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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF STATE BEHAVIOR	12
1.1 Mainstream Theories and States' Behavior.....	12
1.2 Defining the Size of a State.....	21
1.3. Methodology to Measure Transformation from Small to Middle Power....	31
2 EVOLUTION OF KAZAKHSTAN'S FOREIGN POLICY	44
2.1 Transformation of Kazakhstan into Middle Power.....	44
2.2 Internal Variables in Transformation of Kazakhstan into Middle Power....	58
2.3 External Variables in Transformation of Kazakhstan into Middle Power....	67
3 KAZAKHSTAN'S FOREIGN POLICY PROSPECTS	82
3.1 Comparing Kazakhstan's Transformation with International Experience....	82
3.2 Priorities of Foreign Policy of Kazakhstan as a Middle Power.....	95
3.3 Ways to Improve Efficiency and Economic Effect of Kazakhstan's Foreign Policy.....	104
CONCLUSION	113
REFERENCES	118
ANNEX A – Small States and Middle Powers	132

INTRODUCTION

General characteristics of the dissertation research. In the proposed study, based on a wide range of sources, including official and documentary materials, a holistic analysis of the transformation of Kazakhstan's foreign policy from independence to the present has been carried out. Particular attention is paid to foreign policy decisions and internal socio-economic factors, as well as the conceptual and legal foundations of the organization of state activity in order to implement the conversion of Kazakhstan from a small state to a middle power.

Relevance. Kazakhstan has experienced a whole era of fundamental changes in its political and economic systems, becoming a full and active subject of international relations. The formation of Kazakhstan's foreign policy is inextricably linked with the process of strengthening its statehood, implementation of socio-economic reforms, and building a democratic legal basis for Kazakhstan's society. The task of determining Kazakhstan's place and role in the world is projected onto the social mentality in new conditions.

Over the years of independence, the diplomacy of the Republic of Kazakhstan has achieved tangible results, which have strengthened the position and reputation of the country on the world stage. Nuclear disarmament, a new model of interethnic and interfaith dialogue, a multi-vector foreign policy strategy have become hallmarks of state diplomacy. Kazakhstan has established diplomatic relations with almost all countries of the world, entered into all reputable international organizations. Projects such as the convening of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia, participating in the creation of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Eurasian Economic Union have found a wide resonance. Occupying a unique geopolitical location between Europe and Asia, Kazakhstan seeks to ensure its strategic interests through precise foreign policy steps, as well as securing it with the internal socio-economic development.

The new position at international arena challenges Kazakhstan into choosing an approach to the solution of international security issues. In other words, having achieved a new position, Kazakhstan meets the new challenges. Does this mean Kazakhstan needs to approach international security differently? What is the essence of Kazakh diplomacy and what are its main directions? What diplomatic means can and should be used to ensure national security of Kazakhstan? All these are complex issues that require a detailed scientific analysis and actualize the topic of this dissertation research.

In this regard, the study of the development of interstate relations as well as fundamental review and analysis of Kazakhstan's activities in the international arena affected by new global challenges is becoming an important area of research. The study of this topic will help, from scientific perspective, to understand how, in the era of globalization, a small state can transform into a middle power in peaceful terms.

The relevance of the topic is also explained by the fact that today we are witnessing the formation of a new world order. A retrospective look at the development of Kazakhstan and the problems that it encountered in its

implementation, make it possible to evaluate the new challenges and threats of modernity, find patterns of international behavior of states and other actors in a changing world.

Furthermore, it should be taken into account that importance of diplomacy in the world is increasing as they serve the art of resolving numerous international disputes. The power, significance and influence of any state now depend on its ability to take its rightful position in an interdependent world. Kazakhstan, not possessing powerful military forces, demonstrates its capability to find compromising positions for solving pressing problems.

In modern world, where interdependence is strengthening and deepening exponentially, the majority of states rely on diplomacy, international law and equal cooperation. This is the world order that the efforts of Kazakhstani diplomacy are directed. Revealing and finding patterns for the use of such instruments is topical for both academic and practical circles.

Since Central Asia is a traditional arena for the clash of major global players' interests, it is expected that the intensity of the geopolitical struggle will be growing in the coming years. To withstand such difficult conditions and maintain its independent development course, Kazakhstan needs to continue to use political, conceptual and functional potential of its foreign policy. Providing evenly distant relations with major powers as well as meticulously placed foreign policy steps are able to guarantee the preservation of the sovereignty of Kazakhstan. For this reason, the Republic needs enhanced methodological support from both governmental institutions and expert circles.

The degree of scientific elaboration of the problem. The transformation of foreign policy behavior attracts attention of both scientists and specialists in the field of history, international relations, political science, sociology, psychology, management, and the diplomats themselves [1-8]. It should be noted that historians are more engaged in studying the problems of the development of states and the latter, in turn, consider transformation from the perspective of their science's role in making foreign policy decisions, the nature of the factors that caused these changes [9-12]. Therefore, the dissertation proposes the following classification of the literature.

The first group of research is the work of the authors dedicated to the theoretical and methodological aspects of the stratification of the states in the system of international relations. Those are studies of defining size of nations through the problems of geopolitics, political science, national security, the theory of international relations, and foreign policy. Although one may not agree with their conclusions, but they were used to develop a research technique as well as serving as general guidelines for global processes taking place in the world.

To be exact, Burchill and Linklater's textbook *Theories of International Relations* [13] provides a systematic and comprehensive introduction to the main theoretical approaches in the study of international relations. While it focuses on the core theories, it also takes into account some major events and developments,

including new material on neo-realism and neo-liberalism, post-colonialism and cosmopolitanism.

In this regard, the most referenced work in the contemporary research to define small states is the Economic Consequences of the Size of Nations reported by International Economics Association. Researchers such as Kuznets [14], Demas [15] and Jalan [16] employ the quantitative economic measures to define 'smallness' of states, while Taylor [17] Russet and Starr [18] suggest taking into account military potential, life expectancy of the population, the percentage of infant mortality, the number of doctors and beds in medical institutions per capita. Organski [19], Wood [20] and Holbraad [21] identify population, political development, and economic development as the most important determinants of national power. Likewise, Laura Neack [22], in her analysis of middle power behavior, uses cluster technique considering five national attributes (GNP per capita, military expenditures per capita, population, infant mortality rate, and adult literacy rate). Ross [23] scales sizes of states according to their population. Brown and Ainley [24] provide systematic coverage of power, national interest, foreign policy and war – alongside analysis of the impact of globalization on security, governance and the world economy. Sutton [25] suggests considering the geoeconomics of a country to define its position in the world arena.

Other researchers consider that foreign policy behavior or international role are the main factors in identifying one a small or a middle power. Fox [26] argues that small state's foreign policy is often concentrated on regional matters, while Rothstein [27] supports the idea that the small state is identified by the inability of a state to resolve a security dilemma on their own. East [28] bases his definition of small states by a range of foreign policy behavior patterns such as level of involvement in international relations; activity in intergovernmental organizations; support for international law and treaties; utilization of force; foreign policy vectors; the use of moral and normative positions in global issues.

At the same time, Handel [29] attempts to shed light on five perspectives: definitions and feature of weak states; internal and external sources of weakness and strength; how weak states act within different international systems, and their economic position in the world. In Tetreault's [30] opinion, some small states are seen to be guarded by a guardian neighbor which is known as 'cliency relationship', whereas Jazbec [31] reckons small states' prerogative is an exclusive focus on survival, because of which they shall be manipulating as far as possible, the will of other more powerful states.

Nossal [32] identifies that one of the functions that middle powers are often commit to is 'internationalism,' which has following features: (a) responsibility, (b) multilateralism, (c) participation in international organizations, (d) willingness to implement prior commitments. In this regard, it is fair to note that under these conditions, it is up to states themselves if they want to choose middle power role. Meanwhile, Ravenhill [33] argues that such factors as capacity, concentration, creativity, building coalition and credibility should be taken into account when defining one as a middle power.

Græger [34] focuses on the advantageous position of small states that are often seen to have more international credibility, having fewer hidden agendas and less ambitious national interests than more powerful states. In this regard, Behringer [35] agrees that middle powers are catalyst of innovations in international norms, mediation, multilateral diplomacy etc.

At the same time, Gecelovsky [36] thinks middle power concept should be taken as determinant of state behavior, not a form of state behavior. Maass [37] pools both quantitative and qualitative criteria all together to compare all existing definitions and finds out common feature is that it tends to rely on international organizations, multilateral diplomacy and International Law. De Carvalho and Neumann [38] hypothesize that because there is no way for small powers to grow territorially, they seek status from higher moral involvement in international relations. Kurecic finds best [39] to retrieve the results using the combination of both quantitative and qualitative (relational) criteria to get a plausible solution.

The aim of the work is a comprehensive study of external and internal factors that influenced the transformation of Kazakhstan into a middle power since independence.

To achieve this goal, the following **research tasks** are distinguished:

- 1) analyze theoretical framework of the behavior of states of different size in the system of international relation;
- 2) reveal quantitative and qualitative criteria for defining the size of state;
- 3) develop new methodology to measure transformation of states from small to middle powers;
- 4) analyze the transformation of Kazakhstan into a middle power;
- 5) identify internal variables in the evolution of Kazakhstan into a middle power;
- 6) identify external variables in the evolution of Kazakhstan into a middle power;
- 7) test Kazakhstan's transformation through international case studies;
- 8) study in depth and systematize the priorities of foreign policy of Kazakhstan as a middle power;
- 9) develop practical ways and recommendations to improve efficiency and economic effect of the foreign policy of Kazakhstan.

Object of study is foreign policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Subject of study. The need for a political analysis of the changes in the geopolitical space associated with dawn of the information and digital age, overturn of the notion of power in international relations and emergence of new subjects of international relations, identifies the subject of study: the conditions of the implementation of foreign policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in a changing world.

The chronological framework of the study covers the period from 1991 to the present. This time frame includes the process of formation, development and improvement of forms, methods and means used by the government to transform the Kazakh state into a middle power.

The general research methodology is made up of scientific theories of international relations and political science schools that study the problems of modern political processes, the provisions of systemic and comparative historical approaches to the study of interstate relations.

The main research methods were problem-chronological, case study, a method of comparative analysis, content analysis of documents, a method of using expert assessments. Along with traditional methods of a comprehensive analysis of historical phenomena, the dissertation uses a modern methodology for studying foreign policy and diplomacy, which requires attention to the personal aspects of diplomatic activity, such as the study of value system and political culture of the nation, state institution's implementation of professional tasks.

In addition, the study used empirical research methods: the use of data bases, statistics, reports, and analysis of foreign research center data. The principle of historicism allowed not only studying the internal factors for the formation of the Kazakh foreign policy position, but also the dynamics of its activities in a specific historical situation.

In the study of the institutional structure of the government and foreign diplomatic missions, methods of functional analysis were used. The theoretical and empirical base of the research was composed through juxtaposition of the development strategies of Kazakhstan, the concept of the Republic's foreign policy, legislative acts and international legal documents governing the activities of the state bodies in the field of foreign policy and diplomacy.

The source base of the study. The range of sources used in the dissertation research is quite wide and differs in character. Therefore, they were categorized into the following groups.

The first group of sources is represented by legislative acts of the Republic of Kazakhstan relating to foreign policy and regulating the governance [40-47]. This group of sources allows one to analyze the formation and development of the state policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan and its impact on the formation of the state's foreign policy strategy. The fundamental documents of this group are: the law 'On State Independence of the Republic of Kazakhstan' and the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Most of activities taken by state institutions including Ministry of Foreign Affairs, foreign representative bodies have been regulated by the Regulation on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The second group of sources includes works, speeches, messages of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N. Nazarbayev [48-69]. From the first years of Kazakhstan's independence, Elbasy has played a key role in shaping the basic principles and components of Kazakhstan's state and foreign policy. Therefore, scientific and practical importance in the study was the annual State of the Nation Addresses of President to the people of Kazakhstan. The addresses contain conceptual points regarding the foreign policy strategy of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The annual addresses of N. Nazarbayev, which were voiced in the form of strategies: Strategy Kazakhstan 2030 and Strategy Kazakhstan 2050, as well as other messages of the First President, were actively used in the dissertation. Also,

important conceptual provisions addressing the topic of dissertation research are contained in the writings and speeches of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N. Nazarbayev: the Strategy of the Formation and Development of Kazakhstan as a Sovereign State, In the stream of history, Epicenter of the world, Five Years of Independence, Critical Decade, On the Threshold of the 21st Century, Kazakhstan's Way and others [70-78].

To ensure a consistent, systematic review, in-depth analysis of the development of Kazakhstan, dissertation uses N. Nazarbayev's Era of Independence whose name is inextricably linked the history of the formation of independent Kazakhstan. In a difficult period of transformation of the social system, cardinal changes in economic, political and social relations, the activity of the First President ensured the progressive advancement of the country and society. Written in the genre of historical journalism, the book reflects the author's view of the country's recent history and its future, characterizes the stages of construction of a sovereign state from the moment of its foundation, substantiates the internal logic and decision-making mechanism in response to internal and external challenges during the construction of sovereign Kazakhstan.

The third group of sources contains materials on the official websites of the President's Office, Prime Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs [79-81] regarding the strategic documents currently being implemented, functional responsibilities of state bodies, and information about missions at international organizations.

The fourth group consists of materials of international conventions relating to internationally binding instruments and other agreements [82-94]. This group of sources is also represented by the documents establishing and developing bilateral relations of the Republic of Kazakhstan with the states of its geopolitical environment, as well as the international organizations.

The next group of sources is represented by memoirs written by diplomats and political figures whose tremendous work has contributed to the establishment of sovereignty and the solution of tasks on ensuring the security of the Republic of Kazakhstan [95-99]. These works contain not only great factual material, but also new conceptual approaches to the study of bilateral and multilateral relations in Central Asia. The assessments and analysis of events that took place during the period of the 90s and 00s contained in these works provide an opportunity to understand in more detail not only the specifics of Kazakhstan's development, but also the logic of geopolitical processes in the contemporary world.

In particular, Truth about the State Border of the Republic of Kazakhstan with preface of Kasym Zhomart Tokayev [100], is devoted to the international legal design of the state border of Kazakhstan with neighboring countries. It sets out a detailed analysis of the delimitation and demarcation of the state border of the Republic of Kazakhstan, specifies legal regulation of territorial issues, the nature and content of negotiations as well as historical and international significance of legal registration of the border.

In addition, the book called Diplomacy on the way to Independence by Murat Almasbekuly [101] who based his work on diplomatic activities of the honored

worker of the Republic of Kazakhstan, first arabist Sailau Batyrshauily. This work gives a range of insights into diplomatic work of a new-born state, the difficulties and decisive measures taken to transform the country finding its own, Kazakhstani way.

The next group of sources is the research of foreign, Russian and domestic researchers on the specifics of geopolitical, domestic political, socio-economic, demographic and other processes taking place in other middle powers. The study of this group of sources makes it possible to compare domestic political, socio-economic, demographic processes in Kazakhstan with the development processes that took place in other middle powers during their establishment. Although it is not possible to use all the conclusions presented in these works, the factual material allows one to identify the trends and patterns of the development.

One of the important types of sources is focused research centers, which quite often publish their databases. They can be attributed to the seventh group of sources. This group is of great importance for studying the topic of this study and acts as a kind of indicator of reflection in the public consciousness on various processes, including the big data analysis.

In general, the above types of sources were a necessary and sufficient basis for an objective review and writing of this dissertation. These are gleaned and appropriately used. At the same time, this dissertation makes an in-depth analysis into political, economic and social changes accentuating on the progress made by Kazakhstan on the way to become a middle power.

Key Points to Protect:

1 Defining whether a state is small, middle or great power depends not only on its political, economic and social development, but also on its foreign policy behavior.

2 Transformation of small states into middle powers goes through enhancement of economic, security matters as well as state's foreign policy scope of operation and internationalization.

3 Kazakhstan meets the definition of a middle power.

4 Internal factors that contributed to the transformation of Kazakhstan into a middle power are natural resources, political stability and ideology, developed by Annual State of the Nation Addresses of the President.

5 External factors that contributed to the transformation of Kazakhstan into a middle power are geopolitical position, international system, and international issues.

6 Priorities of Kazakhstan as a middle power are to protect national interests and be a responsible player of international relations.

Scientific novelty of the work is revealed by obtaining the following results:

1 For the first time in a study of the theory of international relations the author has attempted to use a developmental approach in the stratification of states in the international system.

2 The dissertation displays a model for the transformation of states from small to middle power in the international system. If previously other studies in this area were limited to merely defining states as small, middle and great powers, this

dissertation categorizes the criteria for transformation of a state from small to middle power.

3 The dissertation defines Kazakhstan as a middle power. It also evaluates the conditions for the effective strategies used by Kazakhstan that combined soft and smart power.

4 A comprehensive analysis of not only geopolitical processes, but also their interrelations with internal political, socio-economic and demographic processes in Kazakhstan is used. In other words, the research uses dependent, interfering and confounding variables to find out the patterns and mechanics of foreign policy decisions.

5 While previous studies of foreign policy of Kazakhstan mostly inclined to use geographical approach or three level analysis, this study employed issue-based approach to reveal relevance of such external factors as geopolitical, international system and international issues to the transformation of Kazakhstan foreign policy behavior.

6 Ways to increase the effectiveness of the foreign policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan are proposed.

Theoretical and practical significance of the research. The main provisions and conclusions of the thesis can be used by a wide range of international experts to further study the Kazakh foreign policy. The research materials are of practical interest, as they can be used in the training of diplomatic personnel, in the process of teaching general and special disciplines in the specialty of ‘International Relations’, as well as in the development of textbooks in the social sciences and other related disciplines. Certain provisions of the thesis may be of interest in terms of the further development of foreign policy concepts. In terms of significance, certain provisions of the dissertation research may be useful to employees of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to carry out more effective activities.

Testing the results of the study. The theoretical provisions of the dissertation were tested at international scientific conferences and seminars, both in Kazakhstan and abroad: International Scientific and Practical Conference ‘Republic of Kazakhstan and the Eurasian Space: Modernity and Development Prospects’ [102], Modern Eurasian Studies [103], International Conference dedicated to the 20th anniversary of Astana ‘Great capitals - Smart cities’ [104], International Round Table ‘Actual problems of the foreign policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan’ [105], III Conference of Youth as Protagonists of Change [106] as well as at meetings of the Department of International Relations of L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University. A number of the main provisions of the dissertation research were presented in the following publications. 5 scientific publications were published in the journals recommended by the Committee for Control in the field of Education and Science of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan: Bulletin of Eurasian National University [107], Bulletin of Kazakh National Pedagogic University [108], Bulletin of Eurasian State Institute [109] as well as Society and Epoch [110] and Kazakhstan-Spectrum and by Kazakhstan Institute of

Strategic Studies [111]. 1 scientific publication included in Scopus database: Insight Turkey [112].

The structure of the dissertation. The goals and objectives set in the dissertation research, determined the structure and logic of the work, which consists of introduction, three chapters, conclusion, list of sources used.

1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF STATE BEHAVIOR

1.1 Mainstream Theories and States' Behavior

The events that take place around the world make political scientists, sociologists, and even psychologist permanently reconsider their views on the theory of international relations. So far existing variety of theories and views on International Relations can be summarized into four well-known paradigms: first is Realism (including classical Realism and neo-Realism), second is Liberalism (traditional Idealism and neo-Liberalism) and third is Marxism (including neo-Marxism and World-systems theory), and fourth is Constructivism, each of which offers its own understanding of the nature and evolution of international relations (table 1.1).

Table 1.1 – Summary of Mainstream Theories of International Relations

Theories	Factors				
	Actors (1)	International Environment (2)	Policies		Institutions (5)
			Goals (3)	Means (4)	
Realism Neorealism	State (Great, Middle, Small powers)	Anarchic Conflictual	Maximizing power	Hard power, Economic coercion, Balancing, Bangwagoning, Hedging	Military Diplomacy
Liberalism Neoliberalism	States, International organizations, Individuals	Anarchic Cooperative	Maximizing benefits	Applying soft power, Legal regulation, Disarmament	Joint Military Forces, Diplomacy, International institutions
Marxism Neo-Marxism World Systems Theory	Classes of states (the core, semi-periphery, periphery)	Imperialistic Exploitative	Maximizing economic benefits	Exploitation or Social revolution	Transnational Corporations (TNCs)
Constructivism	Social Structures, Identities	Co-constructing Interdependent	Implementing ideas driven by political actors	Regimes, Norms, Values	Social agencies

Of all theories of international relations political realism is considered the most profound and comprehensive tool emphasizing state, national interest and military power to be driving forces of international politics as they are all based on human nature. The work of G. Morgenthau [113], for example, looks at political relations between nations in “*Politics Among Nations*”, the first edition of which was

published in 1948, is still relevant to what all the statesmen, scholars and observers come across today.

The following key provisions are common to representatives of political realism:

1 The main participants in international relations are sovereign states. At the same time, *states* are considered as rationally operating homogeneous political bodies that have a common policy regarding other states, the participants of international relations. It is only states that have exclusive rights to use violence within its territory and have legitimate grounds and have necessary resources to conclude treaties, declare a war and do other actions constituting the essence international politics. This does not relate to all states, but only the powerful, conflicting or cooperative relations between which are the make-up of international politics. At the same time, the international political arena is represented by countries with different potential. In this respect, it should be noted that states can be categorized into smaller and greater ones. The Power Transition Theory is the concept developed by Organsky [114], which narrates on the cyclical nature of war associated with power in international relations as well as describes international politics in a hierarchy of 4 tier world system. *Superpower* has the largest share of the resources of power (population, production and political power in the meaning of coherence and sustainability). *Great powers* represent potential rivals of the dominant state, engaged in the preservation of the existing system and control over the resource potential. As a rule, they seek to expand their influence beyond the borders of their geographic region. *Middle powers* have powers of regional importance, are not able to challenge the dominant state and the existing structural system. *Small powers* are the rest of national states that have little power in their own geographical regions and have little influence and projection beyond their borders.

2 The specificity of international relations is that they are anarchic in nature. The nature of international relations is that states are constant competitors. Each participant is guided primarily by their own interests. “National Interests” is the main category of the theory of political realism, the main motive and key stimulus of state policy in the international arena. In the absence of a rigid hierarchical system and a universally recognized supranational power, survival and struggle for better conditions of existence requires states to act on their own. Therefore, “self-help” is the basic principle of the behavior of states on the world stage. The state acting in an anarchic environment based on its own interests inevitably faces the fact that its interests’ conflict with the interests of other states participating in international relations. That is why, the international environment can be described as conflictual.

