an Individual Partnership Action Plan with NATO under the Partnership for Peace (PFP) (Bailes, Dunay, Guang & Troitskiy, 2007). According to Cohen (2008), in the early 1990s, while Russia was dealing with domestic problems, China was meeting the country's energy needs via domestic resources, and the European Union was pursuing a wait-and-see policy, the United States effectively explored the Caspian resources. However, after 2000, Kazakhstan's relation with the U.S. and the EU has started to rebalance, and in that way multi-vector policy of Kazakhstan become more visible. Goldman (2009) indicates that before the 9/11, the United States was not interested in the region. It is clearly seen that 9/11 was a turning point of the relations between Kazakhstan and the United States. Nazarbayev decided to help the U.S. by opening its air bases for the refueling of American aircrafts and by this way tried to strengthen ties.

As the last topic regarding the post-Soviet foreign policy of Kazakhstan, I will examine Kazakhstan's market economy for that period. It is important to mention because a nation's economic status has a role to direct foreign policy decisions and relations with other countries. After the independence, Nazarbayev introduced economic reform policies aimed at creating domestic and foreign markets, operating rich underground resources within the country, and transitioning to free market economy, eliminating government control over the markets and privatizing state enterprises. In 1993, the privatization program was introduced, and legal arrangements were made for the commercial activities of the private sector (Çağlar, 2018). Also, one of the biggest breakthroughs in this process was the nationalization of the currency, the cornerstone of economic independence. On November 15th, 1993, Kazakhstan introduced the national currency Tenge. According to Roy (2000), currency convertibility is an essential issue in terms of economic transition path towards liberalization and privatization in Kazakhstan. As a result of the reform efforts in the economy, Kazakhstan has achieved a large degree of commercial liberalization and development of trade and banking sector (Çağlar, 2018).

Since 2000s, Kazakhstan has pursued interventionist strategies in economic policies. The main objective of the Kazakh government's economic policy in this period is to develop diversity in the economy by developing non-energy sectors of the economy and to eliminate dependence on oil prices. Tourism, equipment for oil and natural gas, food, textile, transportation and logistics sectors have been identified as priority sectors and projects have been started to be developed and implemented by using new technologies. Gleason and Jiadong (2008) indicate "In March 2002, Kazakhstan was listed by the U.S. government and shortly afterwards by the European Union as the first post-Soviet country to succeed in establishing a market economy" (p. 149). Kazakh goods are mostly sold to the following countries: the Russian Federation, China, Switzerland, B.A.E., Poland, Iran, Ukraine, Germany, Great Britain, the Netherlands, USA and Uzbekistan. Moreover, Kazakhstan has increased its national income per capita from 1500 dollars in the first years of its independence to over 12 thousand dollars in 2015 with its successful economic policy (Çağlar, 2018). Hence, in recent years, based on the data of the World Bank, Kazakhstan is an upper-middle-income country considering economic growth, 6 percent in 2013, a ratio that is higher in comparison with 5 percent in 2012 (The World Bank, n.d.).

Furthermore, it is crucial to mention that Kazakhstan would like to establish a regional economic integration by taking into account similar economic histories of Central Asian countries and Russian as lingua franca among them. However, the plan of economic integration in the region may not succeed due to various reasons. Firstly, these similar economies turned out that they were not complementing each other. Secondly, countries in Central Asia adopted different economic policies. While Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan chose to be open to competition that means liberalizing and privatizing, others adopted more gradual economic path. Thirdly, it might be mentioned that there was lack of political will in terms of economic integration due to the regional leadership rivalry between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. Last but not the least, all Central Asian countries needed Foreign Direct Investment, especially from the United States and the European Union to maintain their economic position. Therefore, there was a competition for FDI among countries, and this kept economic integration at a distance for Central Asia.

In this chapter, I firstly examined the historical background of Kazakhstan regarding the pre-Soviet and Soviet periods. Then, I analyzed Kazakhstan's foreign policy in the post-Soviet era. I discussed the goals and directions of foreign policy of independent Kazakhstan while explaining its multi-vector foreign policy approach and its implications for its economic policy and relations with other countries. Kazakhstan's multi-vector foreign policy approach has provided balanced and stable relations with both other states and regional organizations. In the following chapter, I will examine Kazakhstan's role and efficiency in some of these regional organizations.

CHAPTER 4

REGIONAL INTEGRATION EFFORTS OF KAZAKHSTAN

In this chapter, I will examine five major regional organizations that Kazakhstan is a member state regarding their establishments, aims and Kazakhstan's place within them. Kazakhstan's foreign policy strategy, as we discussed in the third Chapter, includes multi-vector policy and integration efforts and therefore prioritizes being a member to regional and international organizations. I will examine the following organizations in this chapter: The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). The reason I chose to examine is that Kazakhstan plays an active role in these organizations, and even took initiative in the establishment of some of these organizations. In order for us to understand Kazakhstan's regional integrations efforts comprehensively, discussing regional organizations is essential.

4.1. THE COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES (CIS)

The Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) is a post-Soviet intergovernmental organization formed following the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics with the member-states of Russia, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Moldova and Tajikistan. The countries established the CIS in order to have economic and military cooperation among the members in the Eurasian region.

4.1.1. The Establishment of the Commonwealth of Independent States

With the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the newly formed republics started to search for a new establishment. Later leaders of Russia, Belarus and Ukraine (Boris Yeltsin, Leonid Kravchuk and Stanislav Shushkevich respectively) gathered in Belarus on December 8th, 1991. The leaders accepted the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and formed the Commonwealth of Independent States as the successor of the Soviet Union (Libman, 2011).

According to Shoemaker (2013), in the agreement, it is indicated that “all members of the former USSR and other states that share the goals and principles of the present agreement” would be welcomed to join (p. 135). Therefore, the leaders of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan had met in Ashgabat, the capital city of Turkmenistan and participated in the Commonwealth of Independent States as co-founders of the organization. On December 21st, 1991, a conference was arranged in Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan (Shoemaker, 2013). According to Borkoeva (2011), the participants were ‘A. Mutalibov (Azerbaijan), L. Ter-Petrosyan (Armenia), S. Shushkevich (Belarus), N. Nazarbayev (Kazakhstan), A. Akaev (Kyrgyz Republic), M. Snegur (Moldova), B. Yeltsin (Russia), R. Nabiev (Tajikistan), S. Niyaziv (Turkmenistan), I. Karimov (Uzbekistan) and L. Kravchuk (Ukraine)’ (p. 26). Protocol to the Agreement on the Establishment of the Commonwealth of Independent States and Alma – Ata Declaration are signed by the 11 former Soviet states. Georgia only sent an observer and did not sign the agreement. Also, three Baltic States, Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania, stated that they could not be a part of any other political union after the USSR (Shoemaker, 2013).

On December 30th, 1991, the participant countries decided to meet in Minsk, Belarus. The structure and the executive bodies of the organization were discussed and agreed on. There were councils rather than presidents, ministers or legislatures for the structure of the Commonwealth of Independent States. According to Shoemaker (2013), one of the most significant issues discussed during the Minsk meeting was the armed forces of the member states and their future status. It is accepted that each republic could build up its own army. Also, a unified army under the CIS central

command would be established. Besides, the control of nuclear weapons in the region, especially in Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus and Ukraine, was decided to be under the unified command of the CIS (Shoemaker, 2013).

In December 1993, Georgia, became the last former Soviet state to join the Commonwealth of Independent States. All of the former Soviet Republics except the three Baltic States ratified the CIS agreement. However today, Georgia, Turkmenistan and Ukraine are not members of the CIS.

4.1.2. The Aim of the Commonwealth of Independent States

The Commonwealth of Independent States is formed after the dissolution of the USSR regarding the security, finance, lawmaking and trade issues. Cohen (2008) states that the CIS helped the USSR to execute a ‘civilized divorce’ for the dissolution process of the Union. The organization aims to prevent crime by supporting democratization in the member countries (Borkoeva, 2011). According to Kubicek (2009), the organization is established to manage the dissolution period and maintain the pre-existing political, economic and military bond between the former republics.

