

On becoming a development cooperation partner: Kazakhstan's foreign policy, identity, and international norms

Insebayeva Nafissa

Abstract

This article joins the discussion on foreign aid triggered by the rise of multiplicity of emerging donors in international development. Informed by the constructivist framework of analysis, this article evaluates the philosophy and core features of Kazakhstan's chosen development aid model and explains the factors that account for the construction of distinct aid patterns of Kazakh donorship. This article asserts that Kazakhstan embraces a hybrid identity as a foreign aid provider through combining features and characteristics pertaining to both—emerging and traditional donors. On one hand, it discursively constructed its identity as a “development cooperation partner,” adopting the relevant discourse of mutual benefit, respect for sovereignty, and non-interference, which places it among those providers that actively associate themselves with the community of “emerging donors.” On the other hand, it selectively complies with policies and practices advocated by traditional donors. This study suggests that a combination of domestic and international factors played an important role in shaping Kazakhstan's understanding of the aid-giving practices, and subsequently determined its constructed aid modality.

Keywords

Emerging donors, foreign aid, foreign policy, KazAID, Kazakhstan, official development assistance

Submitted Date: 4 November 2019

Acceptance Date: 24 June 2020

Introduction

Over the past several decades, the international development landscape has become increasingly polycentric (Fejerskov, Lundsgaarde & Cold-Ravnkilde, 2016; Kragelund, 2015; Mawdsley, 2018). Despite this trend, however, the research in the field of development cooperation is yet to examine the full diversity of emerging actors entering the foreign aid scene. While some of these new providers have become a subject of intense scrutiny and discussion (e.g., Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa [BRICS]), others have often been left aside. As a result, there remains a vacuum of critical knowledge informed by fieldwork regarding not-less-important cohorts of second-tier providers (as discussed in Bergamaschi, Moore & Tickner, 2017; Jaffrelot, 2009; Mawdsley, 2012; Sato, Shiga, Kobayashi & Kondoh, 2007; Scott, vom Hau & Hulme, 2010). The case of Kazakhstan exemplifies the point.

The Republic of Kazakhstan became the first official development assistance (ODA) provider in the Central

Asian region in December 2014 after adopting a series of relevant laws and announcing the decision to establish the Kazakhstan Agency for International Development (KazAID). To date, however, Kazakh aid has for the most part remained woefully understudied. Despite some useful research on the motivations behind Kazakhstan's aid-giving, very little is known about how Kazakhstan has emerged as a development cooperation provider, and most importantly what kind of development actor Kazakhstan has

Special Program in Japanese and Eurasian Studies, Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Tsukuba, Tsukuba, Japan

Corresponding author:

Insebayeva Nafissa, Special Program in Japanese and Eurasian Studies, Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Tsukuba, 305-0006 Room 301-1, 1-1-1, Tsukuba 305-8577, Ibaraki, Japan.



become. What kind of norms, values, discourses, and practices has it adopted and why?

Most studies in the field suggest that Kazakh foreign aid practices are largely driven by economic, political, and strategic objectives. In line with this, the key motivating factors for Kazakh foreign assistance provision are typically framed along the following spectrum: from regional security and economic concerns (Mirzayan, 2014) and aspirations for regional leadership (De Cordier, 2014) to “external legitimization” intentions (Posega, 2015) and desire to maximize its soft power (Malyshev & Bainazarova, 2016).

This emphasis on motives for Kazakh aid in the relevant literature is explained by the widespread conceptualization of foreign aid as an instrument for achieving donors’ foreign policy interests (Hook, 1995; McKinlay & Mughan, 1984; Morgenthau, 1962). Rooted in rationalist understanding, these studies are largely concerned with examining how Kazakhstan strategically pursues its interests as a self-interested rational actor, rather than inquire where those interests and preferences come from (Wendt, 1999).

This research, however, is based on a constructivist approach to international relations (IR), which starts with the premise that “ideas matter” (Jepperson, Wendt & Katzenstein, 1996). According to constructivists, interests are neither self-evident nor static (Klotz & Lynch, 2007, p. 87), but are socially constructed. It is precisely norms, culture, and identities that are considered as “ideational stuff” involved in that social construction. As such, “the black box of interests and identity formation” (Checkel, 1998, p. 326) with regard to Kazakhstan’s case needs to be unpacked. To put it in another way, it is crucial to comprehend how non-material structures (e.g., historical experiences, norms, values, and culture) condition donors’ identities because identities inform interests, which in turn guide behavior of states in terms of their foreign aid (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998; Hopf, 2002; Katzenstein, 1996; Reus-Smit, 2013).

Drawing on the fieldwork in Nur-Sultan (Kazakhstan) and Almaty (Kazakhstan) between 2015 and 2019, this article argues that Kazakhstan embraces a hybrid identity as a foreign aid provider through combining features and characteristics pertaining to both—emerging and traditional donors. On one hand, it discursively constructed its identity as a “development cooperation partner,” adopting the relevant discourse of mutual benefit, respect for sovereignty, and non-interference, which places it among those providers that actively associate themselves with the community of “emerging donors.” On the other hand, it selectively complies with policies and practices advocated by the traditional donor camp. This study suggests that a combination of domestic and international factors explains distinct patterns of Kazakh development aid policy.

Methodologically speaking, the work draws on qualitative and quantitative data, and employs critical discourse analysis. Primary sources such as official statements,

speeches, and interviews with Kazakh high-ranking government officials (at the level of the former Minister of Foreign Affairs and heads of departments at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan (MFA RK) employees of international organizations and agencies (United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], Israel’s Agency for International Development Cooperation MASHAV, Japan’s International Cooperation Agency [JICA]) conducted in Kazakh, Russian, and English are examined, and secondary sources, such as articles on foreign aid as well as statistical data, are surveyed. Discourse analysis has been applied to official documents such as the “Law on Official Development Assistance,” “The Concept of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the sphere of official development assistance” “Plan of the Nation,” “Foreign Policy Concept 2014–2020,” “State policy in the field of ODA for 2017–2020,” and other relevant primary sources on Kazakhstan’s foreign policy and foreign aid, including but not limited to the Annual Addresses of the President of Kazakhstan.

This article proceeds with a brief discussion of the changing development landscape, and then shifts to the outline of the key features and characteristics of Kazakh foreign aid. It also provides the historical background for the evolution of Kazakh donorship, followed by the discussion of Kazakhstan’s chosen model of aid and factors that influenced such choices.

The changing development landscape

The foreign aid landscape has witnessed an increasing diversification in donorship triggered by the emergence of multiplicity of “new” actors in international development, also known as “emerging donors,” “non-DAC donors,” and “Southern donors.” These labels have often been used as a shorthand to set those new actors apart from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC)¹ members who are often referred to as “established donors,” “traditional donors,” or “Western/Northern donors” (Kim & Lightfoot, 2011; Seifert, 2016; Woods, 2008).

Despite its relatively wide usage, however, many commentators have pointed out that the categorization of such actors as “new” or “emerging” is quite imprecise (as argued by Chin & Qadir, 2012). First, many of these “new/emerging” actors are not novices in the field of development assistance (e.g., China, India, and Brazil; see Chin & Qadir, 2012; Kragelund, 2019). Second, the existing umbrella terms may misleadingly entail a connotation of homogeneity among the “new” development aid providers and disregard substantial differences among them (as shown in Fejerskov et al. 2016; Kragelund, 2015; Rowlands, 2012). Furthermore, while new development actors are diverse, by the same token, traditional actors are not homogeneous (Yamada, 2016). Often, they diverge in the way

they organize their aid and prioritize aid's purposes (e.g., Denmark, France, and Germany; see Lancaster, 2007). A good example comes from Japan, which, despite being regarded as an "established" donor, is still often criticized for not meeting certain expectations of the DAC community coordinated aid (Wissenbach, 2010).

Indeed, "new" providers constitute as diverse and heterogeneous a group of actors as do the "old" donors. However, they appear to be held together through the process of collective identity building. Viewed in this light, "old"/"traditional"/"Northern" and "new"/"emerging"/"Southern" development actors can be conceived as members of "imagined communities" (Anderson, 1983), whose boundaries are shaped and reshaped through the process of "Othering." Mawdsley (2016), for instance, has powerfully shown how traditional Northern donors have been going through three interrelated "crises" due to the rise of "new" providers: "ontological (a challenge to their 'traditional' monopoly of donor identity), ideational (the erosion of their normative/agenda-setting dominance) and material (the relative and absolute rise of the South)" (p. 59).

As such, providers of development cooperation, regardless of their diversity, draw lines of differences not only according to material characteristics but also through the prism of ideas, norms, values, and identities (Lancaster, 2007). The dominant narrative framings of OECD-DAC aid and South-South cooperation (SSC) exemplify the point. More precisely, the narratives embraced by traditional Northern donors, which adopt the OECD-DAC development cooperation approach, emphasize charity and moral obligation for the less fortunate, transfer of expertise based on superior knowledge, and the virtues of suspending recipients' obligation to reciprocate.