3 The anarchic nature of international relations suggests that there is a constant threat to the public interest. That is why, the main goal of any state in international politics is to ensure its own national security. Naturally, the great powers have more resources for this than the others. However, they can never feel safe and constantly strive to maximize their power by increasing their own resources. In this respect, one should note that states of different size are thought to have different goals. In the political realism of Morgenthau [113, p. 23], the main

measuring value is the power, which allows to evaluate the position and will of a state in international politics. So *imperialist state* or any other *greater power* will always try to expand its influence to be sufficiently competitive with other states. At the same time, the threat to international stability is typically posed by the imperialist states themselves. Therefore, in his understanding, a policy aimed at opposing great powers by maintaining the status quo in the international environment benefits small states by protecting them from hostile takeovers. Waltz's structural realism [115] shifts the emphasis from the balance of power system to the behavior of states, as in his opinion it largely depends on anarchy and international system. Meanwhile, Walt [116] argues that balancing is a country's reaction to external challenges, is not caused by the presence of power potential of other players. Pape [117] assert the idea of *soft balancing*, according to which the balance can be created not by possessing economic, military or political resources, but by possessing high international status, prestige, participation in the activities of international institutions. Hey [118] specifies that *smaller powers* demonstrate a low level of participation in international affairs and deal with a narrow circle of foreign policy issues. They limit their activity to the nearest geographic space and use diplomatic and economic instruments of foreign policy rather than military. Small states adhere to neutrality and focus on the great powers in matters of security, resources, creating partnerships. In relationships with each other, they avoid conflicts and seek cooperation. Finally, they spend a disproportionately large amount of foreign policy resources to maintain their security.

4 The most important aggregate resource (or mean) used by states is power, which is understood as the military and economic power of the state, providing security and prosperity, and possibilities for setting rules and norms, spreading values and ideas. But the main feature of power is the ability to control the behavior of other participants in international relations. "Whatever the material goals of foreign policy, such as acquiring sources of raw materials, controlling sea routes or territorial changes, they always imply control over the behavior of others by influencing their will" [113, p. 62]. Varying size of states is believed to influence the strategies they pursue as well. It is worth highlighting the theory of the balance of threats by Walt [116, p. 18], in accordance with which *balancing* is considered as a state's reaction to external challenges, and not simply to the presence of power potential from other players. In Walt's understanding, balancing could take place in the form of creation of an alliance against the source of the threat, and the *bandwagoning* would be a rapprochement of smaller state with the bigger one. Accordingly, the larger the state, the more likely it is to balance the threatening state, while smaller states are more likely to be forced to cooperate with it [116, p. 19]. Expressing a fundamental disagreement with the approaches of his predecessors, who associated bandwagoning with the form of diplomatic capitulation, Schweller [119] developed his own concept claiming that the main purpose of the adjoining countries is not to prevent an attack from a great power, but to maximize the benefits of working with a stronger player. It also demonstrates that the presence of a serious external threat is not a condition for bandwagoning. There is also a middle position called *hedging* which is to emphasize the readiness of a weak state to maximize profits from relations with major powers,

while maintaining a wide space for foreign policy maneuver without having to limit cooperation with certain states or alliances [120]. Russian researchers [121] note non-characteristic behavioral models of economic unions of states, increased independence and initiative of small and medium-sized countries. Russian scientists associate this fact with greater “freedom of action” and “the right to choose their own path of development” due to the decline in the value of the confrontational factor and military force. Moreover, their main behavioral models (balancing and bandwagoning) were transformed under the influence of new conditions, including integration processes.

5 Using state’s foreign policy instruments (military strategy and diplomacy) for its narrowly selfish purposes, each state exercises its power contributing to the make-up of international relations, armed conflicts and wars. However, neorealists, such as Waltz [122], defines power through the concept of opportunities, including economic, military and other components. Power is understood as a tool of the state, which does not reflect the control over the results of interstate interaction but reflects the control over the resources with the help of which security is provided in an anarchic international environment. Power is, according to Waltz, a relative concept, which is to say, what is important is not possessing resources but having control over more resources than competitor (one way to do that is to increase the amount of your resources or reduce the amount of resources controlled by other states). The most important resources that a state should have to ensure its security are military, economic, geographic, and demographic resources. It is also important to distinguish between the concepts of “control” and “possess.” The possession of resources does not mean that the state can use them to ensure its security. The state should have exclusive rights to use these resources.

While realists’ point is quite clear on how states behave depending on the nature of human beings and principles of rationality, there are other ways of thinking which have a right to live for several reasons. The key points of the liberalist paradigm are as follows.

1 Participants in international relations are a wide range of actors, which includes not only states, but also international governmental and non-governmental organizations, public associations and groups, private enterprises and even individuals. Moreover, liberalists insist that the state cannot be regarded as a rational and unitary actor. The international policy of the state is the resultant of constant struggle, coordination and compromise of the interests of the bureaucratic hierarchy and individual power structures, civil and military systems of society, various political parties and movements, non-political associations and professional groups, etc.

2 International relations are not anarchic and uncontrollable. They can and should be regulated, firstly, by means of international treaties, and secondly, through the establishment of special organizations regulating interstate relations. The expansion of the power of international organizations, the improvement of the norms of international law, the democratization of international relations, the extension of universal norms of morality and justice makes it possible for other states (not only

great powers) and non-state actors to equitably participate in international politics. Thus, liberals recognize only one aspect of the anarchy of international relations and deny another. Moreover, they only partially agree with the thesis that there is no central authority in international relations, which is empowered to make decisions that are mandatory for the full implementation by all actors. In other words, the implementation of the agreements is in the hands of participating parties themselves, which could be achieved through cooperation. International processes are diverse, and international relations cannot be reduced only to the state of peace and war, or even to cooperation and conflict. All this is taking place, and with the increasingly dominant role of international cooperation. But if we present the international processes in a generalized form as the dominant trend, then we should speak about the increasing interdependence and the formation of a unified global community, which is faced with common problems and therefore has common interests.

3 The priority of universal human values and universal democratic principles, based on which one should move towards the formation of a new, consciously regulated world order that meets the common interests of all humanity. This way liberalists think it is possible to create a win - win situation, which should be able to provide an opportunity for everyone to maximize its own benefits. Like the concept of political realism, modern liberal theory recognizes human nature as the cornerstone of international relations. But unlike realism, making humans aggressive and uncontrollable, liberals think of such qualities as peacefulness, adherence to the ideals of cooperation, morality and mutual assistance. It follows that the purpose of foreign policy of states is the production of wealth based on mutually beneficial cooperation and the search for ways to expand it. The modern world is so closely interconnected that attempts by any single state to obtain unilateral advantages will inevitably entail destructive consequences for all. The desire to get benefits at the expense of others will mean the excess of costs over benefits for any state violating international law and the balance of interests.

4 Although specific features of international relations are characterized by the absence of supranational power, according to the liberal idealistic paradigm, the world community of democratic states, with the support and pressure of public opinion, is fully capable of settling conflicts arising between its members by peaceful means, methods of legal regulation, increasing the number and role of international organizations that promote the expansion of mutually beneficial cooperation and exchange. One of its priority themes should be the creation of a collective security system based on voluntary disarmament and mutual renunciation of war as an instrument of international politics, a system that will allow to end world wars and armed conflicts between states. War is not an objective feature of world politics, but the adversity of mankind, which needs to be opposed to by means of disarmament, as well as the system of interstate treaties and rigid mechanisms of control over their implementation.

5 Military force is an important tool of the state's foreign policy, but it should be used out only in self-defense and upon the exhaustion of non-force instruments for the protection of national interests. An important condition for international peace is

the promotion of democracy [123], because democratic countries prefer to multiply their own wealth, rather than wasting energy on fighting against each other. The path to the promotion of national interests and the realization of the goals of participants in international relations lies through cooperation in the joint solution of these problems. The creation and strengthening of international institutions (through the strengthening and further development of the UN system), the further improvement of international law, the obeying generally accepted standards of morality. Even the largest and most developed states can no longer afford to solve their own and international problems solely by violent means. Firstly, due to intertwining economies, and the use of some forms of modern weapons, like nuclear ones, makes it pointless as it threatens global catastrophes for all mankind. Secondly, owing to growing globalism ideas and declining value of military in modern post-industrial societies, it is hard to justify anyone fighting against another nation.

The key points of the Marxist paradigm (along with neo-Marxist and economic structuralism and World-systems theory) are as follows.

1 The main actors in the Marxist paradigm of international relations are social classes: on the one hand, it is the owners of productive capital, exclusively holding and managing the means of production in the global economy and entering into a tough competitive (including armed) struggle; on the other hand, it is proletarians, oppressed and exploited by world imperialism. Therefore, the dominant processes in the international arena are inter-imperialist crises, contradictions and clashes between these main classes, between the rich and the poor. States as participants in international relations are secondary.

2 Unlike supporters of realism and liberalism, the adherents of this doctrine believe that the nature of international relations is not anarchic but imperialistic and exploitative. Relying on Marxists' ideas, one can claim that international relations do not differ from intra-social relations in anything but scale. They are one of the elements of the superstructure, determined by a set of dominant production relations or, in other words, the economic machine, and, secondly, reflect the peculiarities of the interaction of the bourgeoisie and the working class within the framework of national states [124]. Therefore, the main international processes are represented by class conflicts, crises, wars and social revolutions. Modern neo-Marxists [125] represent international relations in the form of a global system of diverse economies, states, societies, ideologies and cultures. The basic concepts of neo-Marxism are the "world-system" and "world-economy". World-economy has three interrelated structures: a single global market, the political system of independent competing states and a three-tier spatial structure. According to representatives of the world-systems approach, the capitalist system can be maintained and developed only in the form of a world-economy. Capitalism was able to flourish because the world-economy included not just one, but many political systems. The existence of a system of interstate relations is a necessary condition for the development of capitalism. This is because capitalism requires a certain relationship between capital and state power. According to Wallerstein [125, p. 16], if the powers become too strong, as it was in

case of world-empires, their interests will outweigh the interests of producers, and the endless accumulation of capital will no longer be the main priority.

3 In Marxists' thinking, the goals of the main actors of international relations are radically opposite. While some (the world bourgeoisie) strive to maximize profits and accumulate capital, others (the international working class) seek to overthrow the ruling class and thereby realize the world-historic mission of the proletariat: to free all workers from exploitation and establish socialism and communism on Earth. From the world-systems analysis Wallerstein [125, p. 84] there are three levels within the framework of the modern geo-economic structure: core, semi-periphery and periphery. At the *core*, the world's leading companies in key knowledge-intensive industries are concentrated. In the conditions of innovative technological race and patent wars, they retain exclusive or oligopolistic control over the main segments of the world market [126]. High-tech TNCs perform the function of creating commodity and managerial innovations, and the semi-periphery, through the branches of TNCs operating on its territory, ensures mass production of these technologies. *Semi-periphery* includes some of the weaker, industrially developed countries that are not capable of sustainably specializing in the production and marketing of highly complex goods, but sporadically selling them in the periphery states, mainly in those "niches" that are not "occupied" by the "center". It also includes the "new industrial countries", which carried out modernization according to the model of the innovative type and orienting their exports to the "center" and oil-exporting countries [127]. *Periphery* of the system of world economic relations includes countries specializing in manufacturing in highly competitive industries. Their profitability is either low due to the presence of many manufacturers of similar low-tech products or depends on market conditions. These include the extracting industry, which is not directly involved in transnational production cooperation. Thus, the periphery, which mainly has export and specialization in raw material, is excluded from the world geo-economic system.

4 Neoclassical Marxism insists on the need to change logic of modern world development, along with the preferences and strategies of the main actors of international relations. They argue that the struggle of the peoples of "periphery" against the largest monopolies of the "center" for social justice and redistribution of wealth is completely valid and reasonable. The means to achieve these goals are as follows: on the one hand, increased exploitation, and on the other, the world social revolution. The struggle for a place in the hierarchy is carried out by various means - material, informational, cultural, and organizational. The stakes vary from period to period and are related to the balance of power between the world powers, as well as geographical displacement of centers of economic activity and capital accumulation. Consequently, the distribution of niches in the hierarchy can periodically be changed at various scales.

5 The most powerful TNCs form the core of the world geo-economic system, which ensures the interests and goals of these corporations. TNCs in turn serve as a source of economic, financial, technological, and, consequently, military and political power of their home countries.

The key points of the Constructivism, despite all its internal heterogeneity, has a general content, the main elements of which can be summarized as follows:

1 The main objects of analysis of international relations are states. However, it is assumed that non-state actors can play an important role by articulating the rules and norms, which is possible, however, only if the activity of these actors is recognized as such. In other words, states are the product of humans' thoughts, beliefs, ideas etc. That is why the identity and interests of the state are largely constructed by these social structures, and not the result of the exogenous influence of material entities.

2 Constructivists see the interstate system not as material one, but as intersubjective structure. Anarchy is not an inherent attribute of the interstate system, but a product of faith and the will of decision-makers [129]. The main problems of international relations are not determined by the interests, power and authority of states, but by the norms and beliefs that guide their political leaders. Therefore, sovereignty, security, defense, etc. depend on a culture understood in a broad sense. In this regard, Constructivists insist on interdependence of world society and its components (first of all, the states); the continuity in the evolution of the international system, which, however, is capable of undergoing revolutionary changes. At the same time, the reason for the change in international relations lies in the transformation of identities emanating from the societies themselves, which replace the previous dominant ideas with new ones. The dependence of elements in international relations takes place not only because of the processes and interactions happening there, but also because of its conceptualization.

3 The main goal of states is not limited to the issue of security. States may have long-term common interests and actively influence international system. The interests of the state are formed in the process of "constructing" its identity. All political actors change over time, giving rise to a new identity. In turn, this has a significant impact on political processes. Constructivism stresses on the active role of political actors who are able, through their interactions, to change the structure of international relations. Unlike neo-Realism, which considers conflict to be the product of anarchic structure, Constructivism asserts that the problem of peace and war depends on how close cultures and social practices of people, nations, and states are. International politics is not governed by any objective laws. Policy is influenced only by ideas, norms, values and knowledge possessed by political actors.

4 Constructivists emphasize that, in addition to the power component, the influence of culture, language, ideology, knowledge is essential. All of them are alternated through proceduralism, variability and mutual influence. The consequences of a lack of supranational power can be overcome, in particular, with the help of international regimes, laws, norms, economic interdependence, education or institutions. International cooperation is seen as the result of a similar social impact of the external environment and the similarity of national identities shared by states. Thus, constructivists think "inter-identity" cooperation can be achieved more easily, because it is not constrained, by and large, by the framework of state sovereignty.

Interstate cooperation is achievable, and can be the result of the mutual adaptation of the identities of the contracting parties.

5 Social agencies create international norms that have a powerful self-sufficient influence on states. From the point of view of constructivists and historical institutionalists, norms are not necessarily created with the direct participation of states and under their control, and therefore, should be investigated as a substrate independent of the state. Constructivists are convinced that the norms should be linked not with political content of legitimacy, but with social processes developing in international relations and with the strength of the social fabric of these relations. States may not be consciously aware of the existence of social norms, which does not negate their actions and significance. Norms are informal, mobile and plastic, and international politics is the result of constant interaction and interpenetration of international and national norms or identities of states regarding their role and status in the world. Therefore, world politics is a reality, constant in its openness to change, and states are the units open to the reformulation of their identities.

Considering all four paradigms above, a number of general provisions can be developed: (1) although no one denies the anarchy of international relations, the possibilities for its regulation do exist; (2) the number of actors in international relations is expanding, including not only small or middle powers and intergovernmental organizations, but also new, non-traditional actors - international governmental and non-governmental organizations, transnational corporations, numerous businesses and other associations and unions, as well as individuals; (3) recognition of the worldwide stratification of states which implies both their status and function in the world system.

In contemporary circumstances, all theories could agree that states have different power and can be distinguished from each other depending in certain criteria. Moreover, every state is forced, in one way or another, to follow certain foreign policy strategies depending on their power, role and place in international arena. Broadly speaking, each state strives for national expansion or *self-extension*, including territory, influence, resources, allies, etc. It may be concerned with *self-preservation* i.e. the protection of its own space and its national interest. Finally, states can reject any direct benefits in favor of strengthening peace and solidarity in interstate relations which is called *self-abnegation*.

Indeed, although having formal legal equality, states cannot ignore the fact that they differ in their territory, population, natural resources, economic potential, social stability, political authority, arms, etc. These differences are summarized in the inequality of states in terms of their national power. The consequence of such inequality is the need to act actively or passively in international arena. Thus, there is an international stratification, with its characteristic actual hierarchy of states in the international arena.

Exploring the international stratification from the standpoint of historical sociology, Luard [129, p. 358] comes to the conclusion that at all stages of its existence, from the Roman Empire, where the tribal states depended on the central power, and the Chinese multi-state system, where power was unevenly distributed

groups of states, up to modern times – international relations have always been stratified by one or another grounds. In international relations, there are two main directions [130] to explain the causes of social stratification and its consequences on the behavior of actors.

One of them, the “conservative” direction, considers stratification as functional specialization: society is stratified because the positions to which great value is attributed provide those who occupy them with power, privilege or prestige. From this point of view, the integration of society and social order are the products of stratification, and, moreover, the degree of social stability reflects the degree of value consensus of its members.

Representatives of the second – “radical” direction – believe that public order is always based on coercion, and the stratification of society is always accompanied by a process in which the power, privileges and prestige of a certain social stratum are achieved and maintained through the systematic exploitation of other layers.

Most of the ideas related to the stratification of international relations were borrowed precisely from a radical direction. Within the framework of the science of international relations, the literature on the issue of stratification is divided into two trends: “interactionism” and “structuralism”. The first considers the interacting states as autonomous elements of a stratified system of international relations, in which explanatory variable is their behavior [19, p. 21; 115, p. 16; 131]. The second comes from the fact that in the XX century when the states have no longer been autonomous, but play different roles in the global capitalist system, and this role depends on the place they occupy in this system - central or peripheral [125, p. 82; 126, p. 44; 127, p. 78; 132]. Thus, if the state as an international actor is the main subject of analysis for interactionists, structuralists, who primarily consider the relationship between the center and the periphery in the world system, often do not take it as a unit of analysis.

As noted above, one of the most widespread types of international (state) stratification is the unequal ability of states to protect their sovereignty arising from the inequality of their national-state power. From this point of view, superpowers, great powers, middle powers, small states and microstates are distinguished; the argument on how to define, compare and differentiate shall be discussed further on.

1.2 Defining the Size of a State

It is widely agreed that the notion of a size, status or role of a state in the world arena has a great importance. Yet, so far there is no clear understanding to what ‘smallness’ or ‘greatness’ of states refers. Many researchers have been seeking to find a theoretical understanding of what constitutes ‘smaller or greater power’ and classify these features. The received wisdom in international relations suggests that there should be certain characteristics that make states belong to one or another category. However, with technological advancement and sharp development of specialized economies is making the matter of smallness and greatness increasingly relative making some countries more important in some issues and less relevant in another.

This is seen as an opportunity to find new prisms into how states' relational power should be studied.

According to traditional ideas, states express themselves in the international arena through their foreign policy, which can take place in two main forms: diplomacy and military strategy. Their purpose is to satisfy national interests, preserve the territorial integrity of the country, and protect their security and sovereignty. However, nowadays such understanding of foreign policy and international relations reveals its apparent narrowness, because foreign policy can no longer ignore the problems of ecology and scientific and technological progress, economy and the media, communications and cultural values. And most importantly, it cannot reflect both the fact that the traditional problems of international relations are undergoing significant modifications under the influence of all these new factors, and the actual role and true place of middle powers, small states and non-state international actors.

Keohane [133], for instance, grades the states in 4 categories: system-determining, system-influencing, system-affecting and system-ineffectual. A 'system-determining' state is to play a critical role in shaping the system: the 'imperial power' in a unipolar system and the two superpowers in a bipolar system can serve as a clear example. As Tsygankov [130, p. 62] puts it, the superpowers are distinguished by the following features: a) the ability for massive destruction of a global scale, supported by the possession and improvement of nuclear weapons; b) the ability to influence the living conditions of all mankind; c) the impossibility of being defeated by any other state or their coalition, unless another superpower is included in such a coalition.

'System-influencing' states are those which cannot individually dominate a system but may nevertheless be able significantly to influence its nature through unilateral as well as multilateral actions. Those would be great powers at the time of European concert, when Great Britain, France, Prussia, Austro-Hungary and Russia were the main decision-makers in International Relations. In particular, the great powers have a significant impact on world development, but do not dominate international relations. They often seek to play a global role, but the real possibilities that they have limit their role to either a specific region or a separate sphere of intergovernmental relations at the regional level.

Some states that cannot hope to affect the system acting alone can nevertheless exert significant impact on the system by working through small groups or alliances or through universal or regional international organizations may be labeled as 'system affecting' states. The middle powers have a strong influence in their immediate environment. This distinguishes them from small states whose influence is weak. However, they have sufficient means to maintain their independence and territorial integrity.

Meanwhile, some states that can do little to influence the system-wide forces that affect them, except in groups which are so large that each state has minimal influence and which may themselves be dominated by larger powers are 'system-ineffectual'. Those states are usually labeled as small and/or microstates and whose

opinion and role is typically neglected and are basically unable to protect their sovereignty on their own.

Traditionally, theories of international politics have explored relations between large states focusing on security matters. A key factor in the development of world processes was considered a military force and the threat of its use, as well as the main object of study was the great powers or superpowers. Although the debates on the discrepancies between great powers and superpower still do exist, the area is considered well-researched. Small and middle powers, however, have attracted much less of scholar attention. Nevertheless, with contemporary development of economic and technological tools of influence, small and middle powers now require a closer look because of their increasing importance in both regional and global scale. Therefore, before we immerse into the question of how small states turn into middle powers, we shall explore what features should state have to be considered 'small' or 'middle.'

Defining Small States

The problem of defining small states is related to the lack of consensus on how far smallness and greatness of states are measurable and what should be taken as a measure. In doing so, the authors are typically classified into: (1) those who believe there are certain parameters with the help of which states' status can be directly measured; (2) those who suppose it is state's own international behavior as well as perception the world community that regards one a smaller or greater state.

The *first group of researchers* inclines to taking territory, population and economy as a measure. In this regard, the most referenced work in the contemporary research of small states is the Economic Consequences of the Size of Nations reported by International Economics Association [14, p. 24]. Economic Growth of Small Nations, a report written by Kuznets that recognized small states to be those with a population of less than 10 million. To support this, Demas [15, p. 22] and Jalan [16, p. 42] recognized small nations as those with a population of five million or less and a useable land zone of 10,000 – 20,000 miles² and underneath 25,000 kilometers² respectively. Subclassification of small states was also proposed with a population of 400,000 or less, usable land of 2,500 kilometers² or less, and GNP under US\$500m.