Shoemaker (2013) indicates that one of the essential goals of the Commonwealth of Independent States is to form an economic cooperation between the member countries of the organization. There are several agreements made by the different countries of the CIS. For instance, in 1995, Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan came together and established the Eurasian Economic Community (EEC). Later, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan had participated. EEC deals with the water resources and energy issues in the region. The main purpose of the members of the EEC is to generate a common market for energy in the Eurasian region (Borkoeva, 2011). In 1999, except Belarus, all CIS member states started to consider establishing a CIS free trade zone among the members. Another example is the Central Asia Customs Union. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan formed the organization and renamed it as Central Asian Cooperation (CAC). In 2010, Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan launched a new formation, Customs Union (CU), signing an agreement regarding a joint customs zone that includes common external tariff. The leaders of these three countries

gathered in Moscow in December 2010 and eventually signed the agreement for a common economic space. This custom union provides the people of the member-states free travel and working opportunities without an internal tariff (Borkoeva, 2011).

Moreover, against terrorism, especially after 9/11, Russia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Belarus and Armenia established the CIS Collective Rapid Reaction Force. In 2002, it was decided that a joint anti-terrorism unit in Central Asia had to be formed as a result of security concerns of member states. Thus, the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States try to secure their region and act together when it is necessary.

According to Kudaibergenova (2016), until the establishment of the Customs Union (CU) between Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan in 2010, previous attempts of integration were failures or were only partially successful. Mainly the Commonwealth of Independent States, the very first organization established solely among the former Soviet republics in the Eurasia, is considered as a major failure as the organization could not achieve any of its purpose. As Kubicek (2009) states the failure of the CIS had started to be obvious by the end of the 1990s.

There are several reasons why the CIS failed as explained by Kononczuk (2007). Firstly, post-Soviet states have different domestic and international political context. For example, Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine seek to integrate with the West. So, these countries' interests started to diverge from the other former Soviet states. Secondly, Russia had a natural advantage over other members of the CIS in terms of geography, population, economy, political and military power (Figure 2). Therefore, from the beginning, there has been an inequality among the member states of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

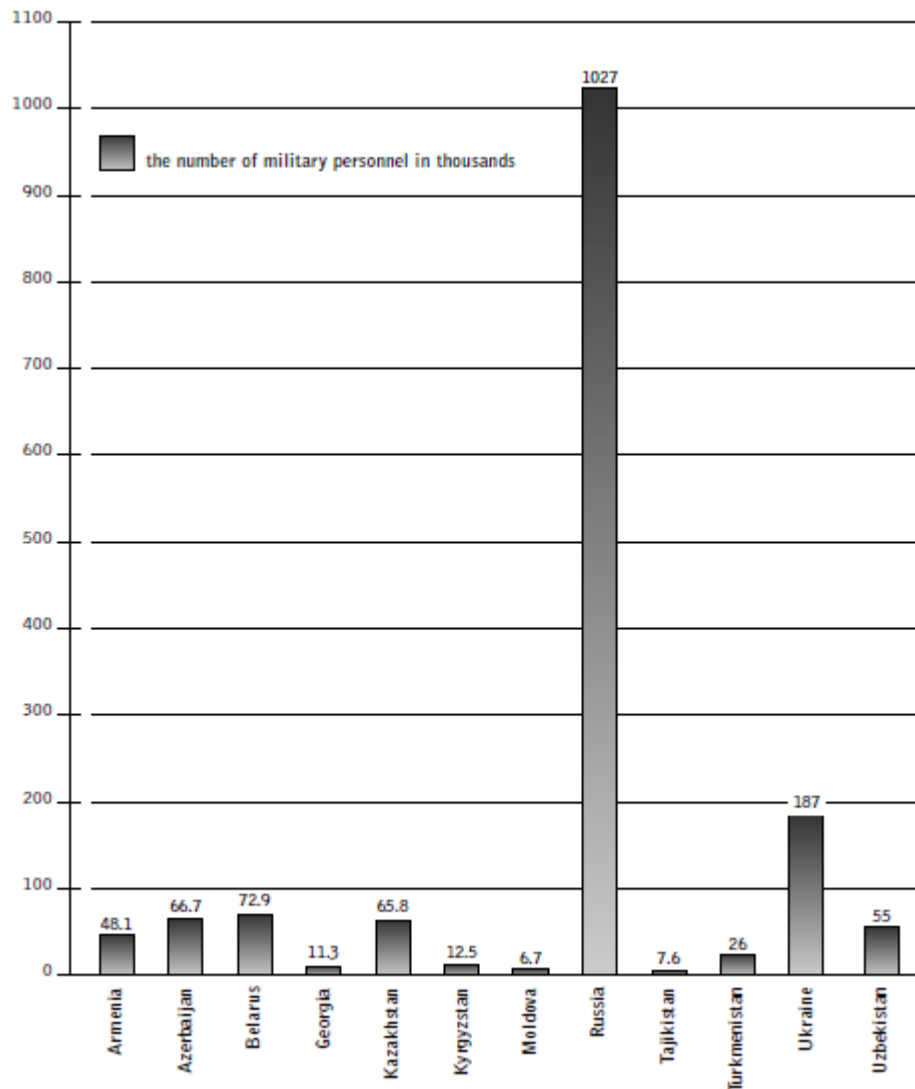


Figure 2. A comparison of the CIS countries' military capabilities

Source: *The failure of integration. The CIS and other international organizations in the post-Soviet area, 1991–2006.* Kononczuk, W. (2007).

Thirdly, the CIS members have various economic capacities in terms of their GDP (which is shown in the Figure 3 below), share of the private sector and privatization, and development of free market. This means that there is a lack of economic compatibility for real economic integration among the members.

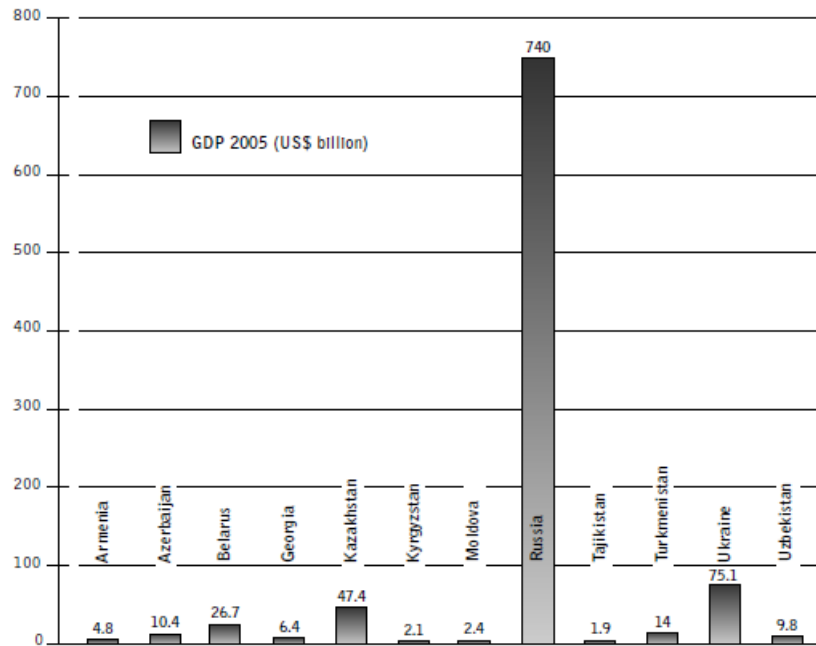


Figure 3. A comparison of the CIS countries' GDP

Source: *The failure of integration. The CIS and other international organizations in the post-Soviet area, 1991–2006.* Kononczuk, W. (2007).

Table 2. Share of the CIS in exports and imports of individual CIS countries, %

State	Export				Import		
	1991	1995	2000	2005	1995	2000	2005
Armenia	96	63	24	19	50	20	29
Azerbaijan	92	25	13	21	34	32	34
Belarus	92	63	60	44	66	70	67
Georgia	98	62	40	47	40	32	40
Kazakhstan	90	55	27	15	70	54	47
Kyrgyzstan	98	66	41	45	68	54	62
Moldova	91	63	59	51	68	33	40
Russia	59	19	13	14	29	34	19
Tajikistan	88	34	48	20	59	83	65
Turkmenistan	97	49	52	44*	55	38	49*
Ukraine	82	53	31	31	65	58	47
Uzbekistan	89	39	**	**	41	**	**

* 2003 data

** No data available

Source: *The failure of integration. The CIS and other international organizations in the post-Soviet area, 1991–2006.* Kononczuk, W. (2007).