This contrasts with SSC narratives that have typically stressed principles of solidarity and equality between partners, sharing knowledge based on experience, political non-interference, and the virtue of mutual benefit and recognition of reciprocity (Gulrajani & Swiss, 2019; Mawdsley, 2012). Numerous studies have emphasized that these SSC principles in fact help to "foster a common Southern identity" (see Aneja, 2018, p. 142). Thus, even though SSC providers are highly heterogeneous in terms of priorities, policies, institutional arrangements, and engagement with international forums and initiatives (Renzi & Seifert, 2014), the common denominator these "new" actors share is their desire "to preserve their 'Southern' identity" (Chin & Quadir, 2012, p. 500), which differs from that of Northern "Others." As Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Daley (2018) have further put it "the contrast with the established aid system, rooted in the legacy and reproducing unequal international relations" is at the core of Southern identity.²

The encounter between these "new" and "old" actors, discourses, and practices in development cooperation has

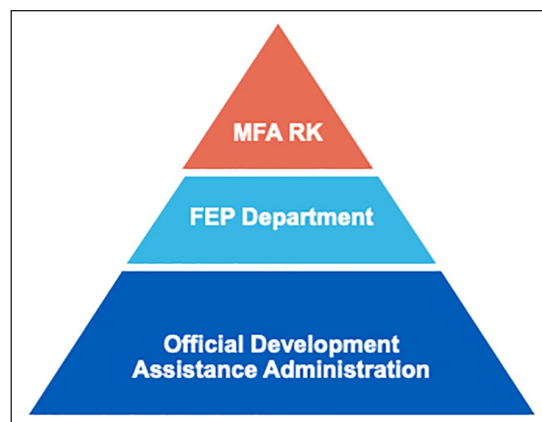


Figure 1. The structure of Kazakh ODA.

Source: Author's compilation.

triggered an impressive wave of interesting research (for example, see Fejerskov et al., 2016; Mawdsley, 2018).

Initially, there was an expectation that traditional donors would "socialize" "new" providers and integrate them into the DAC system. However, recent studies have documented a reverse trend as well—the "southernization" of international development (Mawdsley, 2018), once again generating heated debate over the future of the international development regime. Given these considerations, the questions of who the new actors are, what ideas they bring to development, and how they respond to existing ones gain more significance.

Key features and characteristics of Kazakh foreign aid

As it has been revealed through conducted interviews with Kazakh ODA officials, the structure of Kazakh aid remains in a state of continuous development. Currently, Kazakhstan's foreign aid architecture is confined within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Figure 1), which plays the leading role in Kazakhstan's development cooperation activities. The responsible MFA body that overlooks the conducted work in the field of development cooperation is Foreign Economic Policy Department, which includes ODA Administration.³

The MFA is responsible for coordinating the activities of relevant state bodies, the ODA operator KazAID, and other organizations in accordance with the main directors of state policy on ODA, approved by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan.⁴ The MFA is also in charge of developing proposals on the main directions of the state policy in the sphere of ODA.⁵ The Ministry submits a drafted proposal for consideration of the Government and further approval by the President.

All ODA project proposals for the upcoming fiscal year are required to be submitted to the MFA by 1 February of the current fiscal year, and according to the regulations, no

submissions are accepted past the deadline. The Ministry, then, carefully evaluates submitted project proposals for their foreign policy expediency. In case the project proposal is given positive consideration on the part of the MFA, it is included in the draft of the relevant action plan and a plan for payment of voluntary contributions to international organizations for ODA. It should be noted that state bodies within their competence deliver organizational and technical assistance for the implementation of ODA projects at the request of the MFA, as well as offer expert assistance and provide the Ministry with implementation reports. The MFA provides the Government with the reporting information on the progress of the ODA project implementation.

Speaking of the core guiding principles of Kazakh foreign aid, the study reveals the following findings.

First, the horizontal model of cooperation, as well as mutual solidarity and equality, lies at the heart of how Kazakhstan understands development aid provision. Although it has not been clearly stated in the Concept on ODA, it becomes evident from the analysis that Kazakhstan discursively constructs itself as being a part of the South–South Cooperation (SSC)—a broad cooperation framework that distinguishes from the North–South Cooperation (NSC) due to its emphasis on the notion of horizontality. To be more specific, SSC providers declare that their engagement with recipients is horizontal—which means it is based on mutual solidarity and should be seen as cooperation between equal partners that ought to benefit all parties involved (The Concept of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the sphere of official development assistance, 2013). The language Kazakhstani officials choose when referring to the national aid strategy is of particular interest. Recipient countries are referred to as “partners,” which once again stresses the horizontal power distribution under Kazakhstan’s ODA scheme. This goes in line with the widespread practice among the “emerging” donor countries that exhibit reluctance to call themselves “donors,” and instead, prefer to be called “development partners.” On top of that, they often do not depict their assistance as delivery of “aid” per se, but rather portray it as a process of building “development partnerships” based on solidarity and mutual respect.⁶

According to Kazakh governmental officials in the field of ODA³,

“...the terminology is extremely important. We work closely with representatives of other countries, and our partners sometimes have mixed reactions [toward the terminology]. We pay attention to this, and we try to take into account if our partners have a desire to cooperate, and if they are interested in us assisting their development.”⁷

Second, the principle of non-interference is at the core of Kazakhstan’s development aid-giving practice. It has

been clearly stated that the country would not intervene into recipients’ domestic affairs and governmental processes due to the fact that Kazakhstan supports equality and mutually beneficial partnership, and “interacts with aid recipient-countries on an equal footing” (Concept, 2013).

Moreover, another key guiding principle of Kazakhstan’s ODA distribution model is the principle of no political conditionality. Kazakhstan benefits from political neutrality and does not seek to use aid as a tool to promote any ideological interests; thus, there is no explicitly articulated conditionality in terms of human rights and democratic practices associated with Kazakh aid.⁸ Roughly speaking, Kazakhstan does not call for institutional change: adherence to liberal democratic principles and neoliberalism, as well as fostering civil rights, good governance, and human rights abroad, is not on the Kazakh agenda. However, even if Kazakhstan does not support “political (Western) conditionality,” this does not mean that there is no conditionality at all. After all, the main aim and objective of Kazakh ODA is to build mutually beneficial relations with partner countries. In other words, “the level of relations between Kazakhstan and the country in question” always matters (Dyussebekova, 2018).

In addition, prioritizing technical cooperation for capacity development has been emphasized by the local policymakers to be one of the main features of Kazakh aid. Kazakhstan highlights that the main purpose of its aid is to assist partner countries in building their self-development capacity, while the state’s aid strategy rests on principles of respect for state sovereignty and national interests of their partners. The priority is given to technical cooperation (Concept, 2013) that is seen as the main approach to recipients’ capacity development, which is enabled through knowledge, skills, and technology transfer in the areas that Kazakhstan has a comparative advantage in. This is perceived to be a crucial instrument in assisting partner countries in the process of building their capacity for leading and managing their own development aimed at stimulating economic growth and reducing poverty.

Finally, focused assistance is the final core guiding principle of Kazakh aid provision. Kazakhstan identified the following sectors as priority areas for cooperation: education; health; agriculture and food security; environment protection; conflict management and security; combating transnational crime; and public policy management.

One should note here, however, the Law on Official Development Assistance includes the clause, which reads as follows: “other sectors defined by the main directions of the state policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the field of ODA.” This clause leaves Kazakhstan the necessary freedom for maneuver in case of need.

Hence, Kazakhstan has discursively constructed itself as a “development cooperation partner,” adopting the discourse

of mutual benefit, respect for sovereignty, and non-interference and associating oneself with “emerging donors” community. At the same time, however, it also selectively complies with policies and practices advocated by “traditional donors” (focused assistance, donor harmonization, and attention to social development among others), which will be discussed in detail in the following sections.

Explaining Kazakh modality of development cooperation

Donors’ identities can assume various forms depending on the interaction between domestic and international environment (Reus-Smit, 2005). Kazakhstan embraces a hybrid identity as a foreign aid donor. More specifically, the combination of features and characteristics pertaining to both emerging and traditional donors resulted in the construction of the distinct patterns of Kazakh development aid policy. Building on the understanding that the donor identity is not pre-given, but always acquired, constructed, and reconstructed (Wendt, 1999), the second half of this article examines both domestic and international factors that condition Kazakhstan’s donor identity and, subsequently, its interests.

Domestic factors

The domestic context and interests of stakeholders: the drafting of the Law on ODA. In April 2013, after a series of consultations with the United Nations (UN), its national partners, and donors, Kazakhstan presented the ODA Concept of the Republic of Kazakhstan—the document ought to set the roadmap of the state’s development aid initiative. The Kazakh national system of ODA was established under the MFA of Kazakhstan with the operating budget of 0.01 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) for the purpose of providing development assistance primarily to the countries in its immediate neighborhood.

The Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On Official Development Assistance” has been drafted through a collaborative process involving different bodies. For example, members of the Ak Zhol Democratic Party⁹ (2014) made a series of proposals to the project. The Party’s suggestions to include “reduction of unemployment” to the list of the main goals and objectives and “fight against corruption” to the list of sectoral priorities were declined. It could be explained by Kazakhstan’s reluctance to interfere in others’ internal affairs, which addressing issues such as eradication of unemployment and corruption sometimes requires, because both problems are usually approached through the promotion of institutional change. Moreover, Kazakhstan has often been described by international experts as a state that has been struggling with a high level of internal corruption. Transparency International (2016) put Kazakhstan in the list of top 50 most corrupt countries in the world; therefore,

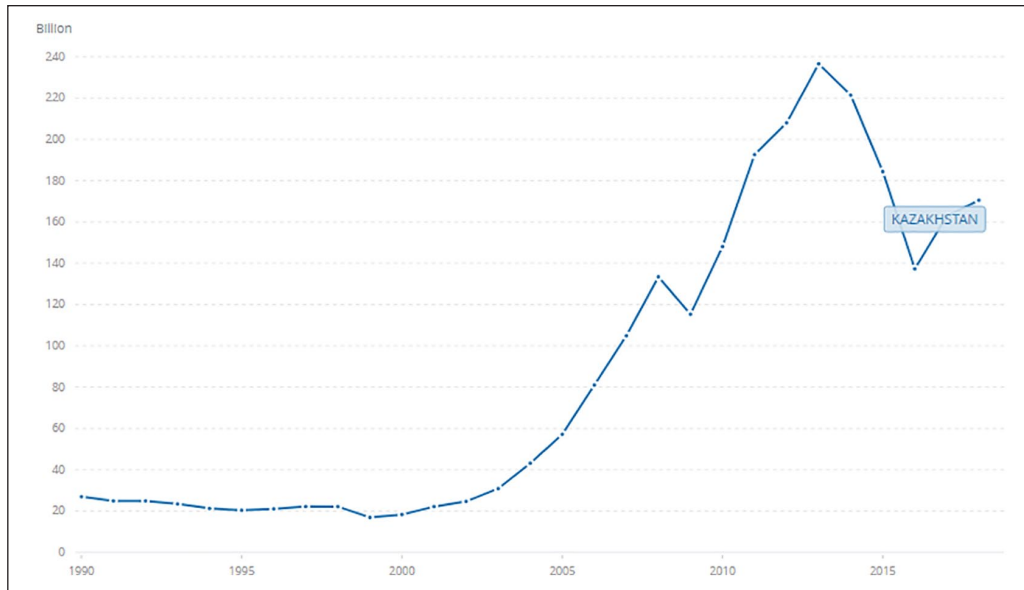
some could argue that Kazakhstan may not be the perfect fit for advising its partners on how to eliminate or reduce domestic corruption. In contrast, other two suggestions (inclusion of “improvement of business climate” and “land use and natural resource management” to the list of sectoral priorities of the national aid system) have received a favorable consideration and eventually appeared in the Official Law on ODA. Both these revolve around economic development, not political transformations (Nazarbayev, 2011), which could explain why the Government eventually approved these less politically sensitive proposals.

These were not the only changes introduced to the Law, however. As such, the Senate—the Upper House of the Parliament—suggested amendments ought to clarify the powers invested in the Government in accordance with the constitutional Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan” (“Senat ver-nul,” 2014). The Mazhilis (2014) approved the introduced modification, which did not change the conceptual framework of the initiative.

Having analyzed the differences between the two versions, it can be concluded that the authority of the Government over the national aid agency has eventually been expanded with the body not only being responsible for the establishment of KazAID but also having the legal capacity to reorganize and/or shut it down. Nevertheless, the Senate has also proposed to limit the role the Government played in the sphere of ODA. For instance, the original draft of the Law equipped the Government with the power to “approve policy documents in the field of official development assistance,” but the updated version of the document stated that the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan was to “develop the main directions of the state policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the sphere of ODA, and submit them for approval to the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan.” In other words, the President has the ultimate authority over Kazakhstani ODA activities. Such power dynamics within Kazakhstan’s aid program mirrors the political power structure within the country with the most power invested in the President.¹⁰

Kazakhstan as a recipient: the country’s development experience. Apart from the domestic political discussions revolving around the interests of the stakeholders involved in the drafting of the relevant law, another important factor, which contributed to the process of Kazakhstan’s ODA design, is Kazakhstan’s historical legacy, in particular, its development experience and experience as a former recipient country.

After the fall of the Soviet Union, Kazakhstan, which was the last republic to secede from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), entered a period full of economic, political, and social challenges. Despite possessing the abundance of natural resources, the country, as a newly formed independent state, could not benefit from these



Graph 1. Gross domestic product (current US\$) of the Republic of Kazakhstan 1990–2018.

Source: World Bank national accounts data (2019a).

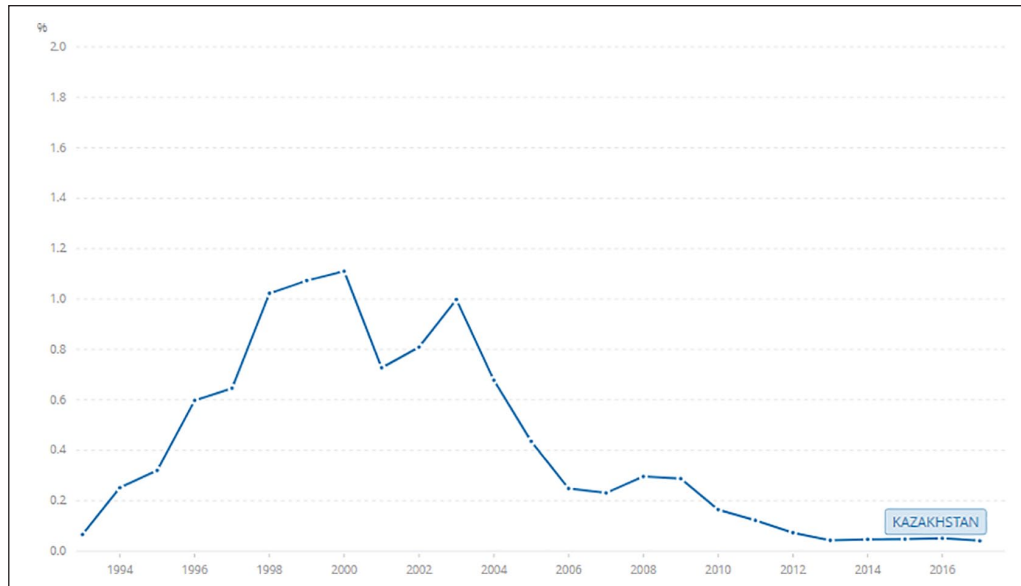
deposits right away due to its dependency on Russia’s pipelines (Bendini, 2013). Russia used such circumstances to its own advantage by introducing a series of tariffs that hindered Kazakhstan’s ability to conduct trade and contributed to the deep recession the latter faced during the first half of the 1990s (Pomfret, 2005). A slight economic recovery in the mid-1990 was followed by a series of severe negative shocks mainly caused by the low oil prices and the 1998 Russian crisis (Pomfret, 2005). Therefore, the country has undergone a significant decrease in its GDP during the late 1990s (Graph 1). Such challenges that Kazakhstan—one of the most tightly integrated states into the Soviet economy—faced called for finances from the outside to assist the country in establishing strong institutions necessary for building a stable and dynamic economy.

As such, Central Asian states—Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan—were added to the list of ODA recipients created by DAC in 1992, soon after gaining independence in 1991. Having entered a period of uncertainty, they started to engage with various international financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and Asian Development Bank, which could offer help in the form of aid in exchange for implementation of a string of neoliberal reforms. This, of course, should be seen as a part of the larger picture, where the “traditional” donors have used foreign aid as a tool to advance institutional transformation and promote certain (neoliberal) values in developing states.

More specifically, it is a rather widespread practice for “traditional” donors to condition their aid because it is believed that they represent the actors who managed to

achieve high levels of economic and political development and, hence, are able to assist their less developed counterparts by promoting institutional change in the countries’ recipients. The most significant impact of this conditionality on the respective benefactors of aid is that it limits their independence and autonomous capacity to choose the development course, which they themselves deem appropriate. Restricted by the obligations attached to the provided aid, recipients have to follow the development path supported and actively promoted by the “established” donors’ community. More specifically, after the end of the Cold War, “good governance” has been advocated to be a necessary precondition for development. As such, having the technical monopoly over international aid flows after the fall of the socialist bloc, traditional donors started to push developing states to implement democratic reforms in return for their assistance (Lancaster, 2007).

In October 2000, however, following a deep economic shock, the first President of Kazakhstan Nazarbayev (2000) presented his annual Address to the People of Kazakhstan, in which he emphasized how important it was for Kazakhstan to cut its dependency on foreign aid. It was announced that the number of short-term loans and aid, in general, accepted by the country from foreign donors would undergo significant cuts; according to the new vision, the country was to finance domestic reforms with its “own” money. With the appropriate reforms that followed this announcement, Kazakhstan was relatively soon to become the most donor-independent state in the region with international actors, in the face of foreign financial institutions and aid agencies, having less influence over Kazakhstani government in this respect (Graph 2).



Graph 2. Net official development assistance received (% of GNI)—Kazakhstan (1993–2017).
Source: The World Bank national accounts data (2019b).

On 28 February 2007, in his Address to the People of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Nazarbayev (2007) stressed the progress the country had made and once again expressed the commitment of the state to continue to follow its principle of self-reliance and to continue efforts toward the establishment of a knowledge-based economy by investing into human capital. From this perspective, instead of referring to international expertise, Kazakhstan started to build a pool of local professionals, which the national economy was to rely on in the future.