Taylor [17, p. 215] suggests a statistical technique to identify micro-states, setting a limit of 2,928,000 on population and 142,888 square kilometers on territory. Russet and Starr [18] suggested taking into account also military potential, life expectancy of the population, the percentage of infant mortality, the number of doctors and beds in medical institutions per capita, its racial composition, the proportion of urban and rural residents, etc. Ross [23, p. 412] scales small states' population in between 1 and 5 million, while between 100,000 and one million are 'mini-states' and those having below 100,000 people are reported to be 'micro-states'. However, in this case, there is a risk of losing decisive criteria and, therefore, the risk of drowning the problem in a huge mass of important, but still not decisive, signs.

International organizations take a closer look on the economy, although population and land area remain the main distinctive feature. To be precise, the Commonwealth defines small states as sovereign countries with a population of 1.5 million or fewer. However, it also includes (Annex A) Botswana, Jamaica, Lesotho, Namibia and Papua New Guinea because of their small state features such as: (1) vulnerability to natural disasters and external economic shocks; (2) limited market diversification; (3) limited human and institutional capacity; (4) limited access to external capital [134].

These features are important, because small states are vulnerable to global economic crises. It takes a long time for them to recover from external economic shocks, which make them fail to meet development goals and get into higher foreign debts further leading to dependency on most strategic products such as food and energy resources. On top of that, most small states are prone to suffer from weather-related disasters, a single case of which is able to cause damages that put development of the country in reverse for several years. Such industries as fishing, tourism and agriculture are extremely sensitive to weather changes, which then are exacerbated by limited institutional capacity to respond the challenges effectively [135].

The World Bank Group [136] defines small states as countries that have a population of 1.5 million or less or are members of the Small States Forum (Annex A). It includes 50 countries that relatively differ in land area, location, GDP, and economic structure. Several are landlocked, and some are island countries; only a few are high-income countries, while many have middle or low income; some of them are conflict-affected; and a few economies are oriented in exporting commodity, while others are based on service and tourism.

Despite all this heterogeneity, they have certain feature which makes them fall into small states' category: a small population, limited human capital, inability to use economies of scale, a constrained domestic market, and vulnerability to climate change and market shocks. Small states often have small land areas, and their population is generally under 1.5 million. There are also 8 micro-states, with populations of less than 200,000.

The criteria such as population and land area are considered primary because it sets off all the other development constraints. For example, a small area gives few or no safe zones to which populations can during or in the aftermath of natural disasters. It causes competition for the use land as transport infrastructure, agriculture, and towns and cities so on. Although some of the listed countries have the opportunity of using all the benefits of the ocean, they have limited land area for economic activity. Small population limits the economy of scale in terms of low competition in economy and politics, lack of customers and high costs for basic services and products.

Other features which small states can be characterized by most common economic constraints: Constraints in labor market and capacity; emigration of skilled labor because of few employment opportunities; difficulty of private-sector-led growth because of the lack of economies of scale; difficulty of diversifying economy due to limitations in productive base; few sources of revenue; endemic debt

challenges; remoteness adding economic cost; poor connectivity affecting the service sector; high cost of providing public services to small scattered populations; exposure to climate change and natural disasters; recurrent financial, climate, and disaster shocks reducing the fiscal space. high fiscal costs of managing economic shocks leading to reliance on international finance; human development challenges: high infant mortality, low child immunization rates, diseases; few in-country education facilities mean a dearth of adequate specialization.

Despite all these systematic economic issues, countries such as Estonia, Malta, Bahrain, Brunei and Qatar serve as an example of economic success who not only achieved high income but also diversified their economies involving fossil fuel, trade, incorporating highly-skilled employees, strong legal and financial system. By this, it should be noted that not all small states are poor, and not all poor states are small.

To find the answer to the question: what makes a state small? Sutton [25, p. 145] suggests considering if what we are researching is an island, a sovereign country or a small economy because it makes a huge difference. It is also suggested that the developmental approach should be added as it may cause confusion when considering economic characteristics. In other words, developed small state may falsely seem superior than developing countries.

Thus, although territory and population are undoubtedly significant composing parts of a state, these measures in investigating the smallness and greatness of states are sometimes ignored because a lot of small countries in their territory and population may have a great significance in special matters as well.

The *second group of researchers* consider that foreign policy behavior or international role that small states choose to pursue is the main factor that associates them to this status.

Fox [26, p. 14] argues that small state's foreign policy is often concentrated on regional matters as they lack the power to successfully apply power or resist the effective application of power on them by other states, unable to pursue an agenda vis-a-vis other states – because they lack the power to do so. Rothstein [27, p. 229] supports the idea that the small state cannot resolve a security dilemma on their own using its internal actions, therefore they instead rely on external sources of security which he calls alliance-seeking behavior.

East [28, p. 561] bases his definition of small states exhibiting following foreign policy behavior patterns: (a) low levels of overall involvement in international relations; (b) high levels of activity in intergovernmental organizations; (c) high levels of support for international law, treaties; (d) avoidance to utilize force or any kind of behavior that could alienate stronger powers; (e) narrowing down foreign policy vectors in terms of functional and geographic scope; (f) seeking to use of moral and normative positions in global issues. Some small states tend to have limited interaction with other states, make more use of verbal statements, rather than non-verbal, take fewer risks because of their limited capabilities.

Handel [29, p. 5] attempts to shed light on five perspectives: definitions and feature of weak states; internal and external sources of weakness and strength; how weak states act within different international systems, and their economic position in

the world. It is found that (a) weak states are mostly passive and their foreign policy are mainly reactive; (b) they always opt to minimize the risk whenever it concerns stronger powers; (c) they are easily invaded or penetrated through other ways; (d) they seek support from international organizations and external actors.

Some small states are seen to be guarded by a guardian neighbor, and in most of the cases it is its ancestor or metropolitan power from whom it succeeded self-determination and independence. This is known as 'client relationship', a clear case for such relationship is between Kuwait and Britain/US [30, p. 569].

Small states tend to exhibit an exclusive focus on survival. For this reason, diplomacy of a small state shall be to manipulate as far as possible, the will of other more powerful states. To offset the weakness, it seeks association with other powers. It might have to sacrifice autonomy in the control of national resources and loss of political maneuver and choice [31, p. 78].

On top of this, because small state cannot obtain security primarily by use of its own capabilities, it must rely fundamentally on the aid of international institutions, processes, or developments to do so. In recent years, there is a clear tendency for small states to attempt to ensure their own security on the basis of international law and by supporting the negotiation of legally binding instruments under the auspices of international or multilateral organizations and institutions. Many of them have advocated and participated in regional co-operation and become members of multilateral organizations and alliances. Experience has shown that small states can successfully strengthen their positions by pursuing their specific interests, as in the case of Iceland, which participated actively in the formulation of the Law of the Sea, while at the same time extending its fisheries jurisdiction. Membership of organizations and institutions has given smaller states security and more political influence than their size might warrant on the basis of the principle of non-discrimination, unity and solidarity; the European Union and NATO are prime examples of this.

The advantageous position is that small states are often seen to have more international credibility, being understood as having fewer hidden agendas and less ambitious national interests than more powerful states [34, p. 415]. International trust and respect are desirable because they facilitate the protection of interests which is at the core of all foreign policy. Of course, all states want to be trusted and respected, but it is particularly important for smaller states who want to be serious participants in international affairs. Fundamental interests, such as peace and security and their derivative benefits, such as a sound economy, employment, a healthy environment and sustainable use of natural resources, cannot be defended except through international co-operation with most of the states in the world.

Maass [37, p. 68] pools both quantitative and qualitative criteria all together to compare all existing definitions and finds out that although small state foreign policy behavior may be quite ambiguous because of geographical, demographic, economic and political circumstances, common feature is that it tends to rely on international organizations, multilateral diplomacy and International Law. He also confirms that there is a correlation between foreign policy behavior and the size of a state.

However, it is implied that they both can serve as independent variables, which means that size could be affecting small state's behavior and vice versa.

De Carvalho and Neumann [38, p. 16] hypothesize that because there is no way for small powers to grow territorially, they seek status from higher moral involvement in international relations. When they engage in seeking status, it is not the way to compete with great powers, they know their power limitations. Instead, small powers they compete to for the state of a good power and reliable partner.

Retrieving results using the combination of quantitative and qualitative (relational) criteria appears to be a plausible solution [39, p. 138]. They classify states into small sub regional groups (such as Central Asia, Near East, Arabian Peninsula etc.) to make a comparative analysis of each state's foreign policy behavior and achievements within the group (Annex A). The research finds that classification of small states requires accentuation various regionally determined features and the use of relational criteria because of high number and variety of data in quantitative characteristics to consider.

Defining Middle Powers

Generally, middle powers are described as relatively wealthy, have medium-sized territory and have no nuclear weapons or permanent membership in UN Security Council [137]. However, the attempts to define middle powers vary significantly involving measuring national capabilities and foreign behavior as well. In particular, there are different approaches: (1) hierarchical, (2) behavioral and (3) functional. The hierarchical approach explores capabilities, self-positioning and recognized status of a state. The behavioral approach takes on 'agential' view and looks at how middle powers act and what instruments they use to achieve their goals. The functional approach asserts that middle powers exercise their peculiar influence in certain areas of interest, serving particular role in international arena i.e. they serve particular function in the world.

One way is *the hierarchical approach* ranking states according to their position in the world. Organski [19, p. 6] identified population, political development, and economic development as the most important determinants of national power. Compiling all of these, Wood and Holbraad both adopt gross national product (GNP) as the main indicator while Holbraad combines GNP, population, and regional considerations.

To be precise, in order to achieve a more balanced result, Holbraad decides to divide all countries in the world by regions: Africa, Asia, Europe, North and Central America, South America, and Oceania and Indonesia. He ranks states in order of their GNP (on based on 1975 data) each region separately first, draws a line of division looking the biggest gap in GNP and/or population size and then compares the results (Annex A). It is interesting to note that this approach involves high level of subjectivity making middlepowerness highly tied to regional development. This is to say, as a result of this research, Turkey did not get to be a part of middle power club because its GNP was only the 15th in Europe, while had it been included in the Asian league, it would have the 5th i.e. a part of middle power club.

In similar manner, Wood (1988) attempting to find the easiest way to differ small, middle and great powers, uses GNP as determining factor, ending up to include the countries between the 6th and 36th rank in GNP ranking as middle powers. As result, it contains the countries having between 40 and 400 billion USD in their GNP, which composes quite a promiscuous group. Also, his analysis does not provide any explanatory power into why certain countries engage in middle power behavior and other countries do not.

Laura Neack [22, p. 8], in her analysis of middle power behavior, uses cluster technique considering five national attributes (GNP per capita, military expenditures per capita, population, infant mortality rate, and adult literacy rate). Cluster analysis is a statistical procedure which allows her to group political entities into relatively homogeneous groups. When using this procedure, it does not need to set critical values for group parameters, thus it avoids the need to predetermine the state group membership criteria. It is known as Ward's Method which attempts to optimize variances within the groups. She performs the cluster technique for the years of 1960, 1965, 1972, and 1980. The results are then combined to compose a final "membership" list for three state groups: great, middle and small states (Annex A).

Such unsatisfactory results of mere 'listing' states according to certain attributes as well as lack of explanatory power of middle power concept have urged scholars to use other techniques and approaches into studying the concept. To some degree it can be agreed that the concept of middle power has always been promoted by Canadian scholars who attempted to clarify Canada's position at the time of Cold War [138]. For this reason, scholar started to think not only in 'positional' terms, but also on the role or 'function' that middle powers play in the world.

Thus, the second view is *the functional approach* which concerns a state's foreign policy activism and the role of middle powers in international system. Middle powers, in this view, are those who occupy the position mediators or 'like-minded' states who work to ease tensions between conflicting parties. Middle powers can be featured by the strength they have and power they put on to use. If we consider the power as the ability to impose one's will to other nations, and ability to reject the will imposed on itself, the power is defined by the means state uses to implement its will. It may contain military, moral and economic tools.

Holbraat [21, p. 24] cites an unpublished address of R.G. Riddell called 'the Role of the Middle Powers in the United Nations' on June 22, 1948: The middle powers are those which, by reason of their size, their material resources, their willingness and ability to accept responsibility, their influence and their stability are close to being great powers. He also adds that 'in a predatory world, the middle powers are more vulnerable than their smaller neighbors, and less able to protect themselves than their larger ones.'

Another is thing to point out is recognition. Holbraat narrates on how it is impossible to use the same measurements which scholars use to identify great powers to build a concept of middle powers. Military strength and economic resources of great powers and superpowers make them belong to special class of world society. It is acknowledged by international law, international organizations, conferences, etc.

For example, great powers and superpowers get to use privileges of being a permanent member of Security Council, while middle powers are deprived of that. However, great powers have not only rights but also responsibilities. During or major conflicts great powers gather around to arrange peace settlements to prevent such conflict from happening again and preserve balance of powers.

In this respect, Mares [139] draws a line between capabilities of small and middle powers. In his view, middle powers possess sufficient resources to affect the group of limited number of states i.e. they are not mere ‘price takers.’ Meanwhile, small states feel obligated to ally in with a group losing its ability to influence otherwise. He also assumes that states often attempt to extend their influence over other states when it concerns maintaining their sovereignty and position in the international system.

In this case, central idea of functionalism in defining middle powers is how certain skills or resources in certain areas make some countries take on responsibility in these areas [140]. Thus, middle power focuses on particular ‘niches’ in which they may make a maximum use of themselves [141]. They can even conduct “a leading position” in managing issues within its functional responsibilities [142].

Along with this, Nossal [32, p. 150] identifies that one of the functions that middle powers are often commit to is ‘internationalism,’ which has following features: (a) responsibility, (b) multilateralism, (c) participation in international organizations, (d) willingness to implement prior commitments. In regards with this, it is fair to note that under these conditions, it is up to states themselves if they want to choose middle power role.

In this regard, Gecelovsky [36, p. 80] thinks middle power concept should be taken as determinant of state behavior, not a form of state behavior. He argues that functionalism and internationalism should be considered as causes of states’ actions rather than the results of actions. In such case, the consistency argument can be avoided, which allows scholars to compare and contrast middle powers in terms of conceiving ideas for change.

The third view is *the behavioral approach*, which encompasses the shift towards agent-based featuring has inspired scholars to focus on individual characteristics of states, in particular, how they behave [143] in regional and global environment, what goals they pursue and what means they use.

The feature that distinguishes middle powers from others is that they focus on keeping peace and stability in international system by participating in various international efforts [142, p. 77]. In addition to this, it is argued that psychological, behavioral and dimensional features should be fulfilled so that state can be considered as a ‘middle’ one. In this model, states are defined by the middle-sized capacity and commitment to implement international treaties, taking initiative in multilateral environment, focus on certain area where the power sees itself to be dominating and perceived to having necessary qualifications [143, p. 33]. Ravenhill [33, p. 12] argues that such factors as capacity, concentration, creativity, building coalition and credibility should be taken into account when defining one as a middle state. To be specific, in terms of ‘capacity,’ Ravenhill thinks that middle powers have

foreign services with higher level of analytical skills, which along with effective intelligence gathering and communication networks allows them to benefit from international cooperation more than small power counterparts. 'Concentration' is the [in]ability of middle powers, as opposed to great powers, to apply high level power across numerous different areas of international political agenda. In other words, middle powers have limited number of objectives. 'Creativity' is understood under the notion of ability to compensate the lack of power by the force of ideas. That is not to say, it is only or necessarily middle powers that use creativity but to note that it can be employed. In this regard, Behringer [35, p. 3] agrees that middle powers are catalyst of innovations in international norms, mediation, multilateral diplomacy etc. 'Coalition-building' is the enterprise taken by middle powers to impose their will at the time of lacking power to do so on their own. It is also worth mentioning that, middle powers engage in *building* coalitions, unlike small powers which merely *join* them. 'Credibility' is understood in two dimensions: first is trust gained through relative weakness and thus innocence of initiatives, unless they are promoting ideas for another weighty actor; second is consistency of advocated policies, or 'reputation,' both domestically and internationally.

This idea of including psychological and intentional dimension is further developed by the Connors [144] who, analyzing foreign behavior of Australia, argues that middle powers seeking multilateral solution to international problems set a precedent for building international order through cooperative institution building. In this regard, it is fair to mention Evans [145] who claims that GDP, population and territorial size as well as military capability serve as no more than starting point.

Seeking to reason such behavior Nye [146] finds that middle powers tend to rely on 'soft power' because they lack coercive power instruments. In his view, they use persuasion and attraction instead of coercion and force. Furthermore middle-sized powers show particular interest in developing and thorough implementation of international law which should serve as a tool for encouraging great powers to behave in international arena.

In addition, Matthew [147] and Rappert [148] claim that middle power have now exceeded their 'role of lieutenants of great powers' which allows them to look for their own ways to peace building and justice. To do so, they engage into powerful partnerships with non-state actors which are having tremendous effect on security architecture of the world nowadays.

Middle powers and non-state actors have common goals in international politics such as developing international law, strengthening global justice, respecting human rights, protecting environment, find ways for economic growth etc. This 'like-mindedness' allows them to use any tools at their disposal: governments operate through state-centric diplomatic channels, while non-state actors work engaging various civil society networks, NGOs to push the idea of the norm-based global politics [149]. It is also important to mention that middle powers and non-state actors widely use media campaigns and political mobilization. To influence people, states and institutions, middle powers use NGOs to expand its power.

Bolton and Nash [137, p. 183] explore the partnership between middle powers and NGOs deeper giving particular example of its success such as Ottawa Convention of 1997 which managed to ban antipersonnel landmines. They also point out achievements of other international agreements on humanizing, stabilizing and pacifying international relations such as Rome Statute of 1998, Kimberley Process of 2003 and Disabilities Convention of 2006. What concerns the providing security, as Lee & Park [150] put it, in order to assert their influence in regional scope middle powers use both their economic and/or military capacities.

Summarizing all three approaches, it is fair to agree with the Coopers' [151] criticism of definition of middle states as those which are not great powers but still have consequential role in its own region and exert some degree of global affairs far beyond that of small states. Such national attributes as geography, population, military, economic, technological and capacity, along with qualitative features as national reputation should be specified. Also, in order to achieve best results, it is suggested avoiding taking into individual countries features but rather take *n*-groupings of states which should reflect certain aspects of 'middlepowerness.'

Moreover, Saxer [152] suggests that the middle power status should be explored from 2 dimensions. First is attribute or capacity which includes population, military and the economy. The second is intention which incorporates political leadership seeking to play a larger role in world arena thus requiring certain type of foreign policy behavior. Indeed, the global shift from security to economic issues, contemporary middle powers find themselves in a profoundly different environment than those 'traditional' middle powers did [153]. Globalization, rise of Asia as an economic core as well as development of technology is diminishing the importance of international structure in explaining international relations. For this reason, the study of defining middle powers should incorporate both material attributes the states possess and structural context as well as the aspirations that political leadership pursue.

1.3 Methodology to Measure Transformation from Small to Middle Power

Scholars of international relations and political science have long been trying to rank states as small, middle, and great powers according to varying disputed criteria [28, p. 558; 154-156]. Although the position and attributes of superpowers and great powers has been relatively clear throughout the history due to their active participation in world conferences on such as Vienna Conference 1815, Paris 1919, Potsdam 1945, the essence and clearly-defined features of middle powers and small powers have remained undetermined.

At the time when scholars were attempting to define, test and criticize the rankings of states from various angles, the states have been transforming from small to middle and from middle to great and vice versa. In this regard, it should be noted the studying such 'transformations' would be of more practical use for states and scholars as it would propose a developmental guideline for statesmen as well as input dynamic dimension into the research.

To introduce the developmental approach to the study of states' ranking, we shall first glean each and every feature claimed in the literature to describe small and middle powers. These features are then clustered by categories they refer to. Unlike widely-accepted way of categorizing states' features by research approaches, this study will be organized based on four following kind of features of small and middle powers:

– economic, scope of operation, security, and internationalism (table 1.2). According to definitions of states ranking, it is assumed these are the basic areas where states have to progress in order to achieve the next level. However, it should be borne in mind that exceeding or lagging behind in one feature does not mean the country have excelled or fell behind the rank, it is rather aggregate of the feature completion that makes the country level up or down.