Kubayeva (2015) also suggests that the trade between Kazakhstan and non-EEU states could deteriorate. Furthermore, Yesdauletova and Yesdauletov (2014, as cited in Mostafa & Mahmood, 2018) mention that there are five main issues standing against a successful economic integration in Eurasia. These are:

- a) the large number of economic sectors requiring too many regulations,
- b) the speed with which integration is proceeding,
- c) the failure of the three countries' foreign trade to orient itself towards SES markets,
- d) the non-diversified nature of SES countries' production,
- e) the coordination and balancing of tariffs between the three member states. (Mostafa & Mahmood, 2018, p. 168)

According to Mostafa and Mahmood (2018), economic situations of member-states have been gradually deteriorating. The economic crisis in Russia, the devaluation of ruble and the decline in oil prices have deeply affected Kazakhstan's economy. Kazakhstan devaluated its currency by 19% in 2014 and 23% in 2015, and this affected trade volumes of the country (Mostafa and Mahmood, 2018).

It is also important to mention that there has been an anti-Eurasian movement in Kazakhstan since the establishment of the Customs Union and its transformation to the Eurasian Economic Union. This is mainly because of the concern about possibility that the EEU-like integrations may threaten Kazakhstan's sovereignty. Foreseeing this possibility, the opposition had suggested a referendum regarding the membership of Kazakhstan to organizations like the EEU, the Customs Union, etc. Satpayev (2015) suggested that because of the opposition (mainly ethnic Kazakhs and Kazakh-speaking intelligentsia), Kazakh government should be more careful regarding the integration issues. The author also claimed that in the case of a change in the regime of Kazakhstan after Nazarbayev, it would be doubtful whether the country would remain as a member of the EEU. "There is always the possibility in Kazakhstan of a situation where in the

medium-term, political forces come to power that want to change the rules of the game” (Satpayev, 2015, p. 13).

4.4. THE CONFERENCE ON INTERACTION AND CONFIDENCE BUILDING MEASURES IN ASIA (CICA)

Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) was officially established in 1993 by numerous Asian countries in order to manage peace and security issues in the region. Today, there are 26 member countries of the Conference.

4.4.1. The Establishment of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia

On October 5th, 1992, during the 47th session of the U.N. General Assembly, Nursultan Nazarbayev, was the first to announce the idea of organizing a meeting regarding the interaction and confidence building measures in Asia, which would be called CICA. This initiative is considered as a new format of cooperation for the peace and security issues in Asia (“The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the United Nations”, n.d.).

At that time, in 1992, there was no structure for ensuring security and peace in Asia and it can be concluded that there was a need for establishing such structure in the region by a number of countries. Hence, the Conference became the first organization on such issues in the whole region and started its official activities in March 1993 (“The CICA-China”, n.d.)

The member states of CICA are Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Egypt, India, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan and Vietnam. States must have part of their territory in Asia in order to become a member of the CICA. Today, member states of the CICA constitute nearly ninety percent of the population and territory of Asia.

The observer states are Belarus, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Ukraine and the United States of America. There are also five multi-national organizations held the observer status of the CICA: International Organization for Migration (IOM), League of Arab States (LAS), Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Parliamentary Assembly of the Turkic Speaking Countries (TURKPA) and the United Nations (UN).

There are two main documents of the Conference. The first one is adopted at the First Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs on September 14th, 1999 in Almaty. The other one is Almaty Act which is the charter of the Conference adopted at the First Summit Meeting on June 4th, 2002 in Almaty (“Secretariat of the CICA”, n.d.).

4.4.2. The Aim of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia

The policy of CICA depends on the principles of sovereign equality, social, cultural and economic cooperation among member states, and non-interference in internal affairs of the member states. The main objectives of the Conference are to enhance cooperation and coordinate multilateral approaches regarding peace, stability and security among the member states in Asia. All decisions within CICA framework are taken by consensus. Members of CICA recognize that there is an important connection between Asia and the rest of the world when it comes to peace, security and stability issues. As they are confirming their commitment to the UN Charter, the states also endorse dialogue and cooperation between Asian countries to provide the main aims of CICA (“Secretariat of the CICA”, n.d.).

Every four years, the Meeting of the CICA Heads of State and Government is held as a highest decision-making organ of the Conference. The summit conducts reviews and consultations of the progress and determines the priorities of CICA. There is also the Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs with the participation of the member countries which is held every two years. In order to be realize the objectives of CICA, Catalogue of Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) and Cooperative Approach for the implementation of CICA CBMs have been established. Economic dimension, environmental dimension, human dimension, fight against new challenges and threats,

and military-political dimension are the five main categories determined by the Confidence Building Measures.

4.4.3. Kazakhstan and the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia

As it is mentioned earlier, Kazakhstan was the country which proposed the idea of convening the Conference in Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia. Nazarbayev was aware of the fact that Asia is the most populated region in the world along with various kind of conflicts and unrest among the countries (extremism, illegal migration, environment issues, drug trafficking, nuclear proliferation etc.). Hence, Nazarbayev's proposal was supported and adopted by numerous countries and international organizations in the region ("Official Site of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan", n.d.). According to Alima (n.d.), Kazakhstan has contributed much to the modernization and development of international relations in Asia region.

The 20th anniversary of the organization and the 4th meeting of ministers of foreign affairs of the Conference was held in Astana in 2012. Nazarbayev made a welcoming speech and emphasized the 'joint effort of international community' in order to solve the common problems of the region ("Secretariat of the CICA", n.d.).

In 2014, the 4th Shanghai CICA Summit was an important milestone for the future of the Conference since the Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the CICA ("Official Site of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan", n.d.). Moreover, trying to establish ties with other regional and international organizations, Memoranda of Understanding have signed between CICA and the following organizations: Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), Eurasian Economic Community (EurAsEC), International Organization for Migration (IOM), Assembly of People of Kazakhstan (APK), Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (RATS SOC) and Shanghai Institute for International Studies ("Secretariat of the CICA", n.d.).

Hence, more than two decades, Kazakhstan has taken on the leading role of the Conference for more secure and peaceful Asia (“Official Site of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan”, n.d.).

4.5. SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANIZATION (SCO)

On June 15th, 2001, Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) was established by the signing of the Founding Declaration (Aris, 2011). At present, People’s Republic of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and the former observer states, India and Pakistan, are the member-states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran, and Mongolia are the observer states. Also, the dialogue partners are Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Turkey.

4.5.1. The Establishment of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization

After the dissolution of the USSR, security, defense and borders have gained importance among the countries of the Eurasian region. Especially for the former Soviet States and China, border issue was an essential subject to resolve. According to Bailes et al. (2007), their shared border became a multilateral concern after the collapse of the USSR.

China aimed to secure its western border because it was a developing and growing country that needed to focus on its stability and economic relations. It means that a territorial tension would have damaged the economic agenda of China. On the other hand, Central Asian countries were also avoiding a tension in their borderline with the aim of protecting their territorial integrity considering that China is a significantly powerful country compared to the newly established nation-states of the area. Thus, China and the former Soviet Republics started negotiating over the matter of border security (Küçük, 2009).

According to Küçük (2009), as a result of the negotiations, ‘Treaty on Strengthening Trust in Military Affairs in the Border Regions’ was signed by the leaders of China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan on April 26th, 1996 in Shanghai, China.

These countries are recalled as ‘the Shanghai Five’ with the feature of the predecessors of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

One year later, the leaders of the countries aforementioned came together in Moscow and signed ‘The Treaty on Mutual Reduction of Military Forces on the Borders’ on April 27th, 1997. The leaders agreed to assign 130.400 personnel in the borders of the countries by the terms of the treaty (Küçük, 2009).

Another summit was organized in 1998 in Almaty with the agreement of confronting the “transnational security issues such as ethnic separatism, religious fundamentalism, terrorism, arms-smuggling, drug-trafficking and cross border crimes”. Also, Bishkek Declaration was signed by the leaders of the five countries. By the Declaration, the Shanghai Five agreed to resist terrorism, separatism and religious fundamentalism (Küçük, 2009, p. 32).

Uzbekistan attended the meeting for the first time as an observer in Dushanbe in 2000 with the leaders of the Shanghai Five. In Dushanbe summit, leaders signed the agreement that considers separatism, terrorism and religious fundamentalism as the “three evils”. Additionally, in the meeting, Chinese leader offered to establish an institutionalized organization as cooperation of the countries of Shanghai Five and Uzbekistan. It is important to emphasize that as a result of the participation of Uzbekistan, the Shanghai Five period was terminated in the Dushanbe summit (Küçük, 2009).