Through invoking Kazakhstan's history, this discussion aims to emphasize that Kazakhstan's identity as an aid recipient has contributed to its understanding of what foreign aid is, how aid strategies are to be designed, and how aid is to be practiced.

Kazakhstan's experience as a former recipient-state has undoubtedly influenced our current development cooperation policy. Firstly, it is worth noting the experience of international donors during the time they operated in Kazakhstan. We seriously analyzed their approach—what worked for them, what did not work, how they built a dialogue with our government. Secondly, we analyzed our reaction to the activities of international donors. For example, what we were interested in, what mistakes we have made. Based on our experience as a former recipient country, we perfectly understand how our partner countries feel and how they view assistance. (Interview 2, 2019)³

Having realized the drawbacks of aid dependency, which come in the form of political and economic pressures, Kazakhstan's reluctance to rely too heavily on loans and foreign aid providers has led to its determinacy to promote self-reliance abroad.

Moreover, it can be argued that Kazakhstan's experience as an aid recipient contributed to the fact that Kazakhstan, as a donor, does not attempt to instruct partner countries on how to develop through imposing conditionality, which distinguishes it from the traditional donors.

The latter have been known for the aid paradigm, which is premised on an inherently hierarchical relationship between donors and recipients. Kazakhstan, however, supports the development path chosen by its partner countries, which is based on their "national interests, partnership with Kazakhstan and international environment" (Decree 415, 2014). The country stands by an "individual approach that takes into account political, economic, social and national characteristics of each recipient state" (Concept, 2013). For instance, within the framework of its development assistance, Kazakhstan has implemented an education project involving 1,000 students from Afghanistan for the purpose of fostering the state's development. Importantly, the selected disciplines offered as a part of this program do not exclusively feature the ones proposed by Kazakhstan; rather the education initiative is designed to meet the needs and interests of the recipient and covers fields of specialization offered by the Afghan side with a consideration of Kazakhstan's capabilities.

Therefore, Kazakhstan, as a former aid recipient and simultaneously a foreign aid provider, significantly differs from the Western donors in this respect—instead of introducing conditionality on its aid, the country focuses on assisting the recipient countries in building up their economic capacity (Concept, 2013). This mirrors Kazakhstan's own development trajectory, which is based on the official discourse "Economy first, then politics." The first president of Kazakhstan, Nazarbayev, has emphasized on multiple

occasions that political instability is something the country should always strive to avoid, while economic growth ought to be the focus of the nation's development.¹¹ Kazakhstan's understanding of the successful development path is, thus, "built around the ideas of a strong independent state, stability, economic development and technocratic rationality" (Insebayeva, 2016).

Such focus on fostering "self-reliance" in recipient countries once again serves as a reflection of Kazakhstan's identity as a former aid recipient, and its formed values and beliefs, which the country announced back in 2000. For instance, while addressing the people of Kyrgyzstan, Nazarbayev advised Kazakhstan's neighbors to stop relying on international assistance and loans and to start "working more" ("Nursultan Nazarbayev," 2012). Afghanistan has received a similar message, which stated that "the country should rely on its own strength; It is impossible to assure sustainable growth of the state relying on humanitarian aid and loans" ("Kazakhstan prodolzhit," 2010).

The experience of being an aid recipient as well as Kazakhstan's choice in favor of knowledge-based development has ultimately affected the country's foreign aid policy and aid patterns later on when the state became a donor itself.

International factors

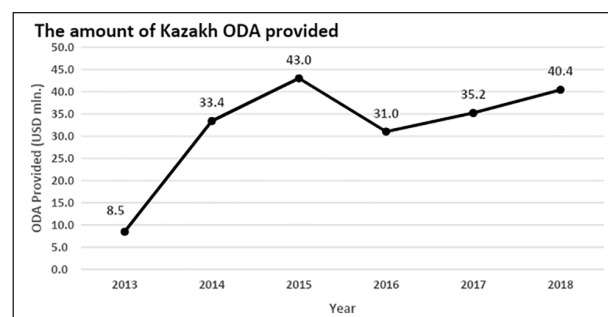
Regardless of the aforementioned points that imply Kazakhstan's belonging to the "emerging" donors' "imagined community," Kazakhstan also aims to contribute to the development of the established aid regime through compliance with particular international norms and standards embraced by DAC donors' group.

In particular, the main priority directions in the formation of the ODA system were proclaimed to be Kazakhstan's participation in the global dialogue and ODA coordination efforts, as well as the establishment and deepening of cooperation with the OECD DAC. As such, taking into account the general course toward rapprochement with the OECD, after a series of bilateral consultation between DAC and the Kazakhstan government, in 2015, Kazakhstan was granted the official status of Invitee to DAC. This status gives the country an opportunity to attend all meetings sponsored by the Committee and get involved in the international dialogue without any financial, legal, or other obligations.¹²

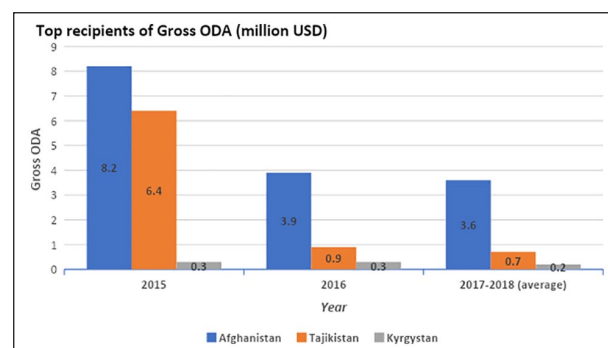
Hence, over the past few years, Kazakhstan has participated in a number of DAC-led roundtables and working groups and has observed the meetings of the DAC Network on Development Evaluation and the DAC Working Party on Development Finance Statistics.³ The country has further enhanced its involvement in the OECD-DAC through making noticeable steps toward greater transparency pertaining to its development aid

flows. In particular, the MFA RK, which is responsible for interaction with this structural unit of the OECD, has submitted six aggregated statistical reports to DAC.¹³ The documents contain government-collected information on the ODA provided by the Republic of Kazakhstan to foreign countries in the period 2013–2018. According to the reports, the total amount of Kazakhstan's ODA raised from US\$8.49 million in 2013 to US\$35.2 million in 2017 and US\$40.4 million in 2018. It must be noted, however, that despite such efforts, to date, there is no real-time aid database that features information on the country's ODA activities, and the Kazakh mechanism of aid-giving seems to lack clear transparency and integrity guidelines.

Regardless, as it is seen in Kazakhstan, the inclusion of the country's data in the official DAC reports signifies official recognition of Kazakhstan's donor activities by the international community. This, in turn, is said to significantly strengthen Kazakhstan's position on the global arena and



Source: Compiled from the data obtained during fieldwork.



Source: Compiled from the data obtained during fieldwork.

influence potential political and image dividends the country can expect from this type of engagement.³

Furthermore, in accordance with DAC recommendations on aid institutions in 2014, the Government passed the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan on ODA. To implement the Law, the MFA has adopted a number of bylaws and regulations, such as Orders of the Minister of Foreign

Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On Approval of the Rules for Interaction between Government Bodies and Organizations in the Field of ODA” of 6 February 2015 and “On Approval of the Form of a Project Proposal of ODA” of 6 February 2015. Moreover, on 31 January 2017, a Decree 415 of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan “On approval of the main directions of state policy in the field of ODA for 2017-2020” (hereinafter referred to as ONGP (Russian acronym for “Main Directions of State Policy [Основные Направления Государственной Политики])) was adopted in accordance with Article 6 of Kazakhstan’s Law on ODA. The ONGP for 2017–2020 are medium term in nature and are aligned with Kazakhstan’s foreign policy priorities. They are also synchronized with the Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan for the period up to 2020. The document is primarily aimed at determining geographical and sectoral priorities for the country’s ODA activities, as well as the forms and mechanisms of financing, and key parameters and instruments of engagement¹⁴

It should be noted that Kazakhstan was the first donor in Eurasia to pass relevant laws on national system of ODA with the help of the UNDP¹⁵ something other regional contributors (Russia and Azerbaijan) were lacking at the time. Therefore, Kazakhstan could be called a “pioneer” when it comes to the adoption of such legislation, which at the time had no analogues in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) space.¹⁶

In addition to following certain OECD-DAC guidelines, Kazakhstan’s decision to adopt the principle of “reducing the number of duplicative ODA programs” and “coordinating Kazakhstan’s assistance measures with activities of other bilateral and multilateral donors” Concept, 2013 can also be reflective of the state’s motivation to meet international norms and standards (Law on ODA, 2014). To the international foreign aid community, division of labor or complementarity has been a vital approach since 2005 that played an important role in achieving one of the main principles of the Paris Declaration—donor harmonization. Such strategy calls for the identification of donor’s respective comparative advantages, which would then serve as the basis for global collaborative effort toward more division of labor and complementarity in the world aid architecture (“Division of Labor,” 2010). It is also worth mentioning that a set of principles mentioned in the official documents on Kazakhstan’s foreign aid resonate with the Busan Partnership agreement (2012) that specifically highlights a set of common principles for all development actors, which are key to making development cooperation effective: focus on results, partnerships for development, transparency and shared responsibility, and ownership.