Table 1.2 – Comparative Analysis of Small and Middle Power Features

Features	Type of States	
	Small Powers	Middle Powers
1	2	3
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Small population (2) low GNP (3) low military expenditure (4) vulnerability to natural disasters and external economic shocks (5) limited market diversification (6) limited human capital and institutional capacity (7) limited access to affordable finance (8) inability to use economy of scale (9) constrained domestic market (10) high infant mortality rate (11) low adult literacy rate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) medium-sized population (2) medium-sized GNP (3) medium-sized military expenditure (4) relatively resistant to natural disasters and external economic shocks (5) sufficient market diversification (6) sufficient human capital and institutional capacity (7) sufficient access to affordable finance (8) efficient use of economy of scale (9) fully functioning domestic market (10) low infant mortality rate (11) high adult literacy rate
Scope of Operation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) concentration on regional matters (2) low levels of overall involvement in international relations (3) narrowing down foreign policy vectors in terms of functional and geographic scope (4) tending to have limited interaction with other states (5) being passive and their foreign policy are mainly reactive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) focus on keeping peace and stability in international system by participating in various international efforts (2) having a range of international agenda, although limited number of objectives compared to great powers (3) focusing on particular ‘niches’ in which they may make a maximum use of themselves (4) expanding foreign services allowing to benefit from international cooperation (5) conduct “a leading position” in managing issues within its functional responsibilities
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) lacking strength to apply power or resist the application of power by other states (2) being unable to withstand security threats on their own (3) probability of being easily invaded or penetrated in any other ways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) having strength to apply power or resist the application of power by similar-sized states (2) being able to withstand security threats from similar sized states (3) asserting influence in regional settings by the use of both economic and/or military capacities

Continuation of the Table 1.2

1	2	3
	<p>(4) reliance on external sources of security i.e. alliance-seeking behavior (5) having guardian neighbor</p> <p>(6) avoidance to utilize force or any kind of behavior to minimize the risk of alienating stronger powers (East 1973)</p> <p>(7) tending to focus on survival (Jazbec 2001);</p> <p>(8) sacrificing autonomy in control of natural resources and loss of political maneuver and choice (Jazbec 2001);</p> <p>(9) rely on ‘soft power’ because they lack coercive power instruments (10) having no privileges of being a permanent member of Security Council</p>	<p>(4) possess sufficient resources to affect the group of limited number of states (5) engaging into powerful partnerships with non-state actors which have significant effect on global security (6) serving as mediators or ‘like-minded’ states who work to ease tensions between conflicting parties (7) intention which incorporates political leadership seeking to play a larger role in world arena (8) close to great powers in their willingness and ability to accept responsibility, influence and stability (9) rely on ‘soft power’ because they lack coercive power instruments (10) having no privileges of being a permanent member of Security Council</p>
Internationalization	<p>(1) high levels of activity in intergovernmental organizations</p> <p>(2) seeking support and reliance aid from international organizations and external actors</p> <p>(3) seeking status from higher moral involvement in international relations</p> <p>(4) high levels of support for international law, treaties</p> <p>(5) having more international credibility i.e. having fewer hidden agendas</p>	<p>(1) taking initiative in multilateral environment as well as imposing their will through building (not merely joining) coalitions at the time of lacking power to do so on their own</p> <p>(2) commitment to implement international treaties</p> <p>(3) creativity as ability to compensate the lack of power by the force of ideas, e.g. using media campaigns and political mobilization</p> <p>(4) catalyst of innovations in international norms, mediation, multilateral diplomacy etc.</p> <p>(5) credibility gained through ‘good’ reputation and innocence of initiatives</p>

Economic Features

Quantitative changes. The economic features of states are claimed to be the most important in defining its rank in the world system. To begin with, we draw attention on quantitative changes that have to occur before a small state can transform into a middle power. In particular, the population size appears to be determining if the country is small or middle. The Commonwealth Secretariat [134, p. 2] and World Bank [136, p. 4] have built their own lists of small states claiming the ceiling of 1.5 million on population, although some exceptions are made for several underdeveloped countries. But a lot of researchers [17, p. 12; 23, p. 5] reasonably question the consistency of such a limit on population size because having just over 1.5 million people, as in the case of Kosovo having only 1.8 million population, clearly does not make it a middle power.

On the other hand, middle power researchers [20, p. 2; 21, p. 13] believe there should be a separation gap which can be drawn 'wherever seems natural' between small and middle powers, at least in regional level. As a result of such study based on 1975 data, it is found that Australia had the lowest population of 13.5 million people to be included in the middle power club. Using the same technique, it is found that Finland is country with the lowest population to be part of middle powers. In a nutshell, small states have under 1.5 million population, middle powers have over 5 million, and whatever country has the population of between 1.5 million and 5 million is the country in transition.

Another quantitative feature in determining whether the country is small or middle is GNP. Although researches use GNP and GDP per capita [157] interchangeably, GNP appears to be more frequently used to measure the ranking. In particular, many scholars [14, p. 24; 15, p. 12; 16, p. 42] agree that small states have as low GNP as 500 million, while middle power researchers use the same technique as in above-mentioned population quantification: first they set the countries in separate regional groups, then list them out from largest to smallest GNP, find the natural gap and draw the separation line.

Using the data from Stockholm International Peace Research Institute [158, p.1] it is found that military spending of middle powers exceed that of small powers. Although the expenditure is elastic depending on country's GDP, foreign policy priorities, and perceived threats, states' status plays a significant role on how much they spend on military purposes [159]. It seems fair to count the expenditure based on share of GDP, which should minimize the significance of economic development imbalances among countries.

Qualitative changes. In order to transform from small to middle power, it is not enough to fulfill only quantitative criteria of the middle powers, one should also be concerned over qualitative economic capabilities. The case in point is natural disasters and external economic shocks to which small states tend to be vulnerable [134, p. 3]. Conversely, middle powers demonstrate relative resistance and are able to avert the consequences of catastrophes by building proper infrastructures to protect its citizens. Along with this, external economic shocks do not have a deep domino effect on the whole economy of a middle power.

Limited market diversification, human capital and institutional capacity [134, p. 4] are the one the most typical causes of small states' failure to manage the aforementioned threats. In order for the state to level up, it should make sure that it has put enough effort on diversifying the economy, having qualified human capital to employed in the country as well as well-organized bureaucracy to respond contemporary challenges.

Limited access to affordable finance in small states [134, p. 4] prevents people form an opportunity to start their own business, which in turn, leads to unemployment and poverty of the majority of population. Unwillingness of external sources of finance to invest is exacerbated by small states' inability to use economy of scale because of small population. This makes the production cost increase even higher creating dead-end situation in the condition of constrained domestic market [136, p. 3]. To move along with middlepowermanship, small states need to break through the vicious circle of underdevelopment. To be a middle power, a state has to have a sufficient access to affordable finance, be able to use economy of scale efficiently, and provide fully functioning domestic market.

Indicators such as education and healthcare are as important. To be exact, to transform into a middle power, the state has to achieve a low infant mortality rate and high adult literacy rate [22, p. 12]. These indicators are to emphasize the vitality of quality human capital in the development of the economy of the country as well as positioning of the nation in the world arena.

Scope of Operation

Another set of features that various researchers emphasize is small and middle powers' scope of operation. It is interesting to note that small states and middle powers differ not only in their economic features but also in foreign policies, to be precise, its scope. For instance, Fox [26, p. 2] argues that small states' foreign policy is highly concentrated on regional matters, while middle powers [142, p. 55] participate in various international efforts including keeping peace and stability in international system as a whole.

It is also stressed that small states have only low level of overall involvement in international relations [28, p. 558], middle powers have a range of international agenda, although compared to great powers, it is limited in terms of number of objectives [33, p. 312]. It seems natural from practical point of view that smaller states cannot manage to deal with all international agenda around the world simply because they lack diplomatic channels and personnel dedicated to do so.

If small states tend to narrow down foreign policy vectors in terms of functional and geographic scope [28, p. 558], middle powers focus on particular 'niches' in which they make a maximum use of themselves. The difference should be understood in the way that small states do not 'choose' any particular vector they are good at, or may master in the future, their choice is made by necessity. Meanwhile, middle powers have more freedom of choice assessing their own assets and liabilities; they select the best area for communication with outer world.

International cooperation can be costly therefore several small states may be willing to limit their foreign representation to a minimum. Middle powers, in

contrast, expand their foreign services as much as possible to get benefited from international cooperation [33, p. 313].

At the time of emerging international issues, small states remain passive and mainly reactive [29, p. 5], whereas middle powers conduct a leading position in managing these issues within their functional capabilities [142, p. 11]. Thus, any state, wishing to become a middle power, should learn to take proactive measures to prevent upcoming issues. In a word, being the first to suggest solving the causes instead of fighting against consequences is thing that makes the difference.

Security

Whether it is national or international, providing security has always been considered very important when measuring states' status in the world arena. Moreover, with the contemporary development, it concerns not only the citizens' peaceful being, but also energy security, autonomy for the use of natural resources as well as the economic and institutional security.

In this regard, first and foremost feature of small powers is that they lack strength to apply power or resist the application of power by other states [26, p. 34], while in contrast to that, middle powers have sufficient resources to do so when it concerns similar-to-its-own size states. It should also be noted that middle powers' strategy may contain not only military opposition to an upcoming threat, but other 'creative' ways as well [33, p. 320].

It is also highly likely that small states are easily invaded or penetrated in any other ways [29, p. 14], while middle powers assert their influence in regional settings by using both economic and military capacities [150, p. 23]. So countries, in transition to middlepowermanship, should upgrade tighter border protection and ability to withstand any kind of informational, religious, or any other imposition.

Derived from these vulnerabilities, the states' reliance on external sources of security, alliance-seeking behavior [27, p. 5] as well as preference to having a guardian neighbor [30, p. 14] makes it small. At the meantime, possessing sufficient resources to affect the group of several states [139, p. 20] as well as willingness to affect global security through engaging into partnerships with non-governmental organizations makes one a middle power [147, p. 12; 148, p. 62].

At the times of crisis, small states minimize the risk of alienating stronger powers by avoiding using force and limit any kind of behavior that could be qualified as such [28, p. 562]. This is to say their focus is solely on survival [31, p. 42]. However, middle powers take on the role of mediators and engage 'like-minded' states to ease tensions between conflicting parties [149, p. 482]. This is the implication of the intention incorporating political leadership seeking to play a larger role in world arena [152, p. 323].

In addition, it is implied that small countries sacrifice their autonomy in control of natural resources and loss of political maneuver and choice whatsoever [31, p. 12], while middle powers are close to great powers in their willingness and ability to accept responsibility, influence and stability in the world [21, p. 284].

Finally, despite these discrepancies, there are some features that small and middle powers share. They both rely on 'soft power' because they lack coercive

power instruments [146, p. 14] and have no privileges of being permanent members of Security Council [137, p. 24].

Internationalization

Although what makes small and middle powers distinct from great powers is often claimed to be ‘internationalization,’ it can be noticed that the level of internationalization differs among them as well. First, to clarify the meaning of internationalization, it should be noted that in economics, it means ‘increasing the involvement of enterprises in international market.’ In line with that, small and middle powers attempt to get engaged into international community, though it is with varying degree of success.

For instance, small states are associated with active involvement in international organizations [28, p. 567]. However, to become a middle power, they need to take concrete initiatives as well as impose their will through building (not merely join) coalitions at the time of lacking power to do so on their own [143, p. 8].

Being a part of international organizations, small states often seek support and rely on the provided aid [29, p. 21]. Middle powers, in contrast, attempt to expose commitment to implement international treaties and other liabilities [32, p. 150].

Moreover, as there is no way that small states would grow in territory, they seek status from moral involvement in international relations, whereas middle powers employ creativity to compensate the lack of power by the force of ideas, e.g. using media campaigns and political mobilization [33, p. 2; 149, p. 481].

If small states depict high levels of support of already existing international law, treaties, norms and procedures, middle powers are the catalysts of innovations in international norms, mediation, multilateral diplomacy etc. [160].

The last but not least discrepancy is that small states get more international credibility from having fewer hidden agenda [34, p. 413], while middle powers gain it through ‘good’ reputation earned over the years [33, p. 323].

Transformation Model

Defined criteria for transformation of small states into middle powers touch upon quite a range of governmental policy area. To make this study useful for policymakers, let us cluster out the actions that prospective middle powers should undertake into following areas: demographic policy, economic policy, government, education and healthcare, security policy, intelligence policy, military policy, foreign policy (table 1.3). Basically, this table represents the policy indicators that small states should achieve to become a middle power. However, it should be noted that all states have their own external and internal factors including historical background, (un-)availability of certain resources, type of regime etc. that affect the feasibility of such endeavor (figure 1.1)

Another thing to point out is that the means to achieve these indicators may vary significantly both country-wise and time-wise. For example, setting a goal of increasing population might require the state to employ ‘repatriation program’ dedicated to immigration of nation’s Diasporas scattered around the world to come back to their home country. Alternatively, the state would need to initiate a ‘baby

boom' with maternity grants, high levels of income across the country which is viable at the time of economic growth.

To boost the economic growth, provided that the country has chosen a capitalist way of development, it would need to attract foreign direct investments. The investments should be able to supply not only the large businesses to create new jobs, but also bring affordable loans through second-tier banks for small and medium-sized businesses to grow. The freedom of choice in starting a business allows citizens to diversify the economy as well as specialize in particular high-profit areas in a natural way. In this way, the matter of achieving autarky or at least relative independence of the economy is in hands of both government and society. If the population of the country is too small for the economy of scale to get efficient, logical way out of this situation would be to trade with neighboring countries which, in turn, should increase the GNP. This, along with aforementioned attraction of investment requires internal political and social stability as well as attractive international image.

The work of getting worldwide recognition or state branding is becoming more and more vital. The fight for consumers' choice is not the concern of commercial companies only anymore. With multicultural companies having a budget comparative to small nations' GDP or the case when one large corporation's tax payment takes up the majority of nations' budget is not a surprising fact for a long time now. Therefore, governments do not hesitate to help promote domestic corporations to expand in any way possible because it does have a significant impact on income and well-being of its citizens. Success of such corporation becomes success of the whole nation.

In such circumstances, the role of foreign policy becomes even more important. Whoever wants to achieve a middle power status should take good care of its foreign services. It might consider expanding diplomatic representation around the world, as most of the work promoting the appealing image of the country should be done in foreign countries locally.

Table 1.3 - Explanations for Policies to Transform Small into Middle Power

Socio-Economic Parameters	Military-Political Parameters	Foreign Policy Behavior
Demographic policy Increasing Population;	Government Well-organized bureaucracy; Developed institutional infrastructure	Foreign policy Expanding foreign services; Taking concrete, proactive, innovative initiatives; Imposing will through building coalitions by using media and political mobilization etc.; Focusing on particular ‘niches’; Taking leading position in resolving international issues; Mediating conflicts and cooperation with NGO to affect global security; Willingness to accept responsibility and commitment to implement international treaties; Gaining reputation of ‘a good citizen’ of international relations.
Educational policy High adult literacy rate; Qualified human capital;	Security policy Providing human, energy, economic and institutional security; Autonomy for the use of natural resources;	
Healthcare policy Low infant mortality rate;	Intelligence policy Ability to withstand any kind of informational, religious, or other imposition;	
Economic policy Fully functioning domestic market; Affordable finance; Efficient economy of scale; Diversification of Economy; Higher GNP; Economic Independence	Military policy Sufficient military spending; Having sufficient resources to apply power against or oppose attacks from similar-sized states; Border protection; Asserting influence in regional settings	

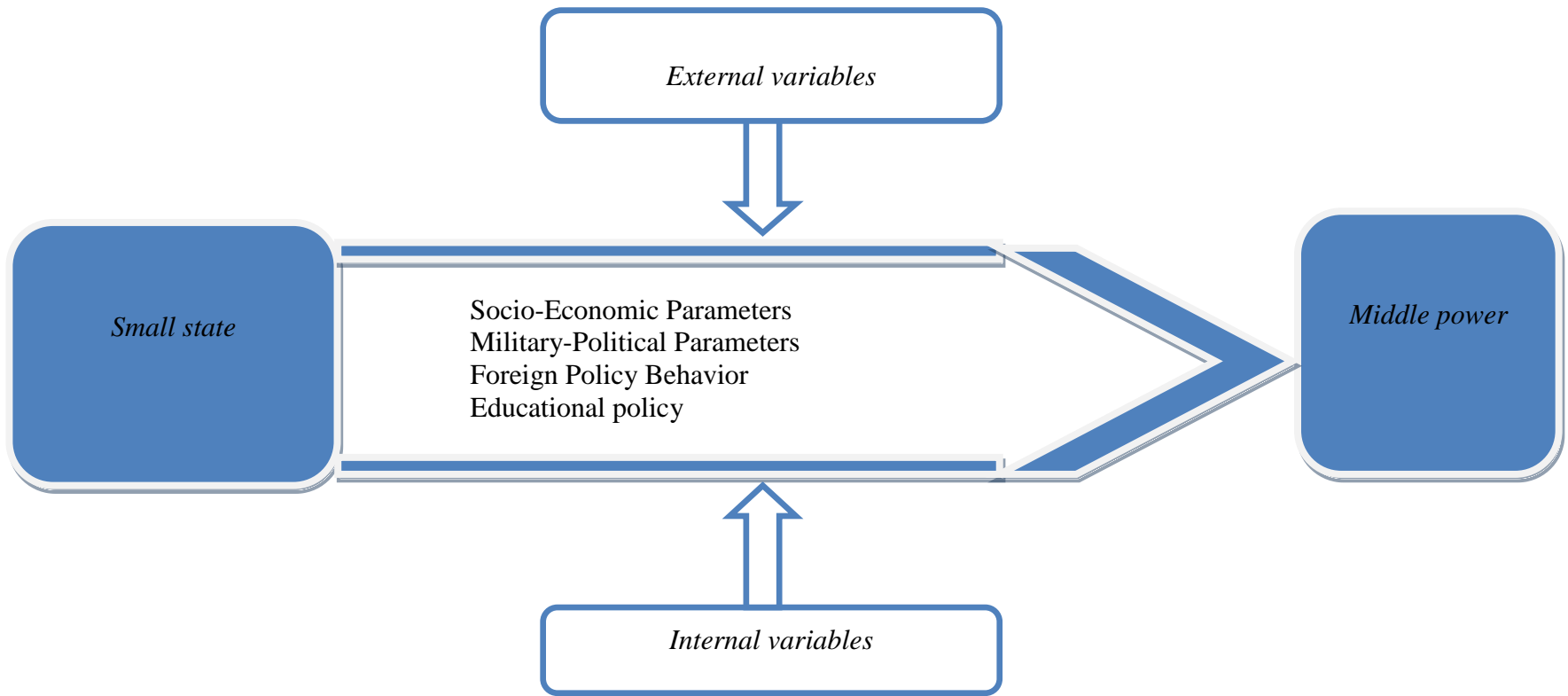


Figure 1.1 – Model of Transformation from Small to Middle Power

It is also noteworthy to mention the role of international initiatives. Although it may seem like there is no place for small state's ideas in international community, it is actually quite the opposite [137, p. 10]. When initiatives are concrete, proactive and innovative, they get a lot of support. With the help of creative approach e.g. media and social networking to affect the citizens of globe, the state may get an exact effect it wants. It might engage into mediating conflicts or cooperation with NGO to affect global security. In this way, the state takes a leading position in resolving disturbing issue as well as imposes its will on other states by building coalitions.

Building a long lasting reputation of 'good citizen' of international relations by fighting for a good cause in its particular 'niche,' actually labels the state with pin of trustworthiness. Willingness to accept responsibility as well as commitment to implement international treaties and respect for international law at the state level makes potential investors and trade partners see the whole country's citizens as such. Therefore, building an image of a trustworthy country is a one way to become a middle power.

It is not all possible, however, without qualified human capital. Healthcare and education are the areas where governments' attention along with sufficient funds and long-term plans should never be detracted. These are not the areas that could give immediate results, but they benefit tremendously in the long term. All the sophisticated development civil engineering plans and cutting edge technology adjusted to the needs of the local society is made by wunderkinds originated from local towns and villages. The interest to develop his/her own home country motivates people more than remuneration of those invited from abroad.

On top of that, governmental institutions' ability to plan, execute and think ahead in their respective areas and mobilize at the times of crisis should undergo a constant sharpening. Thorough implementation of all the undertaken initiatives both domestically and internationally are the responsibility of governmental institutions. Therefore, keeping the balance between excessive expanding and shortage of civil servants, governmental institutions should offer well-thought-out environment where society has an opportunity to develop the country.

Another role of state bureaucracy in making its country a middle power is to provide national and human security. To be precise, providing human security involves economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political security. They should also make sure to protect the rights of whole nation to control natural resources of the country autonomously and protect citizens from any kind economic and other disturbance.

As a part of intelligence policy, the state should be able to protect its citizens from any kind of informational, religious, or other imposition. At the current circumstances of spread of terrorism, the work of intelligence services has become even more important.

Finally, to become a middle power, the state should allocate enough on military expenditure. Being able to protect its border, assert influence in regional settings as well as having sufficient resources to affect to military coalition decisions is important for the state to become a middle power. At the times of crisis, such as

attacks from similar-sized states, it should be ready to apply power to oppose it. Although middle powers are known for their peaceful agenda, they attempt to get ready in case of attacks both militarily and joining armed alliances.

2 EVOLUTION OF KAZAKHSTAN'S FOREIGN POLICY

2.1 Transformation of Kazakhstan into Middle Power

Having established that in order to transform from small to middle power the state should undergo changes in the socio-economic, military-political as well as in its foreign policy behavior, this chapter checks the completion of these parameters by Kazakhstan. To trace the essence of the 'Kazakhstan's model' of transforming into a middle power, changes in aforementioned parameters are studied.

Socio-Economic Changes

In the beginning of 1990s, Kazakhstan emerged as an independent state with neither the political institutions nor the staff needed to guarantee basic state's functions. Demographic situation had been deteriorating with negative balance of migration of just over 175 thousand people yearly in average until 2002 to have nation's lowest population of 14,851 thousand people [161]. However, as a result of tremendous measures on repatriating ethnic Kazakhs from around the world (mainly from China and Mongolia) as well as increasing living standards and other measures to boost economic growth, Kazakhstan managed to put the trend in reverse. To compare, in 2019 Kazakhstan's population accounted for 18,592 thousand people having yearly natural growth of over 250 thousand people [161].

Education is one of government's highest priorities, which can be seen from data on the increasing number of students: 238,253 students in 1991, and 489,337 students in 2017 got their education from colleges, while 288,400 students in 1991, and 496,200 students in 2017 studied at universities. In 2010, Kazakhstan officially joined the Bologna Declaration and became the first Central Asian state recognized as a full member of the European educational space. Thus, most universities joined the Great Charter of Universities, as well as completed the transition to a three cycles model of training 'Bachelor – Master's – PhD' based on the principles of the Bologna Declaration. Moreover, there is 'Bolashak' international scholarship program aimed at training personnel and specialists for the priority sectors of the country's economy. It includes both academic studies and research/production internships at leading companies and universities in the world. Over 24 years of implementation, 9,645 specialists have been trained; today, there are 1,258 scholarship holders [162].

According to the report of the Global Competitiveness Index for 2017-2018, Kazakhstan ranked 57th in the ranking among 137 countries. According to the Health and Primary Education indicator, Kazakhstan ranked 59 out of 140 countries. According to the Human Development Index, in 2018 the republic was included in the group of countries with a very high level of development, taking 58th place out of 189 countries. Kazakhstan's healthcare has shown an enormous leap in developing the service which resulted in following results. Infant mortality has shrunk from 28.10 in 1993 to 7.93 (per 1000 cases) in 2017. Coefficient of maternal mortality decreased from 77.30 in 1995 to 14.0 (per 1000 cases) in 2017. Lifespan has increased from 67.60 years old in 1991 to 72.95 years old in 2017 [163].

In order to strengthen the primary prevention, the National Screening Program for 11 types of diseases was introduced, and the number of general practitioners

increased by 30%. Despite the reduction in bed capacity by 14 thousand units, in the Republic of Kazakhstan, the number of hospital beds is higher than in OECD countries by 20%, the longer average hospital stay (9.5 bed days (2014) versus 6.0 in OECD countries). The equipment of medical organizations with medical equipment increased by 25.5% (2010 – 43.2%, 6 months of 2015 – 68.7%): rural – 72.6%, urban – 74.1%.