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization was officially founded in 2001 with the participation of the countries which are the People’s Republic of China, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Republic of Tajikistan, the Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Uzbekistan. The leaders of the six countries signed the Founding Declaration (Aris, 2011). According to Küçük (2009), the main target of the SCO was determined to fight against the three evil as it was stated in Bishkek Declaration. In 2017, Iran and Pakistan have been granted the full membership in the SCO at a summit in Astana. Zafar (2017) indicates that since Russia and China were the two main countries of the SCO, India’s participation will lead the organization to a more multipolar structure by balancing the regional powers.

Today, with these powerful member states and the observer states as Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran, and Mongolia, the SCO became an important regional organization in Eurasia. According to Bailes et al. (2007), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization covers one of the largest areas geographically as a regional organization.

4.5.2. The Aim of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is considered to be an essential integration for the member-states in terms of defense, security and politics in the Eurasian region. As McDermott (2012) indicates, the SCO focuses on terrorism, separatism and extremism in the area.

As indicated in the Charter of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Article 2, main principles of the organizations are:

mutual respect of sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity of States and inviolability of State borders, non-aggression, non-interference in internal affairs, non-use of force or threat of its use in international relations, seeking no unilateral military superiority in adjacent areas; equality of all member States, search of common positions on the basis of mutual understanding and respect for opinions of each of them; gradual implementation of joint activities in the spheres of mutual interest; peaceful settlement of disputes between the member States; SCO being not directed against other States and international organizations; prevention of any illegitimate acts directed against the SCO interests; implementation of obligations arising out of the present Charter and other documents adopted within the framework of SCO, in good faith (The Shanghai Cooperation Organization, 2009).

In 2004, the SCO founded the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) in order to list and update a database of terrorist, separatist, and extremist actors in the region. The RATS also became a center for intelligence and approaches to counterterrorism

among its member states. According to Aris (2013), the RATS is proven to be a valuable and essential tool for fighting against terrorism by the leaders of the member states.

Aside from terrorism, extremism and separatism, the SCO also deals with organized crime, illegal narcotics trade, and developing structures for responding to natural disasters. Moreover, the SCO organizes regular military exercises. Since the “peace mission”, an agreement for holding regular military exercises, in 2007, exercises of different scales with various participation of member states have been organized. Russian and Chinese troops dominate these exercises while Kazakhstan takes an important role, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have minor roles and Uzbekistan declines to participate (Küçük, 2009). Aris (2013) noted even though these exercises resulted in a debate regarding whether the SCO should establish a common military force, its main agenda is to become a confidence-building measure among the member states. According to Lohschelder (2017), the SCO also provides its member states a platform to engage in geopolitical balancing.

Alongside security issues, economic cooperation has started to emerge since the mid-2000s between the SCO members regarding collaboration on finance, trade, transportation infrastructure, telecommunications, agriculture, and energy. Especially, the idea of creating an energy club in the SCO was proposed by Vladimir Putin at the 2006 Summit, and it became one of the major economic cooperation initiatives for Russia and Kazakhstan. However, according to Aris (2013), there are conflicting interests among the SCO member states in terms of producing and supplying energy to the new markets.

According to Küçük (2009), after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia decided that China would be a better integration partner in the region. Also, it is obvious that Russia would have the chance to control and monitor China’s activities in the region. Moreover, Russia would like to strengthen its place in the global energy market with the support of Iran and Kazakhstan. Energy situation is also important for China since its economy depends on the oil and gas from the Middle Eastern, Central Asian and Latin American countries and Russia. Becoming the great powers of the region, along

with Russia, China could challenge the United States. Furthermore, from an economical perspective, Central Asian region is essential for Chinese trade growth.

It is important to emphasize that the SCO represents a unique establishment for the Central Asian republics. It can engage the two main regional powers, Russia and China, simultaneously. It is an essential situation from the perspective of the Central Asian states because of the opportunity for eliminating the domination by one of the regional powers. It has been suggested that “the Central Asian leaders have more opportunities to pursue their interests within the SCO, than they would in a framework containing only Russia or only China” (Aris, 2013, p. 9). For instance, it is important for Kazakhstan to use Russia to reach the world market. Kazakhstan would not export the energy to the world market without Russia because its own infrastructure is insufficient to distribute resources. Becoming a member of the SCO has its advantages for Kyrgyzstan. For instance, Kyrgyzstan agreed with China regarding energy. Also, pipelines from Uzbekistan to China and Turkmenistan to China are agreed to go through Kyrgyzstan.

4.5.3. Kazakhstan and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization

Kazakhstan has important reasons to join the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Firstly, Kazakhstan has significant energy reserves, yet does not have enough infrastructure to join the world markets. Being a post-Soviet state, the country benefits from the Russian infrastructure and pipeline to distribute its resources into the global market. It can be understood that Kazakhstan depends on Russia in order to reach international market. However, being a part of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization increased Kazakhstan’s chance to diversify its customers to sell energy. For instance, Kazakhstan signed energy agreements with China to build the “Kazakhstan-China oil” pipeline in 2006. Because exported oil from Kazakhstan to China does not pass through a third country or an open sea, Kazakhstan is the first choice of China to establish pipelines and import oil (Schubert, 2017). According to Küçük (2009), having a customer as China, one of the giant economies in the world, Kazakhstan gained power against the Russian pressure, which demonstrates an example of Kazakhstan’s “multi-vector” foreign policy. Establishing and maintaining peaceful

relations with the countries and international organizations are the core values of the multi-vector policy of Kazakhstan for stabilizing and removing any attempt to dominate the country. As Gleason (2017) indicates preventing the reemergence of Russian pressure in the region is the primary motive of the multi-vector policy. The second advantage of the SCO for Kazakhstan is to increase its trade volumes, especially with China. Kazakhstan began to find new customers in the international market and increased its income and development. Moreover, on the one hand, Kazakhstan has been paying attention to not to be too close to the SCO integration against the possibility to block cooperation with the West. On the other hand, with the increased trade volume and investment among the SCO members, the SCO provides Kazakhstan and other Central Asian countries a guaranteed inflow of investment from both China and Russia and support the stability in the region (Bailes et al., 2007). The third reason is security. Kazakhstan supports the Shanghai Cooperation Organization because of the large number of Russian people living in Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan considers Russian population as a potential threat in Kazakh land, and so hopes that being a part of the SCO could prevent interference of Russian population to Kazakhstan's domestic affairs. Also, we can mention that the SCO provides necessary stability to Kazakhstan to be a regional power in Central Asia (Küçük, 2009). As Ospanova (2019) mentions that Kazakhstan is the largest country and has the most successful economy with the richest resources in its lands in Central Asia. Due to its efforts and multi-vector foreign policy it has been pursued in the past quarter of a century, Kazakhstan achieved to have the stability of a peacemaker and guarantor position of the area. Together with the positive effect of the SCO by balancing Russian dominance in the area, Kazakhstan had a unique position among the Central Asian countries regarding to be a regional power.

According to Caspian News, Tokayev, the new President of Kazakhstan, has proposed to establish a new initiative as a special center for combatting the threat of cyber terrorism. At the annual summit of the SCO in Bishkek, Tokayev stated “the problem of terrorism has its effect on the global network and requires additional measures to ensure cyber security. The creation of the information security center would be an important contribution to the protection of the organization's cyberspace” (Ospanova,

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

After the dissolution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Kazakhstan has gained its independence and started to draw its own path in domestic and global areas, like all other newly independent republics of the USSR. After spending seventy-four years being a member of the Soviet Union, the process of establishing foreign relations became an essential part of that path. Kazakhstan is one of the former Soviet republics that has pursued a successful foreign policy. In this thesis, I have presented an analysis of Kazakhstan's foreign policy as a newly independent state with a particular focus on its role in regional integration process. I have also discussed the effectiveness of Kazakhstan's membership in various regional organizations in terms of its foreign policy strategy and economic development.

While analyzing the effectiveness of regional integration in Kazakhstan, it is important to give brief information about the concept of regionalism in this study. For that purpose, I have first provided a historical background about regionalism under four sub-titles: Earlier Integrations, the First Wave, the Second Wave and the Third Wave. Historical perspective of regionalism contains mostly economic cooperation efforts after the Second World War in the years between 1945 and 1965, security issues between 1965 and 1985 during the Cold War, and regional security and economic problems since the end of the Cold War, in accordance with the main events that affected the course of the history worldwide. This historical background is important because they reflect some of the essential starting points of agreements in the history of regionalism. International cooperation mostly emerged from common problems of states or regions. By successful implementations of regional integration policies, interactions and collaborations between states are expected to increase. Thus, there are

possible advantageous agreements and collaborations through regional and international integrations occurs to be a rational one. By not underestimating the guiding impact of regionalism and integration efforts, regional integration contributes greatly to the realization of Kazakhstan's foreign policy goals. With the multi-vector foreign policy and regional integration initiatives, maintaining its sovereignty in Eurasian space, Kazakhstan has become the most globally integrated country in Central Asia.