Speaking of specific projects, in 2016, Kazakhstan, in cooperation with the UNDP, the Government of Japan, and the JICA, launched its very first ODA program, which targeted Afghanistan.¹⁷ The project was designed to serve two purposes: to “improve Kazakhstan’s efforts to build a national system of official development assistance,” and “to assist Afghanistan in raising capacity at a government level, an ordinary civil level, and in gender equality”.¹² More specifically, it is reported that the project was aimed at expanding female economic independence and rights in Afghanistan.

Furthermore, Kazakhstan believes that development of technological capabilities, as well as human and institutional capacity, is an essential pre-condition for growth. Therefore, the country stresses the principal source of its comparative advantage—its technical and organizational knowledge, which it has accumulated throughout the years of independence. Thus, in line with DAC standards, Kazakhstan pays significant attention to social sectors to promote growth and development in beneficiary countries.

For instance, as it has been mentioned above, an agreement between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, under which 1,000 Afghan students were to be trained at Kazakh higher education institutions, came into force back in 2010 (Nazarbayev 2013). Nazarbayev stated that the main goal of the efforts of the states involved in Afghanistan, including Kazakhstan, should be economic development of the region, and not achievement of local military objectives (Nazarbayev, 2010). In this light, Kazakhstan’s education initiative, according to Nazarbayev, was specifically designed to address these challenges in the country (Nazarbayev, 2010).

Kazakhstan’s 2015 decision to deliver development assistance to countries of Africa, Oceania, and the Caribbean through its contributions to local capacity building in terms of training for young professionals is another illustration of the country’s commitment to DAC principles. In 2015, Kazakhstan implemented the AFRICANA project aimed at developing a positive image of the country in the recipient states, as well as at building and strengthening professional capacity of the participants (mid-career professionals, graduates, and researchers), through organizing trainings for specialists in the fields of oil and gas exploration, public health care, and agriculture from 23 African states (UNDP, 2017).

The provided discussion shows the country’s aspirations at following certain norms set by the traditional aid providers.

As was stated by one of the Kazakh high-ranking government officials “Cooperation with the OECD is given great attention. The DAC approaches (Development

Assistance Committee) are the gold standard, we cannot ignore it. The world's experience is concentrated there, and we want to be a member of the OECD club".¹⁸

The question that remains of great importance is, thus, why is selective compliance with norms embedded in the international aid regime so important to Kazakhstan?

Despite the fact that we take DAC standards into consideration, this does not mean that we cannot experiment and take a closer look at South-South cooperation. We are quite young as an official donor, and we are taking our first steps. Time will pass, and we will regard ourselves as an established donor. It is possible that we will be closer to the model of traditional donors, or maybe we will be closer to non-traditional donors. But most likely we will remain a hybrid, as we try to find the best approach, which reflects our own development experience.¹⁹

Therefore, Kazakhstan appears to exhibit both—willingness to adhere to certain DAC values and norms by participating in the DAC peer review system and desire to present its own development paradigm. The official rhetoric pertaining to the “unique” nature of Kazakhstan's approach to development cooperation relies on the selective presentation of the country's peculiar development experience. According to this framing, Kazakhstan's caution and selectiveness in aligning its ODA scheme with DAC principles and norms enhance the legitimacy of Kazakh aid in recipient states.

As noted in the previous sections of this study, domestic factors, such as historical experiences and domestic politics, have played an important role in constructing Kazakhstan's donor identity and its interests. However, the behaviors of foreign aid donors are also heavily influenced by shared expectations and norms regarding development assistance that are constructed and reconstructed at the international level. As such, external ideational and social pressures legitimize or constrain aid practices pursued by the providers of foreign aid. Accordingly, “states and state elites' fashion a political self or identity in relation to the international community,” and seek “legitimization, conformity and esteem” (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998, p. 902).

Kazakhstan has continuously explained its aspirations to become a development donor through the prism of the importance of this role in building the “belt of good-neighborliness” around Kazakhstan's borders, which requires the country to create and maintain its positive international image, follow its multi-vector foreign policy approach, ensure economic development, and increase its political authority in the international community.²⁰ Kazakhstan's active foreign policy choice and its determination to be an active participant in the global negotiations on the most prominent issues have been dictated by its dedication to ensure its security through membership

in various international organizations, which Kazakhstan sees not only as a symbol of international recognition but also as an alternative security practice (Finnemore & Sikkink, 1998). In other words, Kazakhstan believes that its success at ensuring its positive international reputation and being an active and prominent member of the international community is a good indicator of the country's ability to ensure its survival.

It is important to note that in the official discourse, Kazakhstani aid is primarily framed as a foreign policy tool. Kazakhstan's past as a recipient, who has experienced the efforts by the Western powers to advance domestic neo-liberal transformation, contributes to how the state defines and uses its own ODA at the present time. Diplomatic use of Kazakhstan's aid has a clearly strategic edge in procuring Kazakhstan's national security.

The strategic motivations behind Kazakh aid become evident from the fact that Kazakhstan's ODA assigns a particular importance to Central Asia and its own commitment to contribute to the “stabilization of socio-economic and political environment in partner-states; prevention of illegal migration; fight against terrorism and extremism, and the formation of the belt of good-neighborliness” (Concept, 2013). This indicates that Kazakhstan aims to use its ODA and other programs to secure their leading position in the region and cultivate strategic linkages with the states of a significant strategic importance.

Speaking of tangible results, the trade turnover between Kazakhstan and Afghanistan—the top recipient of Kazakhstan's ODA—amounted to US\$520.6 million in 2018 (export—US\$516.4 million, import—US\$4.2 million; Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan [MNE of the RK]: Statistics Committee, 2018). In addition, in 2019, a Kazakh company “INTEGRA Construction KZ” (Incon KZ) won a tender to construct 43 km of the Khwaf-Herat railway project. The contract that was signed between Afghanistan Railway Authority and Incon KZ is valued at US\$58.5 million and is funded by the Government of Afghanistan (Office of the President of Afghanistan, 2019). On top of that, the Ambassador of Afghanistan to Kazakhstan Mohammad Farhad Azimi emphasized that Kazakhstan remains Kabul's largest trading partner in the region and has expressed that the Afghan side was ready to “provide maximum support for joint projects, including the participation of Kazakh companies in the development of mining deposits in Afghanistan” (“Kazakhstan and Afghanistan mull,” 2019).

In this light, Kazakhstan's neighborhood plays a prominent role in the country's foreign policy due to the role the stable regional environment plays in its own economic development. Providing aid to neighbors, in this sense, contributes to the establishment and maintenance of friendly relations for the purpose of creating more trade and investment opportunities and, most importantly, fosters

growth and prevents instability both in the recipient states and the region as a whole.

Stressing that Kazakh aid flows have been reflective of Kazakhstan's diplomatic needs mainly through generating goodwill, cultivating good relations, and building the country's image as ready to provide support and assistance to its regional and international "friends" is the main strategy Kazakhstan has been actively using in its attempts to justify such expenditure decisions amid recent national budget cuts at home (cf. Orazgaliyeva, 2014). The officials emphasize the progress Kazakhstan has made so far as an upper middle-income state, through which they aim to distance themselves from the status of a recipient and legitimize the introduction of the costly development aid initiatives. Kazakhstan's aid discourse does not downplay the fact that the national foreign aid flows and projects are primarily driven by Kazakhstan's own national interests, while also serving possible interests and needs of the recipient countries.

Back in 2007, Kazakhstan first declared its preparedness and commitment to put forward its bid for a non-permanent member seat for the term 2011–2012 (UN, 2007) on one of the global community's most important institutions—United Nations Security Council (UNSC)—but later withdrew its candidacy in favor of India (UN, 2010). In 2014, the country went through with the initial plan and campaigned again to get the seat in 2017–2018 (Kazakhstan's UN bid, 2017). Kazakhstan grounded its bid on four priority areas for international cooperation: food, water, energy, and nuclear security. In 2016, the campaign has been proven successful after Kazakhstan beat Thailand during the election at the plenary session on the UN General Assembly obtaining 138 votes of the total 193 ("Kazakhstan secures seat," 2016). Thus, Kazakhstan has become the first Central Asian state to be elected to the UNSC. Former Chairman of the *Mazhilis* of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan Dzhakupov (2015) stressed that Kazakhstan's ODA and humanitarian aid efforts directed at its partners have played an important role in the country's ability to win over the necessary votes.

On top of that, international experts have long discussed the importance of Africa as an international aid recipient and criticized many donors for not adequately engaging with the continent ("Premature donors?," 2013). Thus, Africa has officially become another important destination for Kazakhstan's foreign aid (Decree 415, 2017). In addition to obtaining and cultivating new markets, aid to Africa shows Kazakhstan's ability and commitment to behave responsibly in addressing key challenges of the developing world. Having experienced difficulties as a landlocked country itself, Kazakhstan is interested in addressing the challenges that limit potential growth of the 15 landlocked African countries. Kazakhstan's position opposite to its other landlocked counterparts creates great opportunities for expanding the state's South-South and Triangular Cooperation with these partners (Clark, 2015).