Gross national product has expanded from 11404.3m USD in 1993 to 162 887.4m USD in 2017, and 696 USD per capita in 1993 and 9030 USD per capita in 2017. The amount of investments has been increasing annually from 1381.4m USD in 1993, to 26903.6m USD in 2017. Trade turnover in 1991 amounted to 1 482.9m USD (910.3m USD for export, and 572.6m USD for import) and in 2017 to 77646.8m USD (48342.1m USD for export, and 29304.7m USD for import) [163].

The emergence of the Kazakhstan model of a mixed economy began in the context of an economic downturn caused by the rupture of traditional economic ties, price liberalization and other trends. In order to create a national structure of its economy, adequate to market requirements, Kazakhstan had to go a long way, to determine its priorities in all areas and at all levels of society and the economy. The imperatives of the Kazakhstani model of a mixed economy are: reintegration of the state and the market; property recombination; reintegration of the public and private sectors of the economy; social orientation of the economy; internationalization of the economy.

There are several stages of the formation and development of Kazakhstan's economy [164]. The *first stage* of economic development in Kazakhstan covers the period (1992-1993) from the moment of the declaration of sovereignty until the introduction of its own national currency. This period was marked by rather disturbing tendency: galloping inflation undermined the launch of market mechanisms and institutional transformation. The budget crisis, the disordered tax system, the uncontrolled outflow of capital and the aggravation of social problems – all this exacerbated inflation, depreciated savings and working capital of enterprises, thereby undermining the real base for investment and savings as factors of economic growth.

The *second stage* of the formation of a transitional economy (1994-1998) began with the formation of an independent economic policy. The course on a tight monetary policy was used as a priority measure to stabilize the economy. A consistent monetary and fiscal policy was carried out, which made it possible to reduce the inflation from 2200% in 1993 to 7.3% in 1998 [50].

The main result of the second stage of reforms was a fundamentally new economic situation, as a result of which the transformation of a command economy into a market economy became irreversible on the basis of key systemic transformations. They include: reducing state regulation in economic life along with the increasingly widespread use of market regulators of socio-economic processes, liberalization of foreign economic activity, opening access for foreign capital, providing a relatively stable exchange rate regime, development of trade; practical implementation of the principles of free pricing using state regulation services for a

very limited range of products; changing the overall economic environment, creating conditions for the development of market-oriented economic structures, formation and expansion of the foundations of a mixed economy, development of entrepreneurship, small and medium businesses, formation of an environment for healthy market competition.

The *third stage* of economic transformation in Kazakhstan (1999-2003) is characterized by the relative stability of the positive dynamics in the main macroeconomic indicators. The system of macroeconomic stabilization measures and successive market reforms along with favorable external economic factors allowed Kazakhstan to form the basis of a market economy. In other words, there was a radical change in the socio-economic system. The steady, dynamic development of the economy over the past five years reinforced the irreversible nature of market transformations. International financial centers have recognized Kazakhstan as a market economy country [55].

At the same time, the world and Russian financial crisis of 1998-1999 had a negative impact on the progressive development of the economy of Kazakhstan. To solve these problems, it was decided to deepen institutional changes. Namely, regulatory and legal framework of economic processes has significantly expanded, a number of policy documents have been adopted to promote the development of the most significant sectors of the economy, and measures have been taken to bring the business environment closer to the standards of a developed market. The Republic of Kazakhstan has become one of the first among the republics of the former USSR, which managed to transform its economy in social terms:

- powerful national investment institutions;
- transition to market mechanisms in the sphere of housing and communal services which implies the full payment for cost of services by consumers, while remaining state support for low-income citizens;
- introduction of market mechanisms in health care and education, stimulating the development of the private sector in these areas;
- improving the processes of privatization and management of state property;
- adoption of a set of measures to support domestic producers and the development of import substitution, which made it possible to begin the restoration of manufacturing enterprises;
- deepening reforms in the financial sector, aimed at further strengthening the domestic banking sector and involving people's funds in investment processes (creating a fund for guaranteeing deposits in second-tier banks, reforms in the insurance market);
- decision on the formation of the National Fund of the Republic of Kazakhstan, allowing to reduce the country's dependence on adverse changes in price on world markets;
- creation of Development Bank to expand the practice of long-term lending to investment projects;
- adoption of new Tax Code, which forms a tax system aimed at stimulating domestic producers and revitalizing the economy.

The *fourth stage* (2004-2008) is characterized as a stage of ‘sustainable development’ of the economy. At this stage, Kazakhstan has taken course to socially oriented development: priorities for social orientation of property relations, income distribution, humanization of the economy, growth of national well-being. Economic priorities include increasing role of Kazakhstan in the global division of labor, industrial and innovative development, developing corporatization, entrepreneurship, public-private market, forming a progressive structure of social production based on the prevalence of the service sector, and ensuring economic sovereignty and security of the country [60].

The year 2006 gave a huge impetus to reforms in the country, becoming the beginning of a new stage in the implementation of the strategy, the main goal of which is to join the pool of 50 of the most competitive countries in the world. As a result of the reforms, large high-tech macro projects began to be introduced, which in the future will be able to change the structure of industry and exports, 30 corporate leading companies that are competitive on the world market began to be created.

The global financial crisis of 2007 brought about changes in the development of the economy of Kazakhstan. In autumn 2007, Kazakhstan faced the first wave of the financial crisis. It should be noted that the Government of Kazakhstan promptly adopted a series of priority measures to mitigate the negative effects of instability on the international financial and food markets. The key areas of state support were the construction sector, lending to small and medium businesses, maintaining food security.

The *next stage* (2009-present) is a period of adaptation to the new global economic realities, which inevitably required structural changes in the economy. At the same time, Kazakhstan continues to rely on building an innovative economic model that allows the country to emerge from the state of catching-up modernization and instead become regional economic leader. The emphasis is put on competitiveness which is understood as nation’s capacity to modernize rapidly and integrate into the global economic and political space.

For ten years, Kazakhstan has been living in a dynamic economy. However, long-term strategy motivates society to set a new level of development, not to settle for what has been achieved. In today’s conditions, the risks of development as big as those at the first stages of formation. The higher the level of development, the more complex and difficult tasks come up to be solved.

Having created optimal economic mechanisms, Kazakhstan began to accelerate political modernization. First of all, the country was faced with the task of adapting the political system to the level reached by the economy. Thus, economic success laid the fundamental foundations for accelerating the process of political modernization of the country. As a result, the evolutionary path of development ‘from economic reforms to political’ became the key formula for success, a feature of the Kazakhstani path of development. Kazakhstan today is a successful example of a country where, along with economic growth, political stability remains, where the restructuring and democratization of state power is not carried out against the background of upheavals, revolution and in an atmosphere of open dialogue, the balance of interests

of various representatives of society. It evidences the maturity and effectiveness of public policy, consistency and continuity of the reform process, and, therefore, of the possibilities to make real breakthrough as the most developed countries in the world.

Military - Political Changes

As regards the military-political changes that occurred in Kazakhstan to facilitate the transformation into middle power, it is important to note the work on developing governmental bureaucracy and quasi-governmental institutions. There is an Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan for Civil Service Affairs which is an authorized state body in the sphere of state service, compliance with the quality of public services. The agency has territorial bodies in regions, cities of republican significance, and the capital. The Agency manages 2 organizations: “National Center for Civil Service Personnel Management” Joint-Stock Company, as well as “Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan” Republican State-Owned Enterprise which are dedicated to preparation of new recruits for the governmental bodies.

Agency had been working on the implementation of the first direction of the “Plan of the Nation – 100 concrete steps” to form a professional governmental apparatus. With the introduction of the Law “On Civil Service of the Republic of Kazakhstan,” the civil service of Kazakhstan is switched to a career model, according to which recruitment is carried out for lower positions, and promotion is only possible on a competitive basis. Thanks to this work, the principle of meritocracy is implemented. Selection for the civil service job is carried out through competence-based approach, which shifted the emphasis from evaluating theoretical knowledge to measuring the personal qualities and skills of candidates necessary for effective work. In order to further improve the civil service, since 2018, in some state agencies (Agency, Ministry of Justice and Local Authorities of Nur-Sultan and Mangystau Oblast) a new system of remuneration for administrative civil servants is being tested, according to which the salary of a civil servant consists of a fixed part based on a factor scale and variable one called ‘bonuses.’ The system of regular training civil servants is now required by law, and has to be implemented at least once every three years.

At the same time, work is going on to improve the quality control of public services. As a result of the systematic explanatory work on alternative ways of receiving services (such as E-Government) and the Agency’s proposals on integrating information systems of government agencies, the number of e-services provided increased by 13% (in 2017 – 50%, in 2018 – 63%), while public services received in paper form decreased by 10% (in 2017 – 27%, in 2018 – 17%). These measures allowed reduce violations in provision of public services by 3.7 times (in 2017 – 370 thousand, in 2018 – 100 thousand) [165].

In addition, to improving the interaction between the government and society, a lot of work has been done to orchestrate smooth communication among the bodies themselves to achieve the aims as efficient as possible. To be exact, the system of ensuring Kazakhstan’s national security is formed by the governmental forces, other state bodies and organizations within their strictly defined competence, on the basis

of the current legislation and unified state policy. The national security forces include the Armed Forces, other troops and military units of the Republic of Kazakhstan; as well as the bodies of national security, internal affairs, foreign intelligence, military and tax police, the security service of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the tax and customs services, emergency response services. National security forces interact with each other within the limits established by law, and inform each other on matters within their competence. Ensuring national security is obligatory for all other state bodies and organizations, which they carry out in their respective area as well as upon appeals from the national security forces.

Governmental institutions such as General Prosecutor's Office, Committee of National Security, and Foreign Intelligence Service are all engaged in the goal of providing human security which is achieved through protecting national interests determined by a set of balanced interests of citizens, society, and the state.

From the moment of Kazakhstan's proclamation of Independence, the task of ensuring the security and defense of a young sovereign state has become a top priority. On May 7, 1992, by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan – the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, the Army of sovereign Kazakhstan was created. The Armed Forces of Kazakhstan are able to effectively accomplish tasks in accordance with the purpose of repelling aggression, armed defense of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Kazakhstan, protecting and defending state and military facilities, protecting airspace, fighting illegal armed groups, and performing tasks in accordance with international treaties ratified by the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Kazakh army achieved its contemporary level due to the dynamic construction process in accordance with the views on ensuring the country's military security, reflected in the State Development Strategies, the President's Addresses to the people of Kazakhstan and Military Doctrines. The Kazakhstani army has gone through a difficult process of transition from a mass army to a compact, but well equipped, combat-ready Armed Forces. In the early 90s, the basis of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Kazakhstan was the formations and units of the former Central Asian Military District, as well as the garrisons stationed in the country. At that stage, the most important task was to preserve the existing personnel, weapons, and military equipment, to create the structures of the Ministry of Defense as well as chain of command to control the armed forces [166].

At the *first stage*, until 2002, efforts were aimed at ensuring the ability of the Armed Forces to solve problems of localizing and suppressing low-intensity conflicts. At the *second stage*, until the end of 2005, the goal was to ensure the ability of the Armed Forces to solve problems in a medium-intensity conflict, independently or jointly with the armed forces of the allied states. At the *third stage*, after 2005, the main task is a set of measures aimed at increasing the number of highly mobile military units in the Armed Forces, capable of solving complex tasks in important strategic areas. The budget of the defense ministries is directed to the modernization, restoration, overhaul and purchase of weapons, military and special rescue equipment, firefighting equipment, and modern communication means [167].

As a result of the reforms, the size of the Armed Forces was significantly reduced. Their composition, location, and purpose were optimized. The ability to mobilize instantly and permanent readiness were taken as the basic principle. A regulatory framework has been developed to form three-species structure of the Armed Forces, including Ground Forces, Air Defense Forces, and the Naval Forces. Taking into account the geographical location and size of the country, regional commands of East, South, West and Astana were formed. This made it possible to create self-sufficient groups of troops in strategic areas to repel aggression and participate in solving problems in the event of crisis situations.

For immediate response to any threats in the shortest possible time a group of Special Operations Forces has been created. In the interests of the efficient relocation of troops to all regions of the country, air transportation has been enhanced. To prevent info-psychological and cyber attacks in the Armed Forces, info-security (cyber) security units have been created. As part of the integration of the territorial defense system into the general system of ensuring military security and state defense, a territorial defense command body has been created as well.

As part of the implementation of measures to develop the state and military command and control system to ensure military security and state defense, automated systems for managing troops, weapons, and resources are being introduced. Modern armaments and military equipment are being supplied to equip the Armed Forces, other troops and military formations, which makes it possible to increase the reconnaissance, attacking and transporting capabilities of the troops.

In this regard, it is worth mentioning that military expenditure in Kazakhstan increased from 177.7m USD in 1995 to 1336.9m USD in 2017, although as a share of GDP it decreased from 1.0% in 1995 to 0,8% in 2017 [158, p.1]. Kazakhstani military use guaranteed program-oriented funding of the armed forces which provides a specific, time-bound, development strategy for the republic's armed forces.

At the same time, the funds provided for Armed Forces, other law enforcement agencies and intelligence is spent on the development of information systems and strengthening the material and technical base, rearmament, the construction of the border guard service of the National Security Committee, military hospitals, internal troops, etc. As part of law enforcement expenditures on the implementation of measures to ensure public safety in the event of a threat and crisis situations, fight against terrorism and religious extremism.

For the sustainable and continuous support of troops in strategic areas, mobile and stationary components of material and technical support in the Armed Forces have been created. Work is underway to create integrated military logistics organizations of the Armed Forces, other troops and military formations on a regional basis. In the interests of the development of military education, the structure of military schools has been refined taking into account real needs. Modern educational technologies are being introduced into the educational process, military educational institutions are developing their educational and laboratory facilities, and advanced experience is being exchanged with foreign military educational institutions. The measures taken to ensure the state's military security strengthened the defense

capability of the Republic of Kazakhstan and increased the readiness of the state's military organization to counter military and security threats.

Foreign Policy Behavior

In the 1990s, the country had few diplomats; Kazakhstan's diplomatic representation was initially handled almost entirely by Russian embassies. The government was facing absolutely new problems; first of all, the need to conduct its own foreign policy, create a foreign policy and defense concept, create a national security system, work out a foreign economic strategy, etc. Until 1991, Kazakhstan, for well-known reasons, did not deal directly with these problems.

At that time, for Kazakhstan, as for all other small states, the international system appeared to be a determining factor. However, Kazakhstan has managed to set a right goal: create favorable conditions for its decent entry as a new sovereign state into the world community and determining its place. Therefore, the main tasks achieve this goal were as follows:

- formation of the concept of national security;
- development of foreign policy doctrine;
- search for allies (in the sphere of international, military, defense policy, in solving problems of national and regional security), as well as trade and economic partners.

To achieve these goals, the first initiatives of sovereign Kazakhstan was to show the peace-loving nature of the country's foreign policy which is aimed at creating an atmosphere of mutual trust, cooperation at the regional and international levels, and developing equal relations with all countries and international organizations [45].

In particular, on December 2, 1991, at the press conference on the results of the presidential election, N. Nazarbayev for the first time outlined the contours of Kazakhstan's foreign policy, defining its multi-vector character noting that Kazakhstan should become a bridge between Europe and Asia. When asked about the orientation of Kazakhstan to the East or to the West, N. Nazarbayev said about the openness of Kazakhstan and stressed that the republic would like to have comprehensive (primarily) economic ties with all states of the world.

The Kazakhstan government has shown a balanced approach on the issue of further developments in the post-Soviet space, preventing the former USSR from splitting into Slavic and Turkic unions. On December 21, 1991 a summit of the heads of eleven independent states was held in Almaty, as a result of which the Almaty Declaration was signed to establish Commonwealth of Independent States.

Nevertheless, the concept of foreign policy was developed in a fairly short time. Considering geopolitical situation (including landlocked geographical position and trade routes), the ethno-social composition of the population, the level of economic development, military construction, it was decided to pursue a balanced diplomacy dedicated to ensuring security of Kazakhstan. In particular, the first Concept of the Foreign Policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan [1, p. 23] was dedicated to following areas to work on:

- Preserving common economic and cultural-humanitarian space within the framework of the CIS;
- Entering the UN, the OSCE, and other international organizations to get access to international relations including achievements of world civilization in the political, economic, social, humanitarian, scientific, and educational fields;
- Getting security guarantees from the United States, Russia, Britain, China to keep sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, and inviolability of borders of Kazakhstan in case of refusal of nuclear status;
- Joining main international organizations – International Monetary Fund, World Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development – to attract financial resources for reforming domestic economy;
- Activating cooperation on a bilateral basis focusing on the development of cooperation with neighboring countries – Russia, China, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan.

On March 5, 1992 Kazakhstan was admitted to the UN. At the 47th session of the UN General Assembly, the head of the Kazakh state launched an initiative to convene a Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia [168]. Kazakhstan became a member of the OSCE in 1992 and thus connected to a developed infrastructure of security and confidence-building measures based on the common value system recorded in the documents of this organization, which unites 57 states in the area from Vancouver to Vladivostok.

Respect and recognition of Kazakhstan by the world community led to the desire of Kazakhstan for a nuclear-free status and the signing by our country of the START I Treaty, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). In December 1994, in Budapest, a Memorandum on security assurances was signed in connection with the accession of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. In accordance with this document, the United Kingdom, Russia, and the United States reaffirmed ‘their commitment to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of the Republic of Kazakhstan, and that none of their weapons will ever be used against the Republic of Kazakhstan except for self-defense purposes [169].’

On top of that, Kazakhstan paid great attention to the development of bilateral relations with foreign countries. In 1992, Kazakhstan’s embassies were opened in Turkey, the United States, and China. On January 9, 1993, the Head of State signed decrees on the opening of embassies in Germany, Iran, France, as well as in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Ukraine. By 1995, 111 countries of the world recognized the Republic of Kazakhstan, with 92 of them establishing diplomatic relations. 18 Kazakhstani embassies were opened abroad; in turn, 36 foreign embassies and missions, 9 representative offices of international and national organizations were established in the capital of Kazakhstan [169, p. 18].

At this point, in the first half of the 1990s, it could be seen that Kazakhstan's diplomacy completed the main task: ensured the decent entry of the Republic of Kazakhstan into the world community as a new sovereign state.

In the second half of the 1990s and the beginning of 2000s, the foreign policy of Kazakhstan started to play the role of a more significant player in the region. It was basically incentivized by international transformations associated with the deepening of globalization processes, as well as the growth of direct threats to the country's national security emanating from the 'southern arc of instability.' However, the desire to get its own 'niche' could be seen quite clearly because of decisive actions taken by Kazakh diplomacy.

Speaking at the Millennium Summit held in September 2000 at the 55th session of the UN General Assembly – the largest forum of the heads of 188 states and governments of the world in modern history, First President N. Nazarbayev drew attention to the fact that globalization, which dictates the contours of the new world order, can have quite a few negative consequences, largely due to the obvious inequality of the countries. Therefore, the Kazakh leader urged the UN to develop 'a model of globalization, taking into account the interests of all, relatively speaking, disadvantaged countries as much as possible [52].'

Therefore, in the opinion of the First President of Kazakhstan, the strategic task of Kazakhstan's diplomacy now is to 'maximize the positive aspects of globalization and neutralize or eliminate its negative consequences.' At the same time, a special place is given to the preservation of multi-vector policy in the country's foreign affairs. According to Elbasy 'only through interdependence and sovereign equality of each member of the international community and unswerving implementation of the international law, can the potential of all countries be united to adequately respond to the challenges of modernity.'

At a meeting of the Security Council of the Republic of Kazakhstan on March 15, 2001, at which issues of military, economic, information security, as well as strengthening of borders are discussed, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan Ye. Idrisov outlined the new Concept of Kazakhstan's foreign policy [45], which took into account emerging global and regional trends. Priority areas of the concept based on vector diplomacy as follows:

- developing integration processes, primarily, within the framework of the EurAsEC (since January 1, 2015 – Eurasian Economic Union), Shanghai Five (since June 14, 2001 – the Shanghai Cooperation Organization), CICA, Central Asian Economic Union;

- bilateral cooperation, in which the main partners of Kazakhstan are Russia, China, the CIS countries, the USA, the EU countries, as well as Japan, India, Turkey, Iran;

- resolving issues of the Caspian Sea;
- working on the delimitation and demarcation of the state border;
- development of transit transport potential;
- resolving the problem of transboundary rivers;

– economic component of foreign policy, the essence of which is to facilitate access of Kazakhstani products to the world market, on the one hand, to attract foreign investment in such sectors of Kazakhstan’s economy as new technologies, engineering, infrastructure, agriculture, small business, on the other [45].

At the turn of the century, new disturbing phenomena of the time, such as international terrorism and organized crime, militant separatism, religious extremism, contradictions between and within confessions, interethnic conflicts, illicit arms and drug trafficking, promptly broke into lives of many people in the world.

To counter international terrorism, religious extremism, and other dangerous phenomena that threaten stability and security in the Central Asian region, Kazakhstan has taken a number of practical measures to create mechanisms to ensure national security in the new environment. In this regard, foreign policy efforts of Kazakhstan’s diplomacy were aimed at creating effective institutions in the United Nations, in such influential international regional organizations as the EU, the OSCE, not only warning of impending conflicts, but also capable of eliminating the social and economic causes of conflicts at the initial stage.

Furthermore, Kazakhstan has now admittedly become the most active supporter of integration on an equal and mutually beneficial basis, advocating full cooperation with other countries. ‘In the 21st century, as the President emphasizes, it’s impossible to live without integration, and we, the post-Soviet states that have much in common, now independent, need to think about how to help each other. And we can help only if we are integrated in the economy, in human relations.’ Taking the lead in integration, Kazakhstan drew the attention of the world community as a country which has its own view to the development and ready to pursue its own path [170].

Speaking at the summit of the heads of state of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, President Nursultan Nazarbayev pointed out the main tasks of this organization:

- ensuring stability and security in the region and in the SCO member countries, with particular attention being paid to countering the spread of terrorism, extremism, the drug business, illegal migration, and arms smuggling;
- interaction in the economic sphere;
- interaction in the environmental field, primarily in the border area;
- consideration and resolution of transboundary socio-economic problems (transboundary rivers, migration, problems of diasporas, etc.) [105, p. 152].

Thus, over the ten years of active and multilateral foreign policy, Kazakhstan has become a full-fledged respected member of the world community, developing comprehensive relations with almost all countries of the world, an active participant in major international structures and organizations, initiating many international and regional security and stability projects.