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APPENDICES

A: TURKISH SUMMARY / TÜRKE ÖZET

KAZAKİSTAN'IN BÖLGESEL ENTEGRASYON POLİTİKASI: SOVYET SONRASI BÖLGESEL ORGANİZASYONLARIN ETKİSİ

Bu araştırmanın temel amacı, Kazakistan'ın bağımsız bir ülke olarak dış ilişkilerinde istikrarlı bir ekonomik ve politik strateji izlemesine yardımcı olacak olası entegrasyonlarla bölgesel entegrasyon organizasyonlarına katılmanın ardındaki mantığı analiz etmek ve anlamaktır. Mevcut literatürde, Avrasya'da bölgeselcilik ve bölgesel entegrasyonla ilgili sınırlı sayıda çalışma bulunmaktadır. Literatürdeki çalışmalar ve tartışmalar çoğunlukla Avrupa Birliği ve gelişimi ile ilgilidir. Ancak, Sovyet sonrası dönemde bölgesel entegrasyon çabalarına ilişkin sınırlı bir literatür var. Bu nedenle, bu çalışma, Kazakistan'ın dış politika kararlarının bölgeselleşme konsepti ile ilişkisini inceleyerek ve bölgesel entegrasyon politikasını analiz ederek literatüre katkı sağlamayı amaçlamaktadır.

Günümüz Kazakistan toprakları tarihsel olarak birçok uygarlığa ev sahipliği yapmış olup aynı zamanda başlıca ulaşım yollarının kesişiminde bulunmaktadır. Bugünün modern Kazakistan'ı uzun zamandan beri önemli kültürel geçmişe sahip birçok ülkenin evi olmuştur. Bugün, 18 milyondan fazla nüfusu ve kapladığı 2,72 kilometrekarelik alan ile dünyanın en büyük onuncu ülkesi durumundadır.

Aralık 1991'de Sovyet Sosyalist Cumhuriyetler Birliği (SSCB)'nin çöküşü ile birlikte on beş ulus devlet bir gecede bağımsızlıklarını kazandılar. Bağımsızlıktan bu yana, Kazakistan'ın ulaşmayı hedeflediği iki ana amaç bulunmaktadır: ortak bir ulusal

kimlik oluşturmak ve ülkenin küresel alandaki yerini güçlendirmek. Ulusal bağımsızlığını ilan ettiği günden bu yana Kazakistan, anayasasını ve siyasi sistemini güçlendirmek için çalışmaya devam ederken, aynı zamanda çeşitli ülkelerle siyasi ve ekonomik ilişkiler kurma ve sürdürme kapasitesini artırmıştır.

Bağımsızlığın ilk yıllarında ulus-inşa sürecinin zorluklarının üstesinden gelinmeye çalışılıyorken, Kazakistan Cumhuriyeti'nin ilk Cumhurbaşkanı Nazarbayev, ülkenin egemenliğinin temellerini sağlamlaştırmak amacı ile herhangi bir yabancı ülkeye, özellikle de Rusya'ya, aşırı bağımlılığı önlemeyi hedeflemiştir. Bunu sağlayabilmek için ise dış politika stratejisini “çok yönlü” dış politika olarak belirlemiş ve bunun yanı sıra ekonomik ve siyasi istikrarı korumaya çalışmıştır. Nazarbayev'in “çok yönlü” dış politikasının temel aracı, çeşitli ülkelerle iyi ilişkileri sürdürmek ve çeşitli uluslararası kuruluşlara aktif üyelik sağlamaktır. Yakın veya uzak ülkeler ve kuruluşlar arasında oluşturulan iş birliği anlaşmaları veya örgütleri, Kazakistan'ın ekonomi, güvenlik ve politika açısından vereceği kararlarını büyük ölçüde etkilemektedir. Bu amaçla Kazakistan, dünyadaki güçlü ülkeleri içeren çeşitli yönleri kapsayan bir siyasi strateji izlemektedir. Bu strateji, ülkenin egemenliğini koruyarak ve küresel ekonomide daha geniş pazarlara ulaşarak ülkeye istikrarlı bir gelişme fırsatı sağlamaktadır. Bununla birlikte, “çok yönlü” dış politika stratejisi izlemenin bir sonucu olarak, “bölgeselcilik” kavramı da bağımsızlıktan sonra Kazakistan'ın dış politika yaklaşımının önemli bir parçası olmuştur. Bu amaçla Kazakistan, çeşitli uluslararası ve bölgesel organizasyonlara üye olmuş veya organizasyonlar kurma ve iş birliği anlaşmaları imzalama girişiminde bulunmuştur.

Bu tez beş bölümden oluşmaktadır. Birinci bölümde araştırmanın konusu, metodolojisi ve tezin organizasyonu açıklanmaktadır. İkinci bölümde, bölgesel entegrasyon kavramı, tarihsel gelişimi içerisinde ele alınırken, aynı zamanda da, siyasi ve ekonomik bölgeselcilik kavramları açısından incelenmektedir. Üçüncü bölümde, Kazakistan Cumhuriyeti'nin dış politika ve ekonomi kararları bağımsızlıktan önceki dönemler için tarihsel çerçeve içerisinde ele alınırken; bağımsızlığını kazandıktan sonraki süreç için ise ülkenin dış politika amaçları, yönleri ve ekonomik durumu detaylı olarak açıklanmaktadır. Dördüncü bölümde, Kazakistan'ın üye olduğu uluslararası örgütler ve bu örgütlerin Kazakistan dış politikasına etkileri

incelenmektedir. Söz konusu örgütler şunlardır: Bağımsız Devletler Topluluğu (BDT), Kolektif Güvenlik Anlaşması Örgütü (KGAÖ), Avrasya Ekonomik Birliği (AEB), Asya'da Etkileşim ve Güven Yaratma Önlemleri Konferansı (AİGK) ve Şanghay İşbirliği Örgütü (ŞİÖ).

Çalışmanın ikinci bölümünde anlatıldığı üzere, bölgesel entegrasyon çabalarının Kazakistan'daki etkileri analiz edilmiş ve "bölgeselcilik" kavramı ve tarihsel gelişimi hakkında kısa bir bilgi verilmiştir. Bu amaçla, bölgeselleşme kavramı ve tarihsel gelişimi dört alt başlık altında sunulmaktadır: İlk Bütünleşme çabaları, İlk Dalga, İkinci Dalga ve Üçüncü Dalga. Bölgeselciliğin tarihsel perspektifi, Dünyadaki tarihin akışını etkileyen ana olaylar ile paralel olarak; 1945-1965 yılları arasındaki İkinci Dünya Savaşı'ndan sonra çoğunlukla ekonomik işbirliği çabalarını, 1965 ve 1985 yılları arasındaki Soğuk Savaş sırasında güvenlik sorunlarını ve Soğuk Savaş'ın sona ermesinden bu yana bölgesel güvenlik sorunları ile ekonomik sorunları içermektedir. Bu tarihsel arka planı analiz etmek önemlidir çünkü bölgeselcilik tarihindeki anlaşmaların bazı temel başlangıç noktalarını yansıtmaktadırlar. Bu demektir ki, uluslararası işbirliği anlaşmaları ve örgütleri daha çok devletlerin veya bölgelerin ortak sorunlarından doğmuştur. Bölgesel entegrasyon politikalarının başarılı bir şekilde uygulanmasıyla, ülkeler arasındaki etkileşimlerin ve işbirliğinin de gün geçtikçe artması beklenmektedir. Bu nedenle, bölgesel bir organizasyona katılan her ülke için çoğunlukla ekonomik, sosyal ve politik sonuçlar oluşmaktadır. Ülkeler bölgesel entegrasyon yolu ile temelde, kendileri için korunma, siyasi ilişkilerinin iyileştirilmesi ve refah artışı amaçlamaktadırlar. Bu şekilde iktisadi entegrasyon çalışmalarına dahil olarak, serbest ticaret bölgeleri, gümrük birliği, ortak pazar, ekonomi ve siyasi organizasyonlar gibi daha istikrarlı bir ekonomi ile daha geniş bir ticaret alanına sahip olabilirler.