"Africa is a continent of opportunities" which is being actively explored by economic giants such as China, India, and the Western states, and it is those opportunities that Kazakhstan intends to develop in cooperation with our African partners. Our country is interested in establishing closer relations of mutually beneficial political, economic, and trade cooperation with African countries," said Former Foreign Minister Idrisov (Orazgaliyeva, 2015a). Importantly, official on-the-ground regional presence in Africa, which the country currently lacks, could be facilitated with the help of the UNDP, which has already partnered up with Kazakhstan to implement the AFRICANA project, as mentioned by Helen Clark (Witte, 2015).

As of now, Kazakhstan focuses on contributing to the development of Africa through the experience exchange. As such, Nazarbayev University²¹ hosted an international seminar on public health for 24 specialists from seven African states, during which expert from the Centre for Life Sciences and National Laboratory in Nur-Sultan²² addressed the most prominent issues in the fields of epidemiology, biomedicine, and public health ("Kazakhstan podelilsya," 2015). Moreover, in October 2015, an international seminar held at the Technical High School APEC Petrotechnic brought together local Kazakhstani experts and professionals from Africa to provide the latter with training in oil and gas business. Finally, the leading training center of the Atyrau region²³ organized a series of lectures and workshops for 19 specialists from seven African states, who got an opportunity to interact with the leading Kazakhstan oil and gas experts and visit the leading Kazakhstani corporations for the purpose of exploring modern methods and technologies of geological exploration, production, oil refining, and transportation ("Vstrechaem gostei iz Afriki," 2015).

Kazakhstan's interest in the African continent has been apparent from its consistent engagement with the region through multilateral and bilateral channels of Kazakh aid distribution. In 2011, Kazakhstan, "being a responsible member of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and chairing the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers" donated US\$500,000 to Somalia to combat humanitarian crisis in the country caused by the devastating drought in East Africa ("Kazakhstan to render aid," 2011). Kazakhstan's engagement in the continent can be reflected in other instances of the state offering its help in the form of humanitarian aid. For example, in October 2014, Kazakhstan transferred the total of US\$300,000 to the UNDP trust fund and the African Union to be used in the fight against Ebola virus (Orazgaliyeva, 2015).

Kazakhstan has been proactively working on establishing diplomatic relations with the continent as well. For instance, the country joined the African Union as an observer state and opened its embassy in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in 2013 and 2014, respectively. Moreover, the UNDP and Kazakhstan signed a cost-sharing agreement to help African continent to reach Sustainable Development Goals, according to which Kazakhstan is to provide technical support for any relevant institutions (Turebekova, 2015).

In terms of the state's ODA allocation pattern, Nazarbayev signed a law, according to which Kazakhstan ought to transfer a total of US\$100 million in technical aid to Kyrgyzstan for the purposes of its integration into the Eurasian Economic Union.²⁴ On top of that, according to Kazakh Former Foreign Minister Abdrakhmanov, the amount of humanitarian assistance provided to Tajikistan in 2016 was US\$943,485, while US\$314,495 was transferred to Kyrgyzstan (Orazgaliyeva, 2017). He also announced that the country would continue its work in the region and stated that the main focus of Kazakhstan as a non-permanent seat holder at the UNSC was going to be Central Asia and Afghanistan (Orazgaliyeva, 2017). Abdrakhmanov added that together with the international organizations, Kazakhstan aims to address the issue of trans-boundary rivers in Central Asia, which would add to the list of initiatives the country currently holds in the region.

To sum up, another fundamental characteristic of Kazakhstan's aid strategy is that it is not only influenced by its identity as a recipient, but that its framework is also shaped by the international discourses of ODA—a fact that is reflected in the principles and goals of Kazakhstan's ODA.

Conclusion

The study aimed to show that a combination of domestic and international factors played an important role in shaping Kazakhstan's understanding of the aid-giving practice and subsequently determined its ODA philosophy. The lack of studies on Kazakhstan's emergence as the only development aid donor in Central Asia—a region that has been often attributed an increasing strategic importance in world politics (e.g., see Blank, 2008)—points at the vagueness of the current conceptualization of all, but especially emerging donors, which becomes problematic when foreign aid activities in the area are subject to analysis. As the second largest local aid donor on the CIS territory, Kazakhstan's experience makes for an interesting case for exploration not only due to the potential impact of its aid on the targets of its assistance but also due to its relevance to explaining how the identity of the first Central Asian development aid donor has been shaped and what factors influenced Kazakhstan's understanding of the practice.

As the study found, the country adopts the principles of horizontality and partnership, self-reliance, and non-interference, which is reflected in Kazakhstan's foreign policy discourse and is rooted in the country's identity. The state believes that its ODA is primarily to build the partners' self-development capacity for long-term sustainable growth. The provided discussion highlights that Kazakhstan's foreign aid policy within the framework of international development cooperation and the national discourse accompanying the process of the country's emergence as a new donor country is, thus, in this respect different from the dominating narrative

followed by the traditional donors under the established OECD-DAC ODA regime. However, Kazakhstan's model of official development aid distribution also goes in line with some principles upheld by the so-called traditional aid providers. As such, Kazakhstan's aid modality is influenced by the country's aspirations to construct an image of a legitimate and responsible foreign aid provider. These insights are of particular interest as they could serve as a potential domain for future research on analyzing the role of some new donor countries in closing the gap between traditional and non-traditional aid schemes.

Funding

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Notes

1. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC).
2. The above discussion of the dominant narrative framings of OECD-DAC aid and SSC does not represent an argument in favor of grouping "new" and "old" actors into binary classification. Rather, the idea here is to demonstrate that the identity problematique (that goes along with other factors, such as values and norms) should be put at the core of the research agenda in the field of development cooperation. After all, identities (that are conditioned by non-material structures) inform actors' interests, which in turn, guide their behavior in terms of development provision (see Reus-Smit, 2013).
3. Interview with the representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, July 2019.
4. "Rules of Interaction between State Bodies and Organizations in the Sphere of Official Development Assistance of February 6, 2015."
5. The proposals are developed with a careful regard to the suggestions made by the aforementioned state bodies, aid agency Kazakhstan Agency for International Development (KazAID), and various partner organizations.
6. Although some authors draw an implicit dichotomy between discourse and practices, this study joins scholarly works that emphasize "the linguistic construction of reality" (Doty, 1993), assuming that language is "a rich source of analysis rather than 'just' words" (Larsen, 2018, p. 62). The point here is that "policy makers also function within a discursive space that imposes meanings on their world and thus creates reality" Doty, 1993, p. 303. The aim of this study is to highlight what kind of national identity the ruling elites want to express through development cooperation practices, and to analyze what that tells us about the assumptions these elites hold regarding the character of the international environment in which they operate, as well as inquire what they deem as legitimate and appropriate behavior. Thus, this article employs discourse analysis, which has the ability to tap directly into the identity-policy nexus. In this regard,

discourse is treated as an analytical prism through which we see the questions of identity unpacked.

7. Interview with the representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Economic Policy Department, Nur-Sultan, July 2019.
8. Here, it should be stressed that “conditionality” in this context is implicitly understood as Western conditionality.
9. Ak Zhol Democratic Party represents an opposition to the ruling political party in Kazakhstan—Nur Otan. As of the 2016 elections, Ak Zhol is the second most represented party in the Lower Chamber of Kazakhstan’s Government—the Mazhilis.
10. Although the country has announced its preparedness to give lawmakers more power, it is still unclear how Kazakhstan’s aid program is to be affected by these changes.
11. Interview with the Former Minister of Foreign Affairs under the Republic of Kazakhstan, May 2019.
12. Interview with the representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, January 2018.
13. The discourse of stability and economic development was skillfully employed by those in power to shore up the legitimacy of the regime. For further readings, please see Lemon, 2018.
14. At the time the interview was taken (2019).
15. The government is currently developing a draft ONGP for the next 5-year period 2021–2025.
16. Interview with the Former Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, July 2019.
17. Interview with the former employee of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), April 2019.
18. Interview with the Former Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, July 2019.
19. Interview with the representative of the United Nations Development Program (Nur-Sultan), January 2018.
20. Kazakhstan is located in the Central Asian region that is facing challenges such as drug trafficking, spread of extremism, and terrorism, among others.
21. Nazarbayev University is a leading autonomous research university in Nur-Sultan, established under the initiative of the President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, in 2010.
22. The capital of Kazakhstan.
23. The oil-rich region in Kazakhstan, the location of the third biggest refinery in the country.
24. The agreement was later canceled by Kyrgyzstan.