To summarize, Kazakhstan’s foreign policy has made quite a few important steps to establish itself as a middle power promoting peace, security, and stability. First step was the establishment of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia in 1992, the forum attempting to mitigate mutual distrust

among Asian countries. Second was the facilitation of Azerbaijan-Armenia Nagorno-Karabakh negotiations and involvement of Kazakh diplomats in the settlement of the civil war in Tajikistan in the 1990s. Third, having received strong international security guarantees from the leading nuclear powers and playing a key role in creating a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia, Kazakhstan actively supports the creation of similar zones in other regions of the world, primarily in the Middle East. Fourth, convening the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions since 2003 which is attended by the authoritative representatives of Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, and Buddhism to conduct interfaith dialogue. Fifth, contribution to the comprehensive settlement of the Iranian nuclear issue by hosting in Almaty two rounds of negotiations between Iran and the P5+1 group in February and May 2013. Sixth, the role of President N. Nazarbayev in normalizing the Russian-Turkish tensions which were exacerbated after the “jet shoot-down” incident in November 2015. The latest is contributing to the settlement of the Syrian civil war hosting three rounds of peace negotiations in Nur-Sultan which included both political figures and representatives of the Syrian opposition [112, p. 122].

Thanks to such a responsible policy, Kazakhstan is rightfully recognized as the leader of the non-proliferation regime, a model for other states. The development of all political and socio-economic institutions has brought Kazakhstan to having diplomatic relations with over 139 countries at present [46]. The consistent and predictable foreign policy of Kazakhstan is a tool to promote its national interests and strengthen regional and global security. A balanced foreign policy means the development of friendly and predictable relations with all states that play a significant role in world affairs and are of practical interest to Kazakhstan.

The concept of the foreign policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan was developed in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the Message of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan – the Leader of the Nation to the People of Kazakhstan Strategy Kazakhstan-2050: a new political course of the established state [64]. The concept reveals the strategic choice of Kazakhstan in favor of cooperation with the UN, which is regarded as a pillar of the modern system of global interaction, a guarantor of preserving and maintaining peace and a balance of interests in the international arena, the sustainability of the existing security architecture.

Today, Kazakhstan is famous for not only with its uranium and hydrocarbons, but also as a regional leader, responsible partner and reliable neighbor. This is evidenced by the dynamics of relations between Kazakhstan and Russia, China, the United States, EU countries and Asia, and Central Asian states [65]. Another distinctive feature of the concept, which has a great intrinsic value, is an orientation toward conducting active economic diplomacy. Considering current conditions, the economization of foreign policy, the foreign policy strategy of the Republic of Kazakhstan requires modernization and promotion of national interests on the principles of pragmatism.

The foreign policy concept clearly defines the foreign policy goals of Kazakhstan. In accordance with the national interests of Kazakhstan, the main foreign policy efforts will focus on achieving the following main goals [45]:

- 1) providing national security, defense, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of the country;
- 2) strengthening peace, regional and global security;
- 3) ensuring sustainable positions and the formation of a positive image of the state in the world community;
- 4) the establishment of a fair and democratic world order with the central and coordinating role of the United Nations (UN);
- 5) further integration into the system of regional and international trade and economic relations;
- 6) creating favorable external conditions for the successful implementation of the Strategy-2050, achieving a high standard of living for the population, strengthening the unity of a multi-ethnic society, the rule of law and democratic institutions, the realization of human rights and freedoms;
- 7) diversification, industrial-technological development and increase of competitiveness of the national economy;
- 8) gradual transition of the country to the “green” path of development and entry into the top 30 most developed countries in the world;
- 9) preservation of national-cultural identity and following its own path for the further development of the state;
- 10) protection of the rights of citizens and legal entities of the Republic of Kazakhstan, their personal, family and business interests abroad;
- 11) support of the Kazakh diaspora and the Kazakh language abroad [44].

Throughout the entire period of independence, the Republic of Kazakhstan forms its own foreign policy strategy based on the principles of current geopolitical realities, existing norms of international law, the needs and conditions of a developing Kazakhstani society. Balancing five main vectors of its foreign policy, initiatives on disarmament and resolution of conflicts as well as prioritizing the domestic economy are the core of the Republic’s state policy for 28 years of independence.

Finally, it can be claimed that Kazakhstan thoroughly matches all the parameters of middle powers in terms of socio-economic, military-political development as well as foreign policy behavior (See Figure 2.1). For this reason, it can be considered as a subject for further study on how one country transforms from small into middle power.

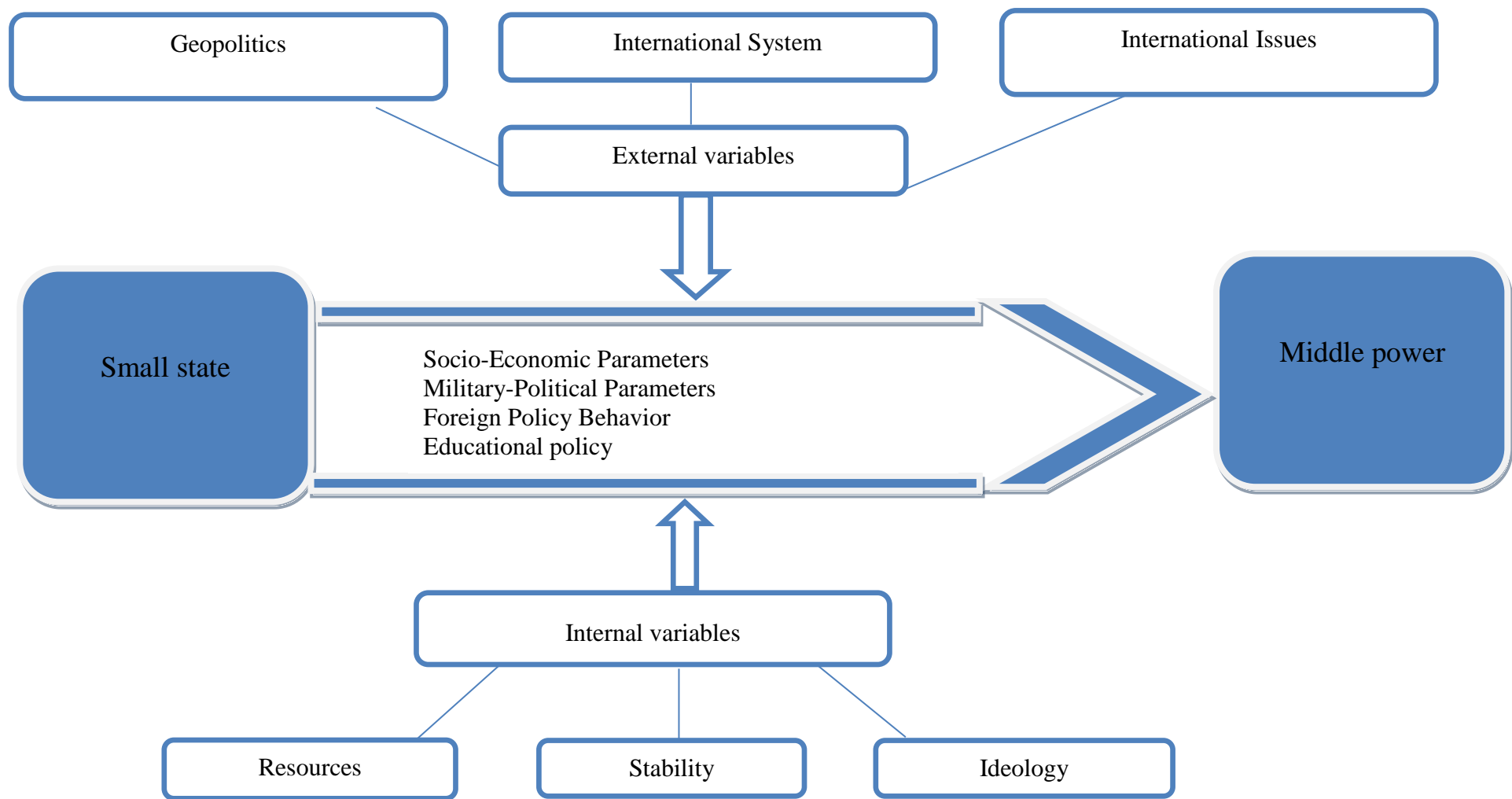


Figure 2.1 – Model of Transformation from Small to Middle Power

2.2 Internal Variables in Transformation of Kazakhstan into Middle Power

Once it has been established that Kazakhstan did indeed transform into a middle power reaching all the parameters outlined in the previous chapter, it is suggested that reaching these parameters incorporates the influence of other factors. Although factors may vary from country to country, Kazakhstan's experience evidences the influence of the following factors. Having natural resources, political, economic and social stability, as well as forward looking ideology are seen as internal factors contributing the transformation of Kazakhstan as a middle power.

Resources

In this respect, it is worth mentioning that Kazakhstan's case of transformation of a small state into a middle power has been dependent on various internal and external factors such as the size of territory, geographical position, level and nature of economic development, socio-cultural and historical legacy, governmental culture and structure.

In particular, territorial size appears to have influenced both public and policymakers' psychological and operational environment. As is often agreed, nations with large human and non-human (natural) resources naturally make efforts to play a larger role in the world arena and they do have better chances to do so. Being relatively most permanent and stable factor of its foreign policy, territory determines both the needs and the capability to fulfill the needs of the people of a nation. It is suggested that availability of natural resources encouraged and helped Kazakhstan to adopt and pursue middlepowermanship.

Kazakhstan is one of the richest countries in the world in terms of both reserves and diversity of minerals and natural resources. It is reported to have almost all elements of the periodic table. The republic ranks first in the world in explored reserves of zinc, tungsten and barite, runner-up in reserves of silver, lead and chromites, the third in copper and fluorite, the fourth in molybdenum, and the sixth in gold [9, p. 18]. Among the CIS countries, Kazakhstan accounts for 90% of the total reserves of chromite, 60% of tungsten, 50% of lead, 40% of zinc and copper, 30% of bauxite, 25% of phosphate, 15% of iron ore, more than 10% of coal. The Western region has significant oil and gas reserves, which make it possible to classify Kazakhstan among the ten largest oil-producing states in the world. This had a significant impact on the transformation of Kazakhstan into a middle power.

According to Statistical Review of World Energy [171] Kazakhstan has oil reserves 30 thousand million tones, which accounts for 1.8% share of total world reserves. As reported in the estimates, resource/production ratio is 44.8 years. The amount of proved reserves of gas totals for 1.1 trillion cubic meters making up 0.6% of the world's reserves with the resource/production ratio of 42.2 years. It can be evidenced by the figures for reserves and volumes of oil and gas production (tables 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4).

Table 2.1 – Confirmed Oil Reserves

Countries	1995 mln. barrel	2005 mln. barrel	2015 mln.	Per cent of world's total	Reserves / Extraction
Russia	113.6	104.4	102.4	6.0%	25.5
Kazakhstan	5.3	9.0	30.0	1.8%	49.3
Turkmenistan	0.5	0.5	0.6	Less than 0.05	6.3
Iran	93.7	137.5	157.8	9.3%	110.3
Azerbaijan	1.2	7.0	7.0	0.4%	22.8

Note – Compiled from source: BP Statistical Review of World Energy June 2016 [171]

Table 2.2 – Oil production (thousand barrels per day)

Countries	2005 thousand barrel	2007 thousand barrel	2009 thousand barrel	2011 thousand barrel	2013 thousand barrel	2015 thousan d barrel
Russia	9597	10043	10139	10518	10779	10980
Kazakhstan	1294	1413	1609	1684	1720	1669
Turkmenistan	193	199	214	220	240	261
Iran	4216	4333	4250	4466	3611	3920
Azerbaijan	445	856	1014	919	877	841

Note – Compiled from source: BP Statistical Review of World Energy June 2016 [171]

Table 2.3 – Confirmed gas reserves

Countries	1995 trln.cub.m	2005 trln.cub.m	2015 trln.cub.m	Per cent of world's total	Reserves / Extraction
Russia	31.1	31.2	32.3	17.3%	56.3
Kazakhstan	N/A	1.3	0.9	0.5%	75.7
Turkmenistan	N/A	2.3	17.5	9.4%	241.4
Iran	19.4	27.6	34.0	18.2%	176.8
Azerbaijan	N/A	0.9	1.2	0.6%	63.2

Note – Compiled from source: BP Statistical Review of World Energy June 2016 [171]

Table 2.4 – Gas production in billions of cubic meters per year

Countries	2005 billion cub.m	2007 billion cub.m	2009 billion cub.m	2011 billion cub.m	2013 billion cub.m	2015 billion cub.m
Russia	580.1	592.0	527.7	607.0	604.7	573.3
Kazakhstan	9.0	9.0	10.7	10.5	11.9	12.4
Turkmenistan	57.0	65.4	36.4	59.5	62.3	72.4
Iran	102.3	124.9	143.7	159.9	166.8	192.5
Azerbaijan	5.2	9.8	14.8	14.8	16.2	18.2

Note – Compiled from source: BP Statistical Review of World Energy June 2016 [171]

However, in the 1990s, Kazakhstan experienced enormous difficulties with the transportation of oil to the main sales markets, combined with the underdeveloped refining infrastructure of oil and gas production, linking Caspian oil to existing systems of pipelines, ports and terminals. Taking into account these conditions as well as the depth of oil in the shelf zone, large-scale and long-term investments, and expensive new technologies were required for the development of oil industry.

Nevertheless, Kazakhstan managed to attract large foreign investments for the development of the oil and gas sector. Foreign capital was directed to the development of field exploration, reconstruction of refinery plants, transportation of oil and gas. In particular, in 1992, the government signed an agreement on the construction of a pipeline with a capacity of 60 million tons per year (Caspian Pipeline Consortium) between Kazakhstan, Russia, Oman, and the International Oil Consortium. In 1995, the state adopted the Law 'On Oil', signed an agreement on the principles of production sharing at the Karachaganak field with Agip, British Gas, Gazprom, Kazakhgaz. The national company 'Kazakhoil' and 'KazTransOil' were created to participate in the development of Kazakhstan's largest oil and gas projects.

Increasing oil prices and expanding export volumes enabled higher quality of life for the public. In particular, oil revenues rose from \$6 billion to \$41.5 billion between 2000 and 2007, making possible GDP growth at an average rate of 10% annually [172]. A growing share of spending (from around 4 billion USD in 1999 to 25 billion USD in 2007) was allocated to social services, housing construction, transportation, and for fostering public employment [173]. Meanwhile, the population benefited from oil boom through other channels as well; the export growth allowed importing consumer goods in higher volumes [174]. Thus, the oil industry has become the main source of long-term economic growth in Kazakhstan.

The growth, in turn, strengthened the credit for government policies. As government professionalism had advanced, it continued the work on building long-run international investors' confidence by safeguarding their interests against risk and uncertainty stemming from the oil market as well as employing the policy of what now can be called 'Kazakh resource nationalism.'

Kazakh resource nationalism is best understood as essentially economic in character. The rationale of this policy is to improve terms of international agreements for the public to obtain long-term economic benefit. In particular, it focuses on insuring timely construction of energy deposits; economic and social development which is independent of energy sector; public health as well as protection of the environment.

Kazakhstan has done this in three ways: first, by increasing the state's share of ownership in major projects; second, by rational use of profits to develop social infrastructure and implement social programs; and third, by tightening the laws placing more of the burden of cost overruns and delays as well as environmental violations on the international oil companies [175].

Renegotiation of oil agreements had not been an easy task: actions of the government were alleged as attempts of nationalization, the public complained on low salaries for local employees. Increasing tensions between the government and

transnational oil companies mainly concerned three following issues: (1) forcing the entry of KMG national company into oil projects; (2) continuous amendment of tax laws; (3) compliance with environmental legislation.

Thus, the revision of the agreements with transnational oil companies has led to enhancing KMG's role as a player, increasing government oil revenues and ensuring the primacy of Kazakh law. The new government bargaining position and the reorganization of the national sector have expanded the state's capacity to collect oil revenues. Generally oil companies working in Kazakhstan have to pay following taxes: bonuses for discoveries, mineral extraction tax, excess profit tax, payment for compensation of historical costs, rent tax on export, land tax, property tax, environmental fees, other fees (e.g., fee for the use of radio frequency spectrum, fee for the use of navigable waterways), value-added tax (VAT), crude oil export duty, and other taxes and payments [176].

The twin goals of economic independence and development have driven Kazakhstan to encourage international competition both to produce and to export its oil and gas. First, competition to produce oil and gas enables the Kazakh government to maximize its share of revenue and to force firms into adopting strict local content policies, which are to benefit economic development. Second, competition for exports ensures that although Kazakhstan is landlocked, it is not forced by lack of substantial alternative export options to take a below-market price for its oil [177].

This pressure on international oil companies was driven by primarily economic concerns enabling Kazakhstan's state companies to take a larger share in the industry. These changes did not represent a rejection of the multi-vector foreign policy that originally led Kazakhstan to welcome Western investment, but rather rebalance fiscal terms in view of changes in oil prices and rising project costs.

Summing the section up, it can be noted that the importance of natural resources and oil and gas in particular has been paramount for the development of economy and vital element of transformation of Kazakhstan. However, this is not to say that the sole presence of fossil fuels is to guarantee the transformation. The importance of other factors should be considered as well.

Stability

Another factor that affected Kazakhstan to become a middle power is political, economic and social stability. Although it may seem like intangible factor, it did have an enormous effect on development of the nation. Neither international investors nor domestic businesses engage in any endeavor if they feel their capital is unsafe. Abrupt changes in the government and laws as well as social unrest discourage the business to grow, which, in turn, leads to growth of unemployment and other implied consequences.

To avoid such a scenario, Kazakhstan has employed 'economy first' philosophy, which can be interpreted as willingness to develop the economy above any political or ideological preferences. This was particularly relevant in the context of ending legacy of communist propaganda, when the country was restricted in choosing trade and economic partners by their proximity to socialist ideology. Now Kazakhstan was finally free of any restrictions, and was strictly determined to avoid

the obligation to ‘choose sides.’ In other words, Kazakhstan was then, and still to this day is unwilling to tie itself to a single political power. For this reason, Kazakhstan has chosen its own way of development.

To assure *political, economic and social stability*, it was not enough to win freedom and independence, it was necessary to defend and consolidate statehood of the new Republic. The main goal at dawn of independence was (1) national security, (2) territorial integrity, and (3) consolidation of statehood and sovereignty. Under any internal and external circumstances, the strategic course of Kazakhstan’s policy was meant to be directed at safeguarding these values.

(1) To secure its nation, paradoxically enough, Kazakhstan has given up 4th in the world nuclear weapon arsenal. The first step that laid the foundation for the future non-proliferation policy of Kazakhstan was the closure of the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site during the existence of the USSR on August 29, 1991. It was the first in world history case of closing a nuclear test site at the behest of the people.

In 1991, as a part of Almaty Declaration on the Strategic Nuclear Forces the leaders of Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia, Ukraine defined a mechanism for joint control over the functioning of the nuclear arsenal of the former USSR, preventing any failures in maintaining an adequate level of nuclear safety and reaffirmed the adherence of the USSR to international commitments to reduce strategic offensive weapons.

On May 23, 1992, in Lisbon, representatives of these countries and the United States signed the five-sided Protocol, specifying their responsibility for implementing the provisions of the Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START) in relation to those strategic nuclear forces that are deployed in four states. The Lisbon Protocol also contained the obligations of Belarus, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as non-nuclear weapon states.

On December 13, 1993, the Supreme Council of the Republic of Kazakhstan ratified the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Kazakhstan’s accession to the NPT was an important step in the implementation of the country’s foreign policy. Becoming a member of the NPT, Kazakhstan strictly adheres to its obligations in connection with the Treaty, in accordance with which it has non-nuclear status [43].

On December 5, 1994, during the OSCE Budapest Summit, Russia, the United States, and the United Kingdom signed a Memorandum on the provision of security assurances to Kazakhstan, Belarus, and Ukraine in connection with their accession to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon state. The signing of this document meant the recognition by the international community of the fact that Kazakhstan fully and strictly fulfilled its obligations to withdraw nuclear weapons from its territory. Later, guarantees of this kind to Kazakhstan were presented by China and France.

This major gambit taken by Kazakh government has paid off. The security of the nation was insured by the most powerful nations in the world. The international image of the country transformed from an unknown ‘armed to the teeth’ country into an open democratic country willing to cooperate and trade with anyone. To take

advantage of this, Kazakhstan has been consistently pursuing multi-vector foreign policy. In his first Address to the Nation as a part of National Security Priority, President Nursultan Nazarbayev announces 5 main balanced vectors of Kazakhstan's foreign policy: (a) strengthening of trusting and equal relations with Russia; (b) developing relations of trust and good neighborliness with the PRC; (c) strengthening relations with the countries of the Middle East; (d) strengthening ties with major democratic, industrialized nations, including the United States of America. Also, (e) full use of aid and assistance from international institutions and forums, such as the UN, IMF, World Bank, Asian, European and Islamic Development Banks [48].

While Russian vector remains the most important priority of Kazakhstan's foreign policy in all fields, strengthening mutually beneficial collaboration with China is directed at economic and political cooperation. Facilitating trade is supported by active political dialogue on international security issues. Strengthening the high level of relations with the United States is characterized by a wide range of cooperation in ensuring international energy stability and security, fighting terrorism and religious extremism, and continuing democratic transformations. Kazakhstan is interested in developing the cooperation with the EU driven by regional and international security, economy, social and cultural development. Kazakhstan creates favorable conditions for European partners for investment activity, implementation of large international projects, attraction of advanced technologies and knowledge. Development of relations with the countries of Middle East is based on active participation in the structures of international cooperation and cultural exchange with the countries of the Muslim world, developing mutually beneficial bilateral relations with the majority of Islamic countries and countries of the Arab East [57].

(2) To insure territorial integrity of the country as outlined in the 'Kazakhstan 2030' development strategy [48] there was a need to guarantee the preservation of state sovereignty, territorial integrity, and inviolability of borders.

Kazakhstan began negotiations with China having formed its delegation on the basis of Resolution No.607 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Kazakhstan of July 17, 1992 to mutually reduce armed forces and build confidence in the military field. Delimitation negotiations lasted from 1992 to 1998, and the demarcation was fully completed in 2002. The total length of the demarcated Kazakh-Chinese state border accounts for 1,783 km, of which the land border was 1,215.86 km, and water boundary is 566.89 km. The border line on the ground is marked with 688 border signs [45].

The process of delimitation of the Kazakh-Uzbek state border took place from 2000 to 2002. Emerging problems on identifying border lines were solved on the basis of the principles of mutual respect and equality, taking into account the interests of the local population. These agreements entered into force on September 5, 2003. The demarcation process field work of the Kazakh-Uzbek state border itself began in April 2004 has practically finished.