Üçüncü bölümde, Kazakistan tarihi ile ilgili analiz yapılmış olup bu bölüm, Sovyetler Birliği öncesi, Sovyetler Birliği süreci ve Sovyetler Birliği dağıldıktan sonraki bağımsızlık dönemi olmak üzere üç farklı alt başlık altında incelenmiştir. Bölgesel entegrasyon perspektifinden bakılarak; Kazakistan'ın bağımsız bir ülke olarak dış politika hedefleri, "çok yönlü" dış politika stratejisi, karşılıklı ilişki içinde olduğu bölge/ülkeleri ve pazar ekonomisine geçiş süreci analiz edilmiştir. Bu analiz, bir

ülkenin başından geçen tarihsel olayların, gelecekteki dış politika ve ekonomi kararlarını şekillendirmesinden ötürü önemlidir.

Sovyet öncesi dönemde Kazakistan, 15. yüzyılın ikinci yarısından sonra yerleşik hayata geçen bir göçebe halk bölgesiydi. 19. yüzyılın ilk yarısından sonra, Kazak halkı Çarlık Rusyası'nın egemenliğine girmesine rağmen, yürütülen Ruslaştırma politikalarına ve sürgün edilme faaliyetlerine rağmen kimliklerini korumak için isyan etmiştir.

1917'de Avrasya tarihinin bir dönüm noktası olan Bolşevik Devrimi ilk olarak Rusya'da ortaya çıkmış ve oradan yayılmaya başlamıştır. 20. yüzyılın başlarında Kazakistan'ın ekonomisi ve üretimi, Birinci Dünya Savaşı, Bolşevik Devrimi ve iç savaş nedeniyle son derece zayıflamıştı. Bütün bu felaketlerin bir araya gelmesi sonucunda Kazak halkı kıtlıkla karşı karşıya kaldı ve 1920'lerin sonuna kadar iyileşemedi. 1970-1980 yılları arasında SSCB'de yaşanan ekonomik, politik ve sosyal problemlerden Kazakistan halkı da etkilenmiştir. 1985'ten sonra, Sovyetler Birliği'nin reformist politikası olan *perestroyka* uygulamaya başlandı. Ancak, Kazak halkı başlangıçta *perestroyka*'yı desteklese de, kısa bir süre içinde SSCB'ye olan inancını yitirmeye başlamıştır. *Perestroyka*'nın ardından ise Sovyet Sosyalist Cumhuriyetler Birliği dağılma sürecine girdi.

Sovyetler Birliği'nin dağılmasından sonra, Kazakistan'ın dış politika konusundaki temel kaygısı, egemenliğini ve ulusal güvenliğini korumaktır. Bu nedenle, Kazakistan Cumhuriyeti'nin ilk Cumhurbaşkanı Nursultan Nazarbayev, hem ekonomik hem de siyasi istikrara kavuşmak ve herhangi bir yabancı ülkenin Kazakistan üzerinde egemenlik kurma çabalarını engellemek için çok yönlü bir dış politika izlemeye başlamıştı. Yürüttüğü "çok yönlü" dış politikanın bir avantajı olarak, Kazakistan, çeşitli dış pazarlara ulaşırken aynı zamanda egemenliğini koruyarak istikrarlı bir gelişme sağlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu amaçla, bir dizi bölgesel ve uluslararası organizasyona katılmış ve birçok ülkelerarası anlaşma imzalamıştır.

Kazakistan'ın dış politikasının dört ana yönü vardır: Sovyet sonrası bağımsızlığını kazanan Avrasya ülkeleri, Asya ve Avrupa ülkeleri ile Amerika Birleşik Devletleri. Ancak, hem Kazakistan hem de Rusya, bölgesel ve uluslararası hırslarını sürdürmek

için birbirlerine ihtiyaç duymaktadır. Dolayısıyla, iki devlet açısından da müttefik olmak, bu amaca ulaşmanın daha kesin ve barışçıl yöntemi olarak görülmektedir. Asya ülkeleri ile ilişkilerde, başta Çin ve Kazakistan olmak üzere ticaret ve güvenlik temelli işbirlikleri bulunmaktadır. Çin, başta Rusya ve ABD olmak üzere diğer küresel güçlere karşı Kazakistan için stratejik öneme sahip bir müttefiktir. Avrupa ülkeleri, çoğunlukla enerji sektörü açısından Kazakistan ekonomisi için temel ekonomik ortaklardır. En büyük küresel ekonomilerden biri olan ABD ile iyi ilişkiler kurmak; Kazakistan'ın iç ve dış pazarının istikrarlı bir şekilde gelişmesini sağlamak ve ülkelerin stratejik ortaklığını geliştirmek için oldukça önemlidir.

Kazakistan, Sovyetler Birliği'nin dağılmasıyla beraber bağımsızlığını kazanmış ve ekonomik anlamda en önemli adım olarak ulusal para birimini oluşturmuştur. Bağımsızlık göstergesinin temel taşlarından biri olan ulusal para birimini Tenge olarak belirlemiştir. Bununla birlikte, ülkede, kömür, demir, krom, manganez, çinko ve benzeri kaynaklar ile dünyanın en büyük ikinci altın rezervi de dahil olmak üzere birçok maden kaynağı bulunmaktadır. Kazakistan bugünün endüstrileşmiş dünyasında iki enerji kaynağı üretmekte ve kullanmaktadır: doğal gaz ve petrol. Bu sayede, Sanayileşme çabalarıyla dış ilişkilerinde de stratejik yerini güçlendiren Kazakistan, bölgedeki en büyük enerji üreticisi ülkelerden biri olmuştur. Bununla birlikte, Kazakistan'da tarım arazileri sınırlı olsa da, tarımsal üretim de yapılmaktadır.

Bu çalışmanın üçüncü bölümü olarak, Kazakistan'ın aktif rol oynadığı beş bölgesel örgütün analizi yapılmıştır. Bu kuruluşlar, ikinci bölümde tartıştığım bölgeselliğin güvenlik, politik ve ekonomik perspektifleri ile bağlantılı olan bölgesel entegrasyon örgütleridir. Bahse konu bu beş örgüt sırası ile Bağımsız Devletler Topluluğu (BDT), Kolektif Güvenlik Anlaşması Örgütü (KGAÖ), Avrasya Ekonomik Birliği (AEB), Asya'da Etkileşim ve Güven Yaratma Önlemleri Konferansı (AİGK) ve Şanghay İşbirliği Örgütü (ŞİÖ)'dür. Söz konusu organizasyonları inceleme nedenim, Kazakistan'ın bu örgütlerin kuruluş ve gelişim aşamalarında, "çok yönlü" dış politika stratejisinin bir parçası olarak üye devletler ile iyi ilişkiler kurmak ve sürdürmek konusunda büyük çaba harcamasıdır.

Bağımsız Devletler Topluluğu (BDT)

Sovyet Sosyalist Cumhuriyetler Birliği'nin dağılmasıyla birlikte, yeni kurulan ulus-devletler 1991 yılında bir araya gelerek yeni bir örgütlenme oluşturmak için çalışmaya başladılar. Rusya, Belarus ve Ukrayna'dan üç ülke lideri Aralık 1991'de Belarus'ta toplandı. Liderler, Sovyet Sosyalist Cumhuriyetler Birliği'nin çöküşünü kabul etti ve Sovyetler Birliği'nin halefi olarak Bağımsız Devletler Topluluğu'nu kurdular.

Bağımsız Devletler Topluluğu, SSCB'nin dağılmasını müteakip güvenlik, finans, kanun koyma ve ticaret konularında üye ülkeleri ile işbirliği sağlama amacıyla kurulmuştur. Kimi uzmanlar tarafından BDT'nin kurulmasının, SSCB'nin dağılma sürecinin “medeni bir boşanma” olarak yürütülmesine olanak sağladığı şeklinde değerlendirilmektedir. SSCB'nin dağılma dönemini yönetmek ve yeni ulus-devletler arasında önceden var olan siyasi, ekonomik ve askeri bağı koruma amacı bulunmaktadır. Bununla birlikte, üye ülkelerdeki demokratikleşmeyi destekleyerek suçu önlemeyi hedeflemektedir.

Bağımsız Devletler Topluluğu, bağımsızlık yıllarının başlarında Kazakistan için en önemli bölgesel kurumu temsil ediyordu. Kazakistan, bağımsızlığını ilan ettikten beş gün sonra BDT'ye katıldı. Kazakistan'ın ilk Cumhurbaşkanı Nursultan Nazarbayev, “bağımsız devletlerin gelecekteki ilişkilerinin atalarımızın mirası olan ulusların manevi birliği ile destekleneceğini” belirtti.