References

- Anderson, B. (1983). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. Verso Books.
- Aneja, U. (2018). South-South Cooperation: Cooperation and competition. In E. Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, & P. Daley (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of South-South relations* (pp. 141–152). Routledge.
- Bendini, R. (2013, October). *Kazakhstan: Selected trade and economic issues*. Policy Briefing. [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/briefing_note/join/2013/522303/EXPO-INTA_SP\(2013\)522303_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/briefing_note/join/2013/522303/EXPO-INTA_SP(2013)522303_EN.pdf)
- Bergamaschi, I., Moore, P., & Tickner, A. (2017). *South-South cooperation beyond the myths: Rising donors, new aid practices?* Palgrave Macmillan.
- Blank, S. (2008). The strategic importance of central Asia: An American view. *Parameters*, 38(1), 73–87. <https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/pdfs/ADA485885.pdf>
- Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation. (2012, July). <https://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/Busan%20partnership.pdf>
- Checkel, J. (1998). The constructivist turn in international relations theory. *World Politics*, 50(2), 324–348. www.jstor.org/stable/25054040
- Chin, G., & Quadir, F. (2012). Introduction: Rising states, rising donors and the global aid regime. *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 25(4), 493–506.
- Clark, H. (2015, May 21). *Speech at the Astana economic forum on “Africa: The next driver of the global economy.”* <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/presscenter/speeches/2015/05/21/helen-clark-speech-at-the-astana-economic-forum-on-africa-the-next-driver-of-the-global-economy-.html>
- Damuga resmi komek turaly [Law on Official Development Assistance]. (2014). <http://adilet.zan.kz/kaz/docs/Z1400000263>
- De Cordier, B. (2014). Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan as donors of humanitarian aid: Has the diversification of aid channels and donors reached southern Eurasia? *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, 15(4). <https://core.ac.uk/reader/55710194>
- Democratic Party Ak Zhol. (2014, September 9). *Predlozheniya chlenov deputatskoy frakcii DPK Ak Zhol k proektu Zakona Respubliki Kazakhstan “Ob oficialnoy pomoshi razvitiyu”* [Suggestions of the members of the deputy fraction DPK Ak Zhol to the project of the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan on “Official Development Assistance”].
- Division of Labor among donors: An approach to harmonization. (2010, February). Input paper for the evaluation of the Paris Declaration Phase.2 (Phase 2). <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/dcdndep/44729615.pdf>
- Doty, R. (1993). Foreign policy as social construction: A post-positivist analysis of U.S. counterinsurgency policy in the Philippines. *International Studies Quarterly*, 37(3), 297–320.
- Dyussebekova, Z. (2018, February 12). Kazakhstan’s foreign aid systems are maturing, integrating with foreign policy, says official. *Astana Times*. <https://astanatimes.com/2018/02/kazakhstans-foreign-aid-systems-are-maturing-integrating-with-foreign-policy-says-official/>
- Dzhakupov, K. (2015, July 15). *Speech at the closing of the fourth Parliaments session of the Vth convocation*. <http://www.parlam.kz/ru/mazhilis/news-details/id//2466011>
- Fejerskov, A., Lundsgaarde, E., & Cold-Ravnkilde, S. (2016). Uncovering the dynamics of interaction in development cooperation: A review of the “new actors in development” research agenda. *DIIS Working Papers*, 1, 1–24.
- Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E., & Daley, P. (2018). *Routledge handbook of South-South relations*. Routledge.
- Finnemore, M., & Sikkink, K. (1998). International norm dynamics and political change. *International Organization*, 52(4), 887–917. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2601361>
- Foreign policy concept for (2014-2020) of the Republic of Kazakhstan. (2014). <http://mfa.gov.kz/index.php/en/component/content/article/16-materials-english/1248-foreign-policy-concept-for-2014-2020-republic-of-kazakhstan>

- Gulrajani, N., & Swiss, L. (2019). Donor proliferation to what ends? New donor countries and the search for legitimacy. *Canadian Journal of Development Studies/Revue Canadienne D'études du Développement*, 40(3), 348–368.
- Hook, S. W. (1995). *National interest and foreign aid*. Lynne Rienner.
- Hopf, T. (2002). *Social construction of international politics: Identities & foreign policies, Moscow, 1955 & 1999*. Cornell University Press.
- Insebayeva, S. (2016). *Imagining the nation: Identity, nation-building and foreign policy in Kazakhstan* (CAP paper 175, Central Asia Program). <http://centralasiaprogram.org/blog/2016/10/04/imagining-the-nation-identity-nation-building-and-foreign-policy-in-kazakhstan/>
- Jaffrelot, C. (2009). *Emerging states: The wellspring of a new world order*. Columbia University Press.
- Jepperson, R., Wendt, A., & Katzenstein, P. (1996). Norms, identity, and culture in national security. In P. J. Katzenstein (Ed.), *The culture of national security: Norms and identities in world politics* (pp. 33–75). Columbia University Press.
- Katzenstein, P. J. (1996). Introduction: Alternative perspectives on national security. In P. J. Katzenstein (Ed.), *The culture of national security: Norms and identities in world politics* (pp. 1–32). Columbia University Press.
- Kazakhstan and Afghanistan mull cooperation issues. (2019, March 19). *KazInform*. https://www.inform.kz/qz/kazakhstan-and-afghanistan-mull-cooperation-issues_a3508893
- Kazakhstan launches project on Official development assistance for Afghanistan—Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan. (2016). *KazInform*. <http://www.government.kz/en/novosti/1003433-kazakhstan-launches-project-on-official-development-assistance-for-afghanistan-ministry-of-foreign-affairs-of-kazakhstan.html>
- Kazakhstan podelilsya opytom so specialistami iz afrikanskogo kontinenta [Kazakhstan shared its experience with specialists from the African continent]. (2015). United Nations Development Programme. <http://www.kz.undp.org>
- Kazakhstan prodolzhit pomogat Afganistanu [Kazakhstan will continue to help Afghanistan]. (2010, December 3). *Tengrinews*. <https://tengrinews.kz/osce/kazakhstan-prodoljit-pomogat-afganistanu-92550/>
- Kazakhstan secures seat on UN Security Council. (2016, June 29). *Eurasianet*. <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/79446>
- Kazakhstan's UN bid. (2017). <http://www.kazakhstanunsc.com/kazakhstan-un-bid/>
- Kazakhstan to render aid to hungry people of Somalia. (2011, August 9). *Tengrinews*. https://en.tengrinews.kz/politics_sub/Kazakhstan-to-render-aid-to-hungry-people-of-Somalia-3718/
- Kim, S., & Lightfoot, S. (2011). Does “DAC-ability” really matter? The emergence of non-DAC donors: Introduction to policy arena. *Journal of International Development*, 23(5), 711–721. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jid.1795>
- Klotz, A., & Lynch, C. (2007). *Strategies for research in constructivist international relations*. M. E. Sharpe.
- Kragelund, P. (2015). Towards convergence and cooperation in the global development finance regime: Closing Africa's policy space. *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 28(2), 246–262.
- Kragelund, P. (2019). *South-South development*. Routledge.
- Lancaster, C. (2007). *Foreign aid: Diplomacy, development, domestic politics*. University of Chicago Press.
- Larsen, H. (2018). Discourse analysis in the study of European foreign policy. In B. Tonra, & T. Christiansen (Ed.), *Rethinking European Union foreign policy*. Manchester University Press, pp. 62–80.
- Lemon, E. (2018). Critical approaches to security in Central Asia: An introduction. *Central Asian Survey*, 37(1), 1–12.
- Malyshev, D., & Bainazarova, E. (2016). Russia and Kazakhstan: Mutually different interests for regional leadership. In H. Rytövuori-Apunen (Ed.), *The regional security puzzle around Afghanistan: Bordering practices in central Asia and beyond* (pp. 243–270). Barbara Budrich Publishers.
- Mawdsley, E. (2012). *From recipients to donors: Emerging powers and the changing development landscape*. Zed Books.
- Mawdsley, E. (2016). DFID, the private sector and the re-centering of an economic growth agenda in international development. In M. Vieira, & J. Grix (Eds.), *Challenges to emerging and established powers* (pp. 58–77). Routledge.
- Mawdsley, E. (2018). Southern leaders, Northern followers? Who has “socialized” whom in international development?. In E. Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, & P. Daley (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of South-South relations* (pp. 191–204). Routledge.
- McKinlay, R. D., & Mughan, A. (1984). *Aid and arms to the third world: An analysis of the distribution and import of US official transfer*. St. Martin's Press.
- Ministry of National Economy of the Republic of Kazakhstan: Statistics Committee. (2018). *Statistics of foreign and mutual trade*. <https://stat.gov.kz>
- Mirzayan, G. (2014, November 13). Kazakhstan formiruet poyas dobrososedstva [Kazakhstan is forming the belt of good neighbourhood]. *Expert Online*. <http://expert.ru/2014/11/13/kazakhstan-formiruet-poyas-dobrososedstva/>
- Morgenthau, H. J. (1962). A political theory of foreign aid. *American Political Science Review*, 56(2), 301–309.
- Nazarbayev, N. (2000, October 16). *Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, to the people of Kazakhstan*. http://www.akorda.kz/ru/addresses/addresses_of_president/poslanie-prezidenta-respubliki-kazakhstan-n-a-nazarbaeva-narodu-kazahstana-oktyabr-2000-g_1342416665
- Nazarbayev, N. (2007, February 28). *Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, to the people of Kazakhstan*. http://www.akorda.kz/ru/addresses/addresses_of_president/poslanie-prezidenta-respubliki-kazakhstan-nnazarbaeva-narodu-kazahstana-28-fevralya-2007-g
- Nazarbayev, N. (2010, November 2). Nursultan Nazarbayev: V nashei družbe net nikakih sekretov [Nursultan Nazarbayev: There are no secrets about our friendship] with Vasilyev, A./ Interviewer. *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*. <https://rg.ru/2010/11/02/nazarbaev.html>
- Nazarbayev, N. (2011, January 28). *Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, to the people of Kazakhstan*. http://www.akorda.kz/en/addresses/addresses_of_president/address-of-the-president-of-the-republic-of-kazakhstan-nursultan-nazarbayev-to-the-people-of-kazakhstan-january-28-2011_1341926571
- Nazarbayev, N. (2013, April 26). *President Nazarbayev's speech at the Almaty ministerial conference of the Istanbul process on Afghanistan*. http://www.akorda.kz/ru/special/speeches/external_political_affairs/ext_speeches_and_addresses/vystuplenie-prezidenta-kazahstana-nanazarbaeva-na-kon-