The agreement between the Republic of Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan on delimitation and the demarcation process of the Kazakh-Turkmen state border was signed on July 5, 2001 in Nur-Sultan. The joint border demarcation activities began

in 2003. The installation of border marks has been completed. The total length of the demarcated Kazakh-Turkmen state border was about 458.3 km. The boundary line on the ground is marked with 330 border signs.

Negotiations on the delimitation of the Kazakh-Kyrgyz state border were held from November 1999 to December 2001. The agreement on the Kazakh-Kyrgyz state border entered into force on August 5, 2008. The total length of the demarcated Kazakh-Kyrgyz state border is about 1,257 km with 683 border signs.

Negotiations on the delimitation of the Kazakh-Russian state border continued from September 1999 to January 2005. In May 2009, the parties began installing border signs on the border between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation. The process of demarcation of the joint state border continues.

Thus, since independence, Kazakhstan has managed to delimit the border along its entire length of over 14 thousand km. This is seen as a serious guarantee of national security creating favorable conditions for the implementation of plans for state-building.

(3) For consolidation of statehood and sovereignty upon an initiative of President Nursultan Nazarbayev, a new capital of Kazakhstan, Astana (now Nur-Sultan), was built. The decision to transfer the capital from Almaty to Akmola was made by the Supreme Council of the Republic of Kazakhstan on July 6, 1994. The official transfer of the capital took place on December 10, 1997. By a presidential decree of May 6, 1998, Akmola was renamed to Astana. On 20 March 2019 Astana was renamed to Nur-Sultan.

Nur-Sultan is the northernmost capital in Asia. Currently, the territory of Nur-Sultan exceeds 722 square kilometers, the population accounts for about 1,030 thousand people [161]. The location in the center of the Eurasian continent makes Nur-Sultan an economically advantageous for transport, communication and logistics, making it a transit bridge between Europe and Asia.

Building a new capital gave a powerful impetus to the economic development of the country. The high growth rates of the city's economy attract many investors. The share of Nur-Sultan in the republican volume of attracted investments is 10%, the share of the city's GRP in the economy of the republic is 10.2% [68].

The city has become one of the largest business centers in Kazakhstan. An entrepreneurial culture is developing dynamically; more than 128 thousand small and medium-sized businesses operate in Nur-Sultan. The capital is the leader in construction in the country; 10 million square meters of housing was erected in the city.

Currently, Nur-Sultan has become the center of the Eurasian space, hosting various forums, congresses, and other events of international importance. Congresses of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, Astana Economic Forum and other internationally significant events are held on a regular basis. The historic OSCE Summit was held in Nur-Sultan, the jubilee summits of the SCO and the OIC were held. In early 2011, the capital of the republic received participants and guests of the VII Asian Winter Games. In 2017, the international exhibition EXPO-2017 was held in Nur-Sultan [178].

Further development of the state's economy and the ability to quickly adapt to new economic conditions encouraged active participation in multilateral international economic projects that promote integration into the global economy, and relying on a favorable economic and geographical position and available resources. However, it was also important to put forward an idea that Kazakhstan should not be a country only using its resource base, but a country that absorbs everything new and advanced, occupying a 'niche' in the world economy system. To make it happen, Kazakhstan managed to employ the strategy of mental transformation to be discussed in the next section.

Ideology

The transition of Kazakh society from an authoritarian, one-party, administrative-command system to a democratic one began from the end of 1986, when questions of democracy, political pluralism, and sovereignty were acutely raised. It can be stated that it is at this time that the prerequisites for the emergence of civil society institutions are emerging, which allow articulating and aggregating the interests of society and forming the mechanism for communicating the requirements of society to government bodies.

Right after getting the independence, the priorities were the construction of a sovereign state, the formation of civil society institutions, including the institution of political parties. Without serious quality changes in the political system it was impossible to achieve the goals of transformation.

Strategy 'Kazakhstan-2030' [48] attempted to determine the role of the state in solving economic, social, political, ideological problems. Particular attention was paid to the transformation of the mass consciousness, while the main emphasis was placed on the younger generation, as part of society able to adapt into new conditions and, for demographic reasons, designed to implement strategic priorities.

For many years, Kazakhstan has been searching for a national idea and prospects for creating a new state ideology. The reason for such extensive attention to this problem is obvious – having experienced a period of deep ideological crisis, Kazakhstan's society is gradually returning to the awareness of the importance of state ideology as a socio-political institution uniting the citizens of the country into one people with their goals, values and interests.

With the onset of the economic crisis, the ideology of ensuring a decent life for the people came to the fore in official discourse. It was documented in the Presidential Address 'Growth of the welfare of the citizens of Kazakhstan – the main goal of the state policy' in 2008, as well as 'Through the crisis to renewal and development' in 2009 [60].

In 2010, the Message 'New decade of new economic growth of Kazakhstan' was promulgated, which is, in fact, the Strategic Development Plan of the country until 2020 and, accordingly, an integral part of the Strategy 'Kazakhstan 2030.' The key priority of the Strategic Development Plan of the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2020 is sustainable economic growth due to accelerated industrialization and infrastructure development. The basis of a sustainable and balanced development of the country in the next 10 years should be based on accelerated diversification,

increasing the competitiveness of the national economy, as well as a comprehensive increase in labor productivity. At the same time, the key factor in increasing labor productivity is the introduction of innovations [61].

On January 27, 2012, the President delivered the next Message to the people of Kazakhstan ‘Social and economic modernization is the main vector of development of Kazakhstan,’ where he noted a very important direction of modern reality. Today, the goal and meaning of social modernization is to prepare society for life in the conditions of a new industrial-innovative economy, find the optimal balance between the accelerated economic development of Kazakhstan and the broad provision of public goods, and establish social relations based on the principles of law and justice.

An analysis of the last decade’s political life in Kazakhstan and the process of shaping the foundations of civil society show that the dynamics of political life in the country correspond to the global laws of democratized societies, although it also has inevitable specific features caused by the transition from totalitarian to a new system.

The process of integration into the world economy implied the following areas: implementation of ‘breakthrough’ projects of international importance, the development of industries, production of goods and services; emphasis on the creation and development of production for export.

To accomplish these goals, Kazakhstan has been focused on the renewal of human capital. This is because it is human capital that has a decisive resource of social and economic development in the conditions of the fourth industrial revolution. The development of human capital, in turn, requires the improvement of the education system, first-class healthcare and a healthy nation, and the further development of culture and ideology. This was the main point of the 2017 ‘Ruhani Zhangyru’ state program. In the view of N. Nazarbayev, the author of the program, a Kazakhstani should know his/her own history, language, culture, while being able to speak foreign languages and having advanced global views.

As part of the implementation of the Third Modernization of Kazakhstan, three modernization processes will be carried out: political reform, the creation of a new model of economic growth, and the modernization of public consciousness. As the State Secretary of the Republic of Kazakhstan G. Abdykalikova [179] notes in her article ‘Spiritual revival is the priority of the Third Modernization of Kazakhstan’: Modernization of the spiritual sphere is fundamental. The success of both political and economic modernization depends primarily on the level of public consciousness, where spirituality is a priority. Therefore, the spiritual revival of Kazakhstan’s society today is the most important task.

The main priorities of the national ideology of Kazakhstan are:

1 To encourage the state authorities to pursue a policy of implementing the main strategic constitutional objective to assert Kazakhstan as a democratic, secular, legal and social state, the highest values of which are people, their lives, rights, and freedoms. Therefore, the constant ideological work is conducted to promote the basic constitutional values and national goals and objectives.

2 To legitimize a policy of building a civilized society. It explains the difficulties of transition from one socio-economic system to another. It teaches to find

new ways to overcome difficulties associated with the transit stage of development of society. This ideology clarifies and reveals the meaning and content of the changes in all spheres of social relations.

3 To inculcate ideas of morality based on three spiritual factors:

First, the propaganda of national ideology, education of Kazakhstanis with the help of national pedagogy, stimulation of the development of national cultures, languages, customs and traditions, education of national patriotism on the example of the historical consciousness of the Kazakh, Russian, and other ethnic groups living in Kazakhstan. Educating young people with examples of the life and work of prominent historical and cultural figures is also the most important segment of the national ideology.

Secondly, the national ideology forms a sense of community of common Kazakhstan interests. It means that the ideology will contribute to solving the problems of strengthening the political independence of Kazakhstan, the ethnopolitical and ethnocultural community of Kazakhstanis, and the moral, physical, and ecological recovery of the population. It actively opposes chauvinism, separatism, nationalism, manifestations of tribalism and ethnic isolation.

Third, the semantic core of the national ideology of Kazakhstan consists of human values. Kazakhstanis, together with the world community of civilized nations, are striving to solve planetary problems. A philosophy of non-violence, compromise, tolerance is being asserted. The rejection of the war, violent methods of solving controversial international and inter-ethnic problems have become the imperatives of the outlook and thinking of Kazakhstani society. The people of Kazakhstan condemn any form of terrorism and extremism.

The core of the ideology of Kazakhstan is the philosophical, spiritual and historical heritage of the Kazakh. It is enriched by using the humanistic, moral potential of the entire multi-ethnic people of Kazakhstan. Such an ideology of morality is an important stimulating factor in the construction of a legal democratic society with a socially oriented market economy.

In general, consistency of approaches to the designed transformation of Kazakhstan into a middle power is inherent to the policy of the President N. Nazarbayev and his Annual Addresses to the Nation. The priorities of state policy receive a more complete, specific content each year aiming at further implementation of a balanced and responsible public and foreign policy that takes into account the interests of Kazakhstan, as well as the dynamics of regional and world development.

2.3 External Variables in Transformation of Kazakhstan into Middle Power

For any state, wishing to transform from a small to a middle power, the issue of ensuring national security and the protection of national interests in international relations is one of the strategic in the development of the country's foreign policy. This is manifested and realized through protecting the sovereignty of the state, exercising its right to act as an independent subject of international relations, to

determine foreign policy in their own interests and independently solve international issues.

It is certainly true that modern world surrounding the state carries a number of security threats associated with targeted impacts on the economic and military potential, social development, information space, the environment and other areas of government activity. The way how the state is capable of surviving all these security threats defines the place of state in the international arena.

For this reason this chapter focuses on external factors such as geopolitics, international system as well as pressing international issues that affected Kazakhstan on its way to transformation into a middle power.

Geopolitics

For a comprehensive understanding of the transformation of Kazakhstan's foreign policy behavior, it is necessary to analyze global, regional and national aspects of its formation.

Due to the growing economic, political and other kind of interdependence among countries and peoples in the era of international integration and globalization, no country in the world can ignore the influence of external forces, regardless of its resource potential or degree of economic development. No country in the world is powerful enough to cope with contemporary problems in isolation from other countries. They can only be confronted within the framework of close international cooperation.

For this reason, a young independent Republic of Kazakhstan chose to conduct a foreign policy that captures the challenges of the surrounding regional system both timely and adequately.

It can be safely said that now the Republic of Kazakhstan is pursuing its foreign policy quite successfully. Today, Kazakhstan is a sovereign state, which is a full member of many international and interregional organizations, actively pursuing an integration policy and entering into bilateral and multilateral partnerships with many countries of the world. Thanks to that, today, the Republic is perceived as a country with a consistent and predictable foreign policy which priorities stability and constructive dialogue [180].

Of all the Central Asian states, Kazakhstan appears to be the most equipped to integrate into world economic relations. The country occupies a leading position in Central Asia in terms of economic growth and accounts for more than 60 percent of the entire region's GDP. Kazakhstan leads among the CIS countries in terms of foreign investment per capita. The republic is ahead of other post-Soviet states on such criteria as internal stability, the adequacy of the legal framework, the creation of a modern financial system. A powerful economic foundation, laying the foundations for a liberal market economy, timely modernization of the political system and other factors allowed Kazakhstan to take a worthy place in the world community and set ambitious foreign policy goals [181].

However, this is the result of the tremendous work that has been done by the state over the period of independence. After gaining sovereignty, the country faced many complex economic, environmental and political problems. So, it had to

determine its place in the system of geopolitical coordinates as soon as possible, formulate its national interests, and build a system of foreign policy priorities.

On top of that, there were a number of problems that stand in the way of the development of a region. The closed geographic location makes the region vulnerable from a geo-economic point of view. The states of Central Asia do not have their own access to the seas and oceans, which hinders their dynamic interaction with the outside world. Central Asian states adhere to different models and rates of economic and political modernization [182]. The economies of the countries of the region have serious structural problems, and Central Asia as a whole is an insufficiently competitive region in the context of globalization [183]. There are many contradictions between the states of the region, including in the energy and water sectors.

Another important issue in the Central Asian region (CAR) is the complex military-political situation, due to its geographical position, current geopolitical situation, and the latest domestic political events in a number of countries in this region. The political and economic interests of the leading world powers that intersect here also have a great influence on the situation [184]. The collapse of the USSR and the countries of the socialist community, which put an end to the rigid division of the world into two opposing camps, coincided in time with the onset of large-scale qualitative changes in the geopolitical structure of the CAR countries.

In the states of Central Asia, the struggle for the redistribution of intensively spent natural and, above all, energy resources, spheres of influence and traffic flows is intensifying. The most attractive for the leading countries of the world in this context is the territory of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan is potentially a springboard for strengthening its geopolitical position in the region, an important source of energy resources, especially taking into account the unstable situation in the Middle East [185].

One of the major priorities of Kazakh diplomacy remained to be deepening and expanding friendly and mutually beneficial relations with the closest neighbors of the Central Asian states. At the same time, the country's leadership intended to actively expand cooperation with other Asian countries and states of the Islamic world [186]. This is because Islam for many centuries has been the religion of the Kazakhs and many other peoples living in the country.

There is no doubt that the success of the foreign policy largely depends on the prospects and practical use of regional cooperation. Through regional integration, small and middle powers get a chance to create a platform for the most valuable connections and have a voice in solving their key problems.

At the present stage, Kazakhstan urges its neighbors to pay more attention to the economic, social, environmental and demographic problems of the Central Asian region. It strives to work out coordination of activities and achieve better compliance of national development programs with other countries in the region [187]. Only by pooling resources, coherence and compatibility of regional policies, especially in the area of trade, energy and transport, are Central Asian countries able to avoid becoming the objects of interests of leading world powers.

The creation of joint clusters in key sectors of the national economy based on mutual interests will help strengthen business ties [188], rapprochement and mutual understanding between Kazakhstan and Central Asian countries. Based on the progress achieved in various spheres of life, Kazakhstan is working to become a driving force for regional development and contribute to the modernization of all of Central Asia.

On top of that, Kazakhstan comes up with a number of extraordinary initiatives that find wide response in the world community. And this quantity has transferred to a new quality. The Republic invariably pursues a policy of upholding its national-state interests, implying, above all, territorial integrity and sovereignty, well-being of citizens and the protection of their constitutional rights.

The case that illustrates the how Kazakhstan resolves issues at the regional level is the issue of Caspian Sea. At present, the value of the Caspian region in the global system of geopolitical and geo-economic coordinates is steadily increasing. The Caspian region is an interweaving of political, military-strategic and economic interests of many countries, and not only coastal ones [189]. The strategic importance of the Caspian Sea is determined by the presence of large reserves of minerals, as well as transport corridors that provide for the delivery of energy resources [190].

Possessing a significant resource potential, as well as a unique geographical location that allows transporting hydrocarbons to both European and Asian energy markets, the Caspian region occupies a special place in the system of national priorities of both coastal states and other great powers.

Coastal countries realizing their national interests in the Caspian, first of all, were guided by geopolitical motives, which exacerbated the issue of determining the international legal status of the reservoir.

According to the Foreign Policy Concept of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2014-2020 [45] and its national interests, the main foreign policy efforts focus on strengthening peace, regional and global security, further integration in the system of regional and international trade and economic relations, and a phased transition of the country to 'green' development path.

In this regard, in resolving the issue of the status of the Caspian Sea, Kazakhstan has been committed to the principle of legality and legitimacy. Resolving such a disputable issue was possible only through such fundamental principles of conducting middlepowerman foreign policy as equality, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual trust, and aversion to actions that violate international legal norms [191].

For example, on July 6, 1998, the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation concluded an Agreement on the delimitation of the bottom of the northern part of the Caspian Sea in order to exercise sovereign rights to subsoil use and on May 13, 2002 a Protocol to this Agreement.

On November 29, 2001 and February 27, 2003, an Agreement was signed between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of Azerbaijan on the delimitation of the bottom of the Caspian Sea between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of Azerbaijan and its Protocol, respectively.

Also between Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Russia, on May 14, 2003, an agreement was reached on the point of junction between the lines of delimitation of adjacent sections of the bottom of the Caspian Sea.

On December 2, 2014, an agreement was signed between the Republic of Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan on the delimitation of the bottom of the Caspian Sea between the two countries (entered into force on July 31, 2015).

The Framework Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Caspian Sea, which entered into force on August 12, 2007, was signed on November 4, 2003. It contains the main provisions for regulating the anthropogenic impact on the marine environment, the protection of biological resources and the general interaction between the parties with regard to measures for the protection of the Caspian ecosystem.

Following the four Summits of the Presidents of the Caspian states, many declarations, agreements and protocols were signed, enshrining a wide list of principles in accordance with which coastal states will operate at sea. These principles are taken into account to draft Convention on the Legal Status of the Caspian Sea.

To prevent any disputes regarding the ownership of oil fields and / or territories between countries, in August 2018 the presidents of the five Caspian states have signed the Convention on the Legal Status of the Caspian Sea, which put an end to the issue of the separation of the seabed and surface of the sea. The signing ceremony was held in Aktau: Nursultan Nazarbayev, Ilham Aliyev, Hassan Rouhani, Vladimir Putin and Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov signed the historical document. They agreed that the main surface area of the Caspian Sea will remain in the common use of the states. It was decided to divide the bottom and subsoil between neighboring states into areas on the basis of international law. The parties also agreed on the rules of shipping, fishing, scientific research and laying of main pipelines. At the same time, all work is to be carried out taking into account environmental safety. According to the Convention, the presence in the Caspian of the Armed Forces of non-regional powers is not allowed. Responsibility for the maintenance of maritime security and the management of its resources lies with the countries parties to the Convention. The parties agreed to adhere to fundamental principles, including the transformation of the Caspian Sea into a zone of peace and good neighborliness, friendship, its use for peaceful purposes, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, non-presence of armed forces not belonging to the parties in the Caspian Sea.

In this regard, one might notice that Kazakhstan's foreign policy is directed at finding the optimal balance of interests, harmonizing the main directions of foreign policy, foreign economic, military policy, assessing the real possibilities of all participants involved in cooperation. This is done through achieving compromises on the basis of long-standing good-neighborly relationship at the regional and interregional level.

International System

Currently, Kazakhstan has sufficient economic potential and international reputation, allowing it to play a more active role not only in Central Asia, but also far

beyond its borders. Kazakhstan's foreign policy initiatives are world renowned. The reputation of Kazakhstan as a member of influential international organizations is growing. The Republic initiated convocation of the CICA and holding congresses of leaders of world and traditional religions, as well as an active supporter of the development of dialogue between East and West.

However this has not always been so. In the beginning of independence, many states and international organizations did not have reliable information about Kazakhstan and were often misled by outdated information regarding its capabilities, its people and economic potential. It was necessary to make Kazakhstan recognizable in the international arena, and create a positive image of the country within the entire world community.

In these difficult conditions, the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan assumed all the burden of responsibility for the development of the international policy of the state. As many foreign and domestic experts admit, N. Nazarbayev played a huge role in introducing Kazakhstan in the global political space.

In particular, a new foreign policy strategy was developed to incorporate the principle of multi-vectorism, which still remains to be the main guideline for the country's international activities. The First President N. Nazarbayev defined multi-vectorism as the development of friendly and predictable relations with all states that play a significant role in world affairs. To be exact, he stated: "Kazakhstan, due to its geopolitical position and economic potential, cannot focus only on narrow regional problems. This would reflect neither the will of multinational population, nor the entire world community's. The future of Kazakhstan is in Asia, and in Europe, and in the East, and in the West. Only by pursuing this kind of policy, we will be able to secure ourselves from a threat. We will be able to strengthen favorable external conditions for economic and political transformations in our country [192]".

It is widely known that Central Asia is of strategic interest from the United States, China, Russia and other great powers. Particular attention is shown by the United States, which has significant financial resources and potential influence on the international community. The United States view Central Asia as an established zone of their national interests therefore they are making significant efforts to develop cooperation with Kazakhstan [193].

Washington is interested in cooperation with Nur-Sultan on mutually beneficial conditions, especially in the oil business and the military-technical sphere. The policy of the leadership of Kazakhstan is aimed at increasing the flow of foreign investment in the country. The main investor in recent years is the United States, which has invested more than \$ 5 billion in the economy of Kazakhstan and plans to provide investments in the oil and gas industry up to \$ 200 million. The increased economic influence of the West on the country [194], in particular Turkey, may lead to the fact that a new "southern axis" may emerge in the region, cutting off Russia from promising sales markets.

At the same time, China, since the early 90s, is deliberately moving towards Central Asia. Since 1993, the PRC has been a major importer of oil, and the successful reforms of the Chinese economy increasingly strengthen its dependence on

energy supplies [195]. Hence, the expression of interest in the exploration of oil reserves in Kazakhstan.

Common interests of the PRC and the countries of the region led to the signing in 1996 between Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan the Agreement on confidence-building in the military field in the border area, in 1997 the Agreement on mutual reduction of armed forces in the border area. Further development of relations in the region contributed to the formation of the Shanghai Five, which was then transformed into the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Beijing considers the SCO as a reliable tool for strengthening regional security and developing multilateral relations [196].

It can be said that the organization can form the basis of the collective security system of the entire Central Asian region, organically fit into other regional organizations operating in close cooperation with the UN. The PRC strengthens cooperation with Russia and the Republic of Kazakhstan, other countries of the region not only through the special services, but also the Ministries of Defense. Proof of this are the successfully conducted multilateral joint military exercises 'Anti-terror' with the participation of China, Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan, which have shown that many armies in the world today have common threats, including terrorism and extremism.

At present, China's efforts are aimed at strengthening security in the CARs, as this is in its interests and in line with new areas of national security policy. The penetration of USA into Kazakhstan is perceived by Beijing not only as a factor of aggravating economic competition, but also as an attempt of military-political and economic deterrence. As for Russia, Chinese diplomacy is based on the recognition of the traditional political and economic interests of the northern neighbor in the region and its leading role in the field of regional security.