Ayrıca, Kazakistan, üye ülkeler arasında uzun vadeli işbirliği alanlarını öncelik sırasına koymak için BDT Kalkınma Konsepti'ni oluşturulmasını ve buna ilişkin bir eylem planının hayata geçirilmesini önerdi. 2000 yılında Kazakistan, Kırgızistan, Tacikistan ve Rusya bir araya gelerek bölgedeki tehdit ve iç savaşlarla başa çıkmak için BDT Savaş Önleme Merkezi'ni kurdular. Nazarbayev 2006 yılında, göç, ulaşım, iletişim, ulus ötesi suçlar, bilimsel, eğitimsel ve kültürel işbirliği ve maliyet azaltma önlemleri gibi ana alanlarda reform yapmak için kapsamlı bir program önerdi.

Kolektif Güvenlik Anlaşması Örgütü (KGAÖ)

Kolektif Güvenlik Anlaşması Örgütü (KGAÖ) 1992'den 2002'ye kadar Bağımsız Devletler Topluluğu çerçevesinde hizmet veren Toplu Güvenlik Anlaşması'ndan ilgili

devletlerin katıldığı bir organizasyona dönüştürülmüştür. Günümüzde üyeleri Rusya, Belarus, Kazakistan, Ermenistan, Kırgızistan ve Tacikistan'dır. Örgüt'ün gözlemci statüsü 2013 yılında Afganistan ve Sırbistan'a verilmiştir.

Kolektif Güvenlik Anlaşması Örgütü (KGAÖ), terörizm veya rehine durumları gibi acil durumlara başa çıkmak için kurulmuştur. Örgütün temel konuları barışı koruma, uyuşmazlık çözümü, ekonomik ve askeri işbirliği ve organize suçtur. Örgüt ayrıca, bağımsızlığın ortak bir temelde korunması, üye ülkelerin egemenliği ve bölgedeki ülkeler arasındaki barışı güçlendirme hedeflerine sahiptir.

Kazakistan Cumhuriyeti, Örgüt'ün Avrasya bölgesindeki bölgesel ve uluslararası güvenlik ve toprak bütünlüğünün girişiminin bir parçası ve aynı zamanda en aktif üyesidir. Ayrıca Kazakistan, Kolektif Güvenlik Anlaşması Örgütü çerçevesinde, askerlerini Belarus ve Rusya'daki askeri üniversitelerde eğitmekte ve buna karşılık, Ermeni, Kırgız ve Tacik meslektaşlarına Kazakistan'da aynı şartları sağlamaktadır. Askeri düzenlemelere ek olarak, uyuşturucu kaçakçılığı, suç ve yasadışı göçler önlenmeye çalışılmaktadır. Kazakistan'ın 2012'de yürüttüğü başkanlığı sırasında, Uyuşturucu Karşıtı Stratejik Plan önerilmiş olup KGAÖ üyeleri tarafından 2015-2020 dönemi için, bölgedeki büyük uyuşturucu satıcılarının yanı sıra ağ ve tedarik zincirlerini belirlemek hedefiyle kabul edildi. Kazakistan için bir diğer önemli husus ise, bilgi güvenliği alanında üye ülkelerle işbirliği yapabilmektir. Bu konuda, Kolektif Güvenlik Anlaşması Örgütü Üye Devletleri İşbirliği Protokolü, veri güvenliği alanındaki cezai faaliyetlere karşı mücadele etmektedir.

Avrasya Ekonomik Birliği (AEB)

1991'de Sovyetler Birliği'nin dağılmasından sonra, Kazakistan ve Rusya Avrasya entegrasyon sürecini başlatan ülkeler oldu. Kazakistan'ın eski Cumhurbaşkanı Nursultan Nazarbayev, Avrasya entegrasyonunun aslında eski Sovyet ülkelerinin kaderi olduğunu belirtmiştir.

Avrasya Ekonomik Birliği'nin kurulmasına kadar, eski Sovyet ülkeleri arasında ekonomi ve ticaret alanında farklı bölgesel örgütler ve ittifaklar kurma girişimleri bulunmaktaydı. Bunlardan biri 1994 yılında Ermenistan, Belarus, Gürcistan, Moldova,

Kazakistan, Kırgızistan, Rusya, Tacikistan, Ukrayna ve Özbekistan arasında kurulan Serbest Ticaret Bölgesi'dir. Amacı, üye ülkeler arasındaki ihracat ve ithalat vergilerini ortadan kaldırmaktır. Ancak, Rusya onaylamayı reddettiği için hiçbir zaman yürürlüğe girmemiştir.

Diğer bir entegrasyon girişimi olan Avrasya Ekonomik Topluluğu 29 Mart 1996 tarihinde Belarus, Rusya ve Kazakistan tarafından kurulmuştur. Birkaç yıl sonra, 2000 yılında Kırgızistan ve Tacikistan da anlaşmayı imzalayarak topluluğa katılmıştı. 2006'da Özbekistan, Andijan olaylarının ardından Batı ülkeleri ve Amerika Birleşik Devletleri ile ilişkilerinin bozulmasının ardından topluluğa katılmıştır. Bununla birlikte, 2008 yılında Avrupa Birliği ile düzenlenen ilişkileri nedeniyle, Özbekistan Avrasya Ekonomik Topluluğu'ndan ayrıldı. 2015 yılında Avrasya Ekonomik Birliği'ne dönüşecek olan Avrasya Ekonomik Topluluğu, Avrasya doğal kaynakları konusunda ortak bir enerji piyasası oluşturmayı ve kullanmayı amaçlamaktadır.

2015 yılında kurulan Avrasya Ekonomik Birliği, karşılıklı ekonomik politikalar oluşturup ticari engelleri kaldırarak, mal, hizmet, iş gücü ve sermayenin (dört özgürlük) üye ülkeler arasında serbest dolaşımını gerçekleştirmeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Nursultan Nazarbayev'e göre, Avrasya Ekonomik Birliği'nin ekonomik yönü siyasi ve jeostratejik yönlerinden daha önemlidir. Öte yandan Rusya, AEB'yi politik ve stratejik emellerde kullanma konusuna daha sıcak bakmaktadır. Bu nedenle, Kazakistan ve Rusya'nın AEB'nin temel amacının ne olduğu konusunda çelişkili yaklaşımları vardır.

Kazakistan'ın AEB ile başarmak istediği hedefleri şunlardır: ticaret, ulaşım yolları ve enerji altyapısı için daha geniş pazarlara erişim; sermayenin, iş gücünün ve hizmetlerin üye ülkelere arasında serbest dolaşımı ve 2025 yılında üye devletler ile tek bir finansal piyasa oluşturmuş olmak. Avrasya Ekonomik Birliği'nin bir üyesi olmak Kazakistan'ı "Orta Asya'da küresel anlamda en entegre ülke" haline getirmiştir.

Kazakistan açısından, bölgesel ve uluslararası ekonomik entegrasyonlar, ülkenin coğrafi konumu nedeniyle de özel önem arz etmektedir. AEB, üye devletlerin ekonomisine birçok fayda sağlamakta olup küresel ekonomiye açılmasını kolaylaştırmaktadırlar. Bununla birlikte, ekonomik bir bloğun üyesi olmak diğer

ülkelere karşı müzakere avantajları sağlayabilmektedir. Ayrıca, tüketici bakış açısından, üye ülkelerdeki şirketler arasındaki rekabet dolayısıyla mal ve hizmetlerin çeşitliliğinin artması beklenmektedir.

Asya'da Etkileşim ve Güven Yaratma Önlemleri Konferansı (AİGK)

5 Ekim 1992'de, BM Genel Kurulu'nun 47. oturumunda Kazakistan'ın ilk Cumhurbaşkanı Nursultan Nazarbayev, Asya'daki etkileşim ve güven artırıcı önlemlerle ilgili bir toplantı düzenleme fikrini ilk kez açıklamıştır. Bu girişim, Asya'daki barış ve güvenlik konularında yeni bir işbirliği biçimi olarak görülmekteydi.

Asya'da Etkileşim ve Güven Yaratma Önlemleri Konferansı, üye ülkeler arasında eşitlik; sosyal, kültürel ve ekonomik işbirliği ve üye devletlerin içişlerine müdahale etmeme ilkelerine dayanmaktadır. Konferansın ana hedefleri üye ülkeler arasında iş birliğini artırmak ve Asya'daki barış, istikrar ve güvenlik ile ilgili çeşitli yaklaşımları koordine etmektir.