- ferencii-ministrov-inostrannyh-del-stran-uchastnic-stambul-skogo-processa
- Nursultan Nazarbayev Kyrgyz zhastaryna oku grantyn boluge uede berdi [Nursultan Nazarbayev pledged to allocate grants to Kyrgyz youth]. (2012, August 22). *Baq.kz*. <https://baq.kz/kk/news/sayasat/nursultan-nazarbaev-kirgiz-zhastarina-okugrantin-boluge-uade-berdi-15626>
- Office of the President of Afghanistan. (2019). *First phase, section four of Khwaf-Herat railway project signed*. <https://president.gov.af/en/first-phase-section-four-of-khwaf-herat-railway-project-signed/>
- Orazgaliyeva, M. (2014, October 31). Kazakhstan's Official Development Assistance to focus on Central Asia, Afghanistan, says FM. *Astana Times*. <http://astanatimes.com/2014/10/kazakhstan-official-development-assistance-focus-central-asia-afghanistan-says-fm/>
- Orazgaliyeva, M. (2015a, May 18). Astana Economic Forum to feature sessions on Africa, KazAID. *Astana Times*. <http://astanatimes.com/2015/05/astana-economic-forum-to-feature-sessions-on-africa-kazaid/>
- Orazgaliyeva, M. (2015b, May 26). Kazakhstan to provide \$200,000 in humanitarian aid to Nepal. *Astana Times*. <http://astanatimes.com/2015/05/kazakhstan-to-provide-200000-in-humanitarian-aid-to-nepal/>
- Orazgaliyeva, M. (2017, March 14). Kazakh FM informs Parliament on Astana's work on UNSC, priorities in central Asia. *Astana Times*. <http://astanatimes.com/2017/03/kazakh-fm-informs-parliament-on-astanas-work-on-unscc-priorities-in-central-asia/>
- Parlament Mazhilisi "Damuga resmi komek turaly" zan zhobasyn makuldady [Members of the Mazhilis adopted the "Law on Official Development Assistance"]. (2014). Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan. <http://www.government.kz/kz/novosti/21039-parlament-m-zhilisi-damu-a-resmi-k-mek-turaly-za-zhobasyn-ma-ldady.html>
- Pomfret, R. (2005). Kazakhstan's economy since independence: Does the oil boom offer a second chance for sustainable development? *Europe-Asia Studies*, 57(6), 859–876.
- Posega, P. (2015). *Kazakhstan beyond Borat*. Modern Diplomacy. http://modern diplomacy.eu/index.php?option=com_k&view=item&id=:kazakhstan-beyond-borat&Itemid=2763772
- Premature donors? Development aid from Central and Eastern Europe ten years on. (2013). University College London School of Slavonic and East European Studies Research Blog. <https://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/ssees/2013/11/28/premature-donors-development-aid-from-central-and-eastern-europe-ten-years-on/>
- Qazaqstan Aугan zhastary ushin bilim beru bagdarlamасыn uzartu masesin qaraidy [Kazakhstan considers the extension of the educational program for Afghan youth]. (2015, May 18). *Qazaqparat*. http://www.inform.kz/kz/kazakhstan-augan-zhastary-ushin-bilim-beru-bagdarlamасыn-uzartu-masesin-karaydy_a2777264
- Qazaqstan Respublikasy Presidentinin no. 415 Zharlygy: Qazaqstan Respublikasynyn damuga resmi komek salasyn-dagy memlekettik sayasatynyn 2017-2020 zhyldarga arnalgan negizgi bagyttaryn bekitu turaly [Decree no. 415: On the adoption of the main directions of the State policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the field of official development assistance]. (2017).
- "Qazaqstan Respublikasynyn Damuga resmi komek salasyn-dagy tuzhyrymdamasyn bekitu turaly" Qazaqstan Respublikasynyn Presidenti Zharlygysynyn zhobasy turaly [Concept of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the sphere of official development assistance]. (2013). Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan. <http://adilet.zan.kz/kaz/docs/P1300000240>
- Renzo, P., & Seifert, J. (2014). South-South cooperation and the future of development assistance: Mapping actors and options. *Third World Quarterly*, 35(10), 1860–1875.
- Reus-Smit, C. (2005). Constructivism. In S. Burchill, A. Linklater, R. Devetak, J. Donnelly, M. Paterson, C. Reus-Smit, & J. True (Eds.), *Theories of international: Relations* (pp. 78–102). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Reus-Smit, C. (2013). Beyond metatheory? *European Journal of International Relations*, 19(3), 589–608. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066113495479>
- Rowlands, D. (2012). Individual BRICS or a collective bloc? Convergence and divergence amongst "emerging donor" nations. *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 25(4), 629–649.
- Sato, J., Shiga, H., Kobayashi, T., & Kondoh, H. (2010). *How do "emerging" donors differ from "traditional" donors? An institutional analysis of foreign aid in Cambodia* (Working paper 2). JICA Research Institute. https://www.jica.go.jp/jica-ri/publication/workingpaper/jrft3q00000022dd-att/JICA-RI_WP_No.2_2010.pdf
- Scott, J., vom Hau, M., & Hulme, D. (2010). *Beyond the BRICS: Identifying the "emerging middle powers" and understanding their role in global poverty reduction* (Working paper no. 137). Brooks World Poverty Institute.
- Seifert, J. (2016). New dynamics or old patterns? South-South Cooperation between Brazil and Angola. In J. van der Merwe, I. Taylor, & A. Arkhangelskaya (Eds.), *Emerging powers in Africa: A new wave in the relationship?* (pp. 129–157). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Senat vernul v Mazhilis zakonoproekt ob oficialnoy pomoshi razvitiyu [Senat returned to the project of the "Law on Official Development Assistance" to Mazhilis]. (2014, November 20). *Today.kz*. <http://meta.kz/novosti/kazakhstan/940426-senat-vernul-v-mazhilis-zakonoproekt-ob-oficialnoy-pomoshchi-razvitiyu.html>
- Transparency International. (2016). *Corruption perception index: Kazakhstan*. <https://www.transparency.org/country/KAZ#>
- Turebekova, A. (2015, October 6). Kazakhstan, UNDP to assist African countries with sustainable development goals. *Astana Times*. <http://astanatimes.com//kazakhstan-undp-to-assist-african-countries-with-sustainable-development-goals/201510>
- United Nations. (2007, November 13). *Kazakhstan budet dobi-vatsya izbraniya v sostav Soveta Bezopasnosti* [Kazakhstan will work towards election as a member on the UN Security Council]. <http://www.un.org/russian/news/story.asp?newsID=8600#.WUoZx-uGPIV>
- United Nations. (2010). *Security Council elections 2010* (Special research report no. 3). <http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/special-research-report/lookup-c-gIKWLeMTIsG-b-6238577.php?print=true>

- United Nations Development Programme. (2017). *Africana project brief*. www.kz.undp.org/content/dam/kazakhstan/AFRICANA_project_brief_ENG.doc
- Vstrechaem gostei iz Afriki! [Welcome guests from Africa!]. (2015). *Zhasatyrau*. <http://zhasatyrau.kz/vstrechaem-gostey-iz-afriki/>
- Wendt, A. (1999). *Social theory of international politics*. Cambridge University Press.
- Wissenbach, U. (2010). A new Seoul consensus on development: The G20 needs to reconcile effective ODA with emerging country economic cooperation. In T. Fues, & P. Wolff. (Eds.), *G20 and global development: How can the new summit architecture promote pro-poor growth and sustainability?* (pp. 26–29). German Development Institute.
- Witte, M. (2015, May 27). UNDP seeks stronger Kazakh partnership, says country key to South-South Cooperation. *Astana Times*. <http://astanatimes.com/2015/05/undp-seeks-stronger-kazakh-partnership-says-country-key-to-south-south-cooperation/>
- Woods, N. (2008). Whose aid? Whose influence? China, emerging donors and the silent revolution in development assistance. *International Affairs*, 84(6), 1205–1221.
- World Bank. (2019a). *GDP (current US\$): Kazakhstan*. <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?locations=KZ>
- World Bank. (2019b). *Net ODA received (% of GNI): Kazakhstan*. <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/DT.ODA.ODAT.GN.ZS?locations=KZ>
- Yamada, S. (2016). *Post-education-for-all and sustainable development paradigm*. Emerald Group.