The Russian direction in the foreign policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan has always been one of the most important due to the geopolitical neighborhood, political weight in the system of international relations, the economic potential of the Russian Federation and other factors [197]. The traditional positions of Russia in Kazakhstan are based on factors that are long-term in nature and are determined by such categories as geography, geopolitics and history; they are also united by their historical community, spiritual, cultural interpersonal connections.

The Russian factor largely determines the foreign policy situation around Kazakhstan at the regional and international levels. Russia occupies a special place in the military-political sphere, serving as a leader and guarantor of regional security. It is important for Kazakhstan to be not a stake in the external political game, but a factor in Russia's geopolitics. It is also obvious that the nature of bilateral relations between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Kazakhstan at the present stage will be determined by the new complicating geopolitical situation in the region of Central Asia, which was formed as a result of the antiterrorist operation in Afghanistan and the American military-political presence in the region.

The transformation of the Central Asian region into a new field of political and military confrontation contradicts the interests of Russia and bears a direct threat to

its security. For Russia, it is important that the CARs be a zone of stable dynamic development, not burdened by any internal or external sources of tension, open to mutually beneficial cooperation. Therefore, the Russian Federation is concentrating its efforts on key areas, primarily on ensuring regional security and stability in Central Asia. This contributes to the strengthening of stability and security in the Republic of Kazakhstan, the creation of favorable conditions for the recovery of its economy.

Unlike past eras, Central Asia is no longer an area for the Great Power Games, Central Asia and its member states now play a number of serious positions. This is not a 'platform' for the clashes of other, more powerful powers, but an independent party with its own interests, which are articulated openly in the public. As Laumulin [198] once stated that 'Kazakhstan has become a player who imposes on others, more powerful external players, to a certain extent, of course, their own rules of the game.'

Kazakhstan is a partner that tries not to bind with excessive promises and preserves maximum space for geopolitical maneuver both in bilateral and multilateral relations, and within the framework of international organizations. That is, the countries of the region are increasingly perceived by the Western expert community as independent political units, rather than 'objects of influence.'

Kazakhstan pursues a balanced policy of constructive and predictable relations with all the major powers of the modern world. It is obvious that to a large extent, the security of Kazakhstan depends on relations with such neighboring states as Russia, China and our neighbors in Central Asia. Kazakhstan is committed to developing a strategic partnership with the United States, strengthening cooperation with the European Union.

Thus, Kazakhstan is increasingly becoming a factor of stability for the whole region. Security is also important for economic success. This is the main priority of its foreign policy. There are various mechanisms for containing threats to security and stability, but, nevertheless, none of them have a comprehensive nature and do not provide for the full participation of all states.

Thus, foreign policy of Kazakhstan is now immersed in initiating ideas for the concept, nature and structure of international security. The initiatives of Kazakhstan are taken into account in conceptual approaches to resolving problems of regional and international security.

In addition to bilateral relations, Kazakhstan pays a great attention to the establishment of dialogue with universal and regional international organizations [199], introducing the country to world economic relations, ensuring the security in a complex multilateral environment, achieving compromise on mutually-respected interests, and creating favorable international conditions for transformation.

For example, Kazakhstan, being a responsible UN member, fully supports peacekeeping activities and the efforts of the United Nations to strengthen its peacekeeping capacity. Evidence of Kazakhstan's active participation in this activity is the creation of the Kazakhstan Peacekeeping Battalion (Kazbat), whose units served in the stabilization forces in Iraq, Afghanistan and other hot spots of the

planet, participating in peacekeeping operations. In 2017-2018 Kazakhstan served as a non-permanent member of UN Security Council.

Being a member since 1992, Kazakhstan had a chance to chair the OSCE in 2010, holding a Summit for all 56 member countries of the largest regional organization currently involved in security and conflict prevention. This is evaluated as a milestone of recognition of Kazakhstan as a middle power. First, the chairmanship of Kazakhstan to this organization was voted 'for' by unanimous decision. Second, the Summit was attended by all the major heads of states, which showed how respected Kazakhstan is. Third, Kazakhstan managed to set its own unbiased agenda to the Summit.

Constant diplomatic work of Kazakhstan in the frame of Commonwealth of Independent States, Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia, Collective Security Organization, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe, Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Council Cooperation of Turkic speaking States, and other international organizations and forums, envisions to put forward the following:

- ensuring protection of national interests in the process of development and making decisions of regional and global character in various spheres;
- constructive participation and contribution to regional and global security;
- promotion of Kazakhstan's foreign policy initiatives;
- establishment of optimal and mutually acceptable ways of cooperation between regional and international organizations and forums in order to provide stability and security in the region;
- advancement of political – legal and organizational – administrative functions of regional and global organizations in order to increase effectiveness of their work.

To sum up, one might note that the gist of the influence of international system on the transformation of Kazakhstan into a middle power can be traced as follows.

First, the steady improvement of the country's position is based on it being an active, yet impartial, actor in regional events. Second, building solid bilateral relations based on mutual trust and solidarity. Third, Kazakhstan has gained entry to several international organizations of large importance. The country's recent track record is as follows: in 2010, it became the first Central Asian, post-Soviet and predominantly Muslim country to chair the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the world's largest security oriented intergovernmental organization, and chaired the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation the following year. By leading nuclear arms reduction efforts, Kazakhstan is poised to play an even larger role by presenting 'Manifesto. The World. XXI Century' at the Washington Summit. Finally, it joins the UN Security Council as a non-permanent member which is evaluated as the highest international recognition.

International Issues

Last but not least Kazakhstan has managed to transform into a middle power because of pressing international issues such as globalization, terrorism, and transportation.

Kazakhstan, as any other country, is forced to face the challenges from a globalized world. The state is now involved in large-scale integration into the world community, various partnerships and close cooperation in global affairs, including economic, environmental and social.

One of the major issues is *globalization*, featured as a process of unification of traditions, cultures, religion and ideology. This is directly related to Kazakhstan, because the multiethnic and multiconfessional nature of the republic raises the question of maintaining the linguistic and cultural identity and originality of the traditional culture of the Kazakh and other peoples of Kazakhstan. The country takes the course of revival and development of the Kazakh culture, so that it is competitive with Western culture. In particular, the state necessitates a constructive dialogue of the values of the traditional culture of the peoples of Kazakhstan and the liberal-democratic society.

It is widely agreed that Kazakhstan has several possible options for further historical development, one of which is the transformation of culture into the Turkic-Islamic world, with which the original community has national roots in language, traditions and customs. At the same time, there is a Muslim culture which attempts to dominate, although secular views often hold stronger significance [200]. Finally, 'Eurasian cultural space' [201], which is actively being promoted these days, may turn out to be the most likely promising way of developing Kazakhstani culture in the XXI century. This is because it suits the geopolitical position of the country and chosen path of foreign policy.

Another major point into consideration is co-existence of cultures with diametrically opposite values, ideologies, historical traditions. Although the world has recently been experiencing a number of inter-ethnic and inter-religious conflicts, Kazakhstan has managed to build unique model of a society of interethnic and inter-confessional accord, known as 'Kazakhstan's way'.

Moreover, at the beginning of the 21st century, at the time of internally clashing religions and terrorist attacks, Nursultan Nazarbayev, the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan initiated holding the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions in Kazakhstan.

The first ever Congress welcomed the Leaders of World and Traditional Religions from 13 countries of Europe, Asia and Africa. Since 2003 the number of countries and participants has increased exponentially. Over the years, Kazakhstan has welcomed six Congresses with the total of 366 delegations.

The Congress has established its institutional structure, which includes Working group and the Secretariat as well as Council of Religious Leaders identifying the agenda of the Congress. To keep the historical memory of the Congress, the Museum of Peace and Reconciliation was opened and Astana International Prize for Contributing to Interfaith Dialogue was established.

The initiative of the Republic of Kazakhstan to hold the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions in Kazakhstan generated great interest among the world community. At the Sixth Congress as a part of the Declaration, the participants proposed the establishment of Center for Interfaith and Inter-civilization Dialogue in recognition of outstanding contribution of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan to global efforts to foster peace and harmony.

Among all international issues, countering *terrorism* has always been one of the top priorities in ensuring Kazakhstan's national security. Kazakhstan strongly condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and stands for the adoption of the collective efforts of the world community to combat this phenomenon [112, p. 115].

Kazakhstan strictly fulfills the requirements of the UN Security Council Resolution and submits an annual National Report on the work done to the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee. The creation and active participation in the activities of the International Counterterrorism Coalition has been supported.

Kazakhstan believes that international cooperation in the fight against terrorism should be carried out in full compliance with the norms of international law, and also supports the further improvement of anti-terrorism treaty mechanisms, including the adoption of a Comprehensive Convention on Combating International Terrorism.

In December 2003, by order of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan in order to improve the efficiency of the work of all security agencies in the fight against terrorism and religious extremism the Anti-Terrorism Center was created. The ATC focuses on coordinating the activities of all special, law enforcement and other agencies in the fight against terrorism [112, p. 116].

Organizations that involved in or support terrorism are prohibited in Kazakhstan. Organizations are recognized as 'terrorist' if their goals and activities contradict the Constitution and the Laws of the Republic of Kazakhstan and international treaties to which the Republic of Kazakhstan is a party; if there is a potential danger of enhancing the functioning of these organizations to destabilize the situation in the states of the Central Asian region.

The national list of terrorist and extremist organizations whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Republic of Kazakhstan includes 16 foreign structures (Al-Qaeda, Asbat al-Ansar, Muslim Brothers, Boz Gurd, Zhamaat Mujahideen of Central Asia, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Islamic Party of Eastern Turkestan, Kurdish People's Congress, Taliban, Lashkar-i-Taiba, Hizb-ut-Tahrir, Tablighi Jamaat and Society for Social Reforms, AUM Shinrikyo, Organization for the Liberation of Eastern Turkestan, Jund-al-Khilafat (Caliphate Soldiers) [112, p. 117].

Understanding that the fight against international terrorism and extremism requires the interaction of states at all levels (global, regional and bilateral), the republic has signed a number of international and interstate treaties and agreements in this area.

Great importance is attached to the development of regional cooperation currently represented by the activities of the Antiterrorist Center of the

Commonwealth of Independent States, the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, as well as in the framework of measures taken in the fight against terrorism and extremism of the Collective Security Treaty Organization.

Practical interaction is employed among the CIS member states that are part of the Anti-Terrorism Center established at the initiative of the First President of Kazakhstan in 2000 [190, p. 57]. The procedure for organizing and conducting joint anti-terrorism measures in the territory of the Commonwealth countries has been determined. The mechanism of its operation was successfully tested during the large-scale joint exercise of special services and security agencies of the Commonwealth countries 'Caspian-Anti-terror 2005' held in Kazakhstan in August 2005.

The IV Special Meeting of the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the UN Security Council held in Almaty on January 25-28, 2005, with the support of the initiative of the heads of the CIS states, evidences the recognition by the international community of the important role played by the Commonwealth countries in the fight against international terrorism.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is becoming a significant component of ensuring security and stability, a regional and global political factor. Within the framework of regional and subregional counterterrorism cooperation, measures have been taken to strengthen the legal framework for countering terrorism in the SCO format. The SCO Convention Against Terrorism was signed, as well as the SCO Agreement on the training of personnel for anti-terrorist formations and on cooperation in the fight against trafficking of weapons, ammunition and explosives. The Statute on Political-Diplomatic Measures and Response Mechanisms of the SCO to Situations Threatening Peace, Security and Stability in the Region has been ratified. The program of cooperation of the SCO member states in the fight against terrorism, separatism for 2010-2012 has been approved [111, p. 40].

Since January 1, 2004, the SCO operates the Executive Committee of the Regional Antiterrorist Structure (RATS) in the city of Tashkent. Since the establishment of the SCO Regional Antiterrorist Structure, interaction has been established with the regional office of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime in Central Asia.

In the format of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), an Agreement on Collective Rapid Reaction Forces (CRRF) was signed, the tasks of which include the fight against terrorism. The relevant regulatory legal acts regulate the organizational aspects of the creation of the CORF. The list of organizations recognized as terrorist and extremist in the territories of the CSTO member states has been adopted [105, p. 151].

In 2010, Kazakhstan chaired the OSCE having vast experience in the military-political field and great potential for its implementation in concrete actions. As part of the military-political dimension, more than 60 events were held. On October 14-15, 2010, a Conference on the Prevention of Terrorism was held in Astana. As a result of the conference, the Astana Declaration was adopted, confirming the

commitment of the OSCE participating States and partner states to the fight against terrorism [105, p. 151].

In addition, the issues of cooperation in the fight against terrorism on an ongoing basis are raised in the framework of the Subcommittee on Justice and Law 'of the Republic of Kazakhstan - the European Union.'

Kazakhstan participates in the implementation of counter-terrorism activities in the framework of the Individual Partnership Action Plan with NATO. Cooperation with the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council is expanding. An indicator of confidence in Kazakhstan was the holding of the 3rd NATO / EAPC Security Forum and the Rose-Roth Inter-Parliamentary Workshop in Nur-Sultan on June 24-26, 2009.

The Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism was launched by the Presidents of Russia and the United States in July 2006 with the aim of creating an international multi-level protection system and is aimed at strengthening the interaction of the world community to prevent nuclear weapons from falling into the hands of terrorists. Ensuring reliable control over the use, storage and trafficking of nuclear materials, physical protection of nuclear facilities, the development of effective means to reduce the risk of the consequences of possible terrorist attacks using nuclear materials, improving the legal framework for international cooperation and domestic systems for the suppression of any type of crime, related to the illicit movement of nuclear materials.

Kazakhstan was one of the first to join this initiative and was among the original partners along with Australia, Great Britain, Germany, Italy, Canada, China, Russia, the USA, Turkey, France and Japan. RK took an active part in the first two meetings held in October 2006 in Rabat (Morocco) and February 2007 in Ankara (Turkey). The third meeting took place on June 11-12, 2007 in Nur-Sultan. To date, 88 countries are already participating in the Global Initiative [112, p. 120].

In accordance with the initiative of the First President of Kazakhstan, announced at the Global Summit on Nuclear Safety in Washington in April 2010, the holding of a conference of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) in Kazakhstan from 28 to 30 September 2010. The GICNT Conference on Counteracting the Financing of Terrorism and the First Meeting of the Implementation and Evaluation Group (GROG) were held in Nur-Sultan [112, p. 121].

Kazakhstan, which voluntarily renounced possession of the fourth largest nuclear arsenal in the world, regards the Initiative as a new effective step in countering nuclear terrorism. The support of the Russian-American initiative confirms our country's firm commitment to strengthening international security and the collective efforts of the world community in the fight against terrorism.

Kazakhstan supports the efforts of the international community in the fight against terrorism, as well as develops comprehensive cooperation and interaction in practice.

For example, the tense military-political situation in Afghanistan, the threat of terrorism and extremism, drug trafficking coming from this country, affect regional security in Central Asia.

In this regard, Kazakhstan is convinced that the Afghan problem can be solved on the basis of three approaches: the interdependence of security and development, a regional approach to ensuring security and development, as well as adopting a coordinated integrated and regional development strategy in order to increase the level of international humanitarian assistance from UN agencies and other donors.

This intense concern and decisive willingness to solve the problem can be explained by several factors. Kazakhstan and Afghanistan are separated by mere 1,500 kilometers. The two countries have no direct borders, but there are common neighbors: Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

Over the past few years, Kazakhstan has taken a number of efforts to contribute to enhance the situation in Afghanistan. First, it went on to work on bilateral cooperation which now can be characterized by positive development dynamics. Contacts at the highest and governmental levels have intensified, inter-parliamentary and business ties are being strengthened.

Second, the parties cooperate productively within the framework of international and regional organizations. Kazakhstan is a member of the Working Group of Collective Security Treaty Organization for Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. Also, it is a member of a contact group for interaction and coordination of efforts of the SCO member countries to recover the IRA. Afghanistan is a co-coordinator of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA) to control drug trafficking, as well as new challenges and threats.

Third, the political leadership of Afghanistan and large representatives of local business circles are showing interest in further developing trade and economic ties with Kazakhstan. To be exact, the key areas of cooperation are agriculture, railway construction, attracting investment, military-technical cooperation, land and air transport.

Fourth, according to the Foreign Ministry, Kazakhstan has provided assistance to Afghanistan of approximately \$75 million. This amount includes training of Afghan citizens in Kazakhstani universities, the delivery of food, clothing, essential goods and the implementation of the construction of infrastructure facilities.

In particular, Kazakhstan-Afghanistan state educational program has been implemented since 2009 to train thousands of Afghan students in educational institutions of Kazakhstan.

In addition to financial aid, investment projects are also being implemented. For example, Kazakhstan is currently considering the proposal of the Afghan side to launch a pasta factory in one of the Northern provinces as well as repairing the road Talukan - Kunduz - Shirkhan – Bandar.

Last but not least important international issue is *transportation*. In this regard, it is important to point out that Kazakhstan has made great efforts to integrate into international transport networks. Internally, a number of sectoral programs have been adopted; the legal basis of the industry has been formed to build the new socio-economic reality. A competitive environment for the provision of transport services has been created. Over the past 10 years, about \$ 30 billion has been invested in the development of the transport industry. More than 2 thousand km of railways were

built, 6.3 thousand km of roads were reconstructed, port capacities in the Caspian were increased to 26 million tons, runways for 15 airports were reconstructed.

Externally, on the border with China, in order to develop international trade, the Khorgos-Gateway FEZ has been completed. Along with the industrial and logistics zones, the FEZ infrastructure also includes the Dry Port, which was launched in 2015 to consolidate and distribute cargo in the east of the country [180, p. 65].

Kazakhstan is actively cooperating with China on mutually beneficial conditions for the development of infrastructure associated with the new economic policy of Nurly Zhol and the 'One Belt, One Road' concept. It is China's international initiative to improve existing and create new trade and transport corridors connecting more than 60 countries of Central Asia, Europe and Africa, which is designed to promote the development of trade relations between them and China [180, p. 65].

The idea of forming the Silk Road Economic Belt was put forward by the leader of China Xi Jinping and was first voiced during his speech in Nur-Sultan as part of a state visit to Kazakhstan in September 2013 [180, p. 66].

In March 2015, the Concept and action plan for promoting the joint construction of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Sea Silk Road was published, which more clearly presented the concept and plan of cooperation under the 'One Belt, One Road' framework.

To sum up, perspectives of the further development and intensification of Kazakhstan's foreign policy activities on these and other international issues depend on the completion of the strategic tasks set by the government and the President of the Republic. However, one might notice that Kazakhstan having its own unique pressing issues has been able to adapt and adequately respond which, in turn, help the country not only to survive but to transform into a more influential power. The way how Kazakhstan dealt with problem of multiethnic and multiconfessional society, the way it attempts to solve the problem of terrorism and Afghan underdevelopment, as well as the way it resolves the problem of landlocked country show the nature of Kazakhstan's foreign policy.

3 KAZAKHSTAN'S FOREIGN POLICY PROSPECTS

3.1 Comparing Kazakhstan's Transformation with International Experience

In the previous chapters it was elaborated on how Kazakhstan has transformed from a small to a middle power developing in different area of public policy. To be exact, the public policy has worked on to initiate changes in military-political as well as socio-economic fields. Along with that, Kazakhstan managed to advance in international cooperation both bilateral and multilateral, which benefitted the country not only economically but socially and politically as well. This model suggest the idea that it is indeed possible for a country willing to transform into a middle power to do so in the matter of 30 years depending on availability of certain resources and circumstances. For this reason, we attempt to test this model on the case of following countries: Turkey, South Korea, and Malaysia. This is explained by the necessity to study various strategies and main driving forces of economic development as well as future prospects of such endeavors. The experience of the dynamically developing Turkish, South Korean, and Malaysian economy, in particular, their successful transition from a raw material to an industrialized economy, can be used both for certain theoretical conclusions and in practical terms, including in the framework of upcoming strategy of Kazakhstan's economic development.

Testing the Model: the case of Turkey

Turkey today is considered a middle power, attracting increasing attention with its way of development as well as political prospects. In this chapter, we will look at how, in the course of almost 100 years, Turkey has turned from an undeveloped country into a middle power, and also analyze how these changes coincide with the transformation model discussed in previous chapters. Although Kazakhstan and Turkey are very different, the tasks Turkey faced in 20th and early 21st centuries are similar to those challenges met by Kazakhstan in many ways.

Politics and Society. Turkey has been developing to achieve middle power status since mid-1920 s. In particular, the changes concerned two main fields: national capabilities and foreign policy. The former includes GDP, population, military spending, the clear progress of which can be see right from the initial decades (table 3.1)

Table 3.1 – Information on population, GDP and Military Spending of Turkey in selected years

Years	Population (people)	GDP (million USD)	Military Spending (million USD)
1	2	3	4
1930	N/A	742	49.3
1940	17 820 950	1 741	147.3
1950	20 947 188	3 462	236.6
1960	27 472 331	13 995	1 769
1970	34 876 267	17 087	3 175

Continuation of the Table 3.1

1	2	3	4
1980	43 975 921	68 789	6 772
1990	53 921 699	150 676	10 770
2000	63 240 121	272 980	16 890
2010	72 326 914	771 902	14 050
2017	80 745 020	851 549	19 580
Note – Compiled from source [158, p. 1; 202, 203]			

One can notice the similarity of how the states typically attempt to transform. It illustrates in what way and in what conditions national capabilities increase complemented by respective foreign policy behavior.

First similarity between Kazakhstan and Turkey's transformations is state modernization and state-focused society. Turkish modernization, which began since Mustafa Kemal, was initiated and carried out mostly by the state and the President himself [204]. It was first intended as a response to the increasing superiority of the West, but eventually turned into a competitive edge against the world community as a whole. Unlike Kazakhstan's modernization, where a much more emphasis was placed on the economy, Turkey focused on the cultural transformation of society and its westernization. The military-bureaucratic elite focused on building a 'modern' society through raising the level of education of citizens as well as instilling secular values.

In 1923 the new Turkish state adopted a new form of government with a president, a parliament, a constitution. After a long and difficult war for independence, Turkey was in a difficult situation. To become a strong state and gain world powers' respect it was necessary to modernize Turkish society, industry and agriculture, and as a result, get a strong economy. The President's reforms are a series political, legislative, cultural, economic and social changes that made the Republic of Turkey contemporary secular national state. Kemal's reforms included changes in fundamentals of life on the one hand, and on the other, they imposed revolutions on domestic behavior of ordinary people.

Another similarity is political transformations which included the implementation of the principles of Kemalism: nationalism, laicism, étatism, republican thinking through their continuous development and adaptation to modern needs and conditions [204, p. 390]. Political reforms have