Nazarbayev, Asya'nın, ülkeler arasında çeşitli çatışmalar ve huzursuzlukla birlikte dünyanın en kalabalık bölgesi olduğunun ve söz konusu bu durumun Kazakistan için sorun teşkil edebileceğinin bilincinde idi. Bölgede, radikalizm, aşırıcılık, yasadışı göç, çevre sorunları, uyuşturucu kaçakçılığı, nükleer silahlanma temel sorunları oluşturmaktadır. Bundan dolayı, üye ülkeler arasında iş birliğini artırmak ve Asya'daki barış, istikrar ve güvenlik ile ilgili konularda birlikte hareket etmek amacıyla Nursultan Nazarbayev'in önerisi birçok ülke ve uluslararası örgüt tarafından destek görerek kabul edildi. Bu tarz girişimleri ile Kazakistan, Asya bölgesindeki uluslararası ilişkilerin modernleşmesine ve gelişmesine büyük katkıda bulunmuştur.

Bununla birlikte, 2014 yılında düzenlenen 4. Şanghay AİGK Zirvesi'nde, Şanghay İşbirliği Örgütü (ŞİÖ) ile Asya'da Etkileşim ve Güven Yaratma Önlemleri Konferansı arasında imzalanan Mutabakat Zaptı belgesi Konferans'ın geleceği ve örgütler arası işbirliği açısından için önemli bir dönüm noktası olmuştur. Buradan yola çıkarak söyleyebiliriz ki Kazakistan, yirmi yıldan fazla bir süredir AİGK'da daha güvenli ve barışçıl bir Asya için öncü ülke rolünü üstlenmektedir.

Şanghay İşbirliği Örgütü (ŞİÖ)

Şanghay İşbirliği Örgütü (ŞİÖ), 15 Haziran 2001 tarihinde Kuruluş Beyannamesi'nin imzalanmasıyla kurulmuştur. Günümüzde Çin Halk Cumhuriyeti, Kazakistan, Kırgızistan, Rusya, Tacikistan, Özbekistan ve eski gözlemci ülkeler Hindistan ve Pakistan, Şanghay İşbirliği Örgütü üyesidir. Afganistan, Belarus, İran ve Moğolistan ise gözlemci devletlerdir. Ayrıca, diyalog ortakları Ermenistan, Azerbaycan, Kamboçya, Nepal, Sri Lanka ve Türkiye'dir.

Şanghay İşbirliği Örgütü (ŞİÖ), üye devletler tarafından Avrasya bölgesindeki savunma, güvenlik ve politika açısından temel iş birliği örgütlerinden biri olarak kabul edilmektedir. ŞİÖ, en genel anlamda, bölgedeki terörizm, ayrılıkçılık ve radikalizm konularına odaklanmaktadır. Güvenlik konularının yanı sıra, ekonomi, ticaret, ulaştırma altyapısı, telekomünikasyon, tarım ve enerji konularında iş birliği yapılması amacıyla, 2000'li yılların ortasından itibaren ŞİÖ üyeleri arasında ekonomik ortaklıklar ortaya çıkmaya başlamıştır. Özellikle 2006 yılında, Şanghay İşbirliği Örgütü altında bir enerji kulübü oluşturma fikri Vladimir Putin tarafından önerilmiş olup zamanla Rusya ve Kazakistan için en önemli ekonomik iş birliği girişimlerinden biri olmuştur.

Şanghay İşbirliği Örgütü'nün Orta Asya cumhuriyetleri için eşsiz bir kurum oluşturduğunu vurgulamak önemlidir. Üye devletler, iki büyük bölgesel ve aynı zamanda global güç olan Rusya ve Çin'i ile eşzamanlı ittifak halinde olabilmektedirler. Kazakistan açısından tehdit oluşturabilecek olan, bölgesel güçlerden birinin boyunduruğu altına girme ihtimalini ortadan kaldırmaya destek olması nedeniyle önemli bir durumdur.

Kazakistan, Şanghay İşbirliği Örgütü'ne katılmak için çok sayıda önemli nedene sahiptir. Birincisi, Kazakistan önemli enerji rezervlerine sahip olmakla birlikte bu rezervleri dünya pazarına sunmak için yeterli altyapıya sahip değildir. Örgüte katılarak dünya pazarına açılmak amacını daha kolay gerçekleştirebilecektir. ŞİÖ'nün Kazakistan için ikinci avantajı, özellikle Çin ile olan ticaret hacmini artırmaktır. Üçüncü sebep olarak ise bölgesel ve ulus güvenliğinden bahsedebiliriz. Kazakistan, yüksek orandaki Rus popülasyonunu Kazakistan topraklarındaki potansiyel bir tehdit

olarak görmektedir ve ŞİÖ'nün bir parçası olmanın, ülkede yaşayan Rus nüfusunun Kazakistan'ın iç meselelerine müdahalesini önleyebileceğini ümit etmektedir.

Kazakistan'ın bölgeselleşme çabalarını dış politika hedefleri çerçevesinde analiz ettiğim bu bölümde vardığım sonuç; Kazakistan dış politikasının temel stratejisi olan “çok yönlü” dış politikanın bir parçası olarak Kazakistan'ın bölgesel örgütlere önem verdiği ve onları geliştirmede de aktif rol oynadığı yönündedir.

Bu çalışmanın ana araştırma konusu olarak, yukarıda bahsedilen bu bölgesel örgütlerin Kazakistan'ın dış politikasına etkilerini analiz ettim. Ülkenin, küresel dünyada görünürlüğünü ve tanınmasını sağlayan istikrarlı bir ekonomik ve politik gündem izleme çabalarını analiz ettim. Kazakistan'ın dış politika hedeflerinin (egemenliği ve ulusal güvenliği sağlama, bölgesel bütünlük, piyasa ekonomisinin çeşitliliği ve sürdürülebilir uluslararası meşruiyet gibi), ülkelerin bölgesel entegrasyon çabalarının temel nedenlerine paralel olduğu sonucuna vardım. Bu nedenle Kazakistan, bölgeselciliği ve bölgesel örgütlenmeleri dış politika hedeflerini yerine getirmek için bir araç olarak kullanabilir.

Açıkça görülüyor ki, Kazakistan'ın bağımsızlıktan sonraki dönemde hedeflediği istikrarı sağlayabilmesi amacıyla Nursultan Nazarbayev, dış politikayı ve diğer ülkeler ile ilişkileri dengede tutmak için dikkatli bir politika izlemiştir. Kazakistan, geçmişten öğrendiklerini gelecek politikalarına başarılı bir şekilde uygulayarak, diğer bölgesel ve küresel ülkelerle ilişkilerinde “çok yönlü” dış politika yaklaşımının başarılı bir örneği olduğunu göstermiştir.

Bununla birlikte Kazakistan; doğal kaynakları, büyüme hızı, GSYİH ve kişi başına düşen milli geliri dikkate alındığında hızla gelişen bir ülkedir. Tüm dünyada ülkeler arasında dış politikaların değişen özelliğine bağlı olarak bazı problemler ortaya çıksa da, şu ana kadarki bağımsızlık sonrası süreci nasıl ele aldığına bakıldığında, Kazakistan dış ilişkilerinin yakın gelecekte de istikrarlı ve dengede olacağını söyleyebiliriz. Sonuçta, uluslararası ve bölgesel organizasyonların bir parçası olmak ve ülkeler arasındaki ilişkileri sözleşmeler ve anlaşmalar ile dengelemek Kazakistan'ın “çok yönlü” dış politika amacına da katkıda bulunmuştur. Bahse konu bu denge, hem

Kazakistan'ın uzun vadeli hedeflerine ulaşmasında, hem de halk arasında ortaya çıkabilecek potansiyel bölücü faaliyetlerin önlenmesinde etkili olacaktır.

Bu anlamda, Kazakistan'ın bölgesel ve uluslararası organizasyonlara dahil olma yoluyla olası avantajlı anlaşmalar ve işbirlikleri ile birleştiği “çok yönlü” dış politika yaklaşımı rasyonel bir yaklaşım olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır. Bölgesel entegrasyon, Kazakistan'ın dış politika hedeflerinin gerçekleştirilmesine büyük katkı sağlamaktadır. Kazakistan'ın bölgeselcilik ve entegrasyon çabalarının; “çok yönlü” bir dış politika, ekonomik kalkınma ve Avrasya bölgesindeki egemenliğini sürdürmek için yol gösterici etkisini hafife almamak gerekir.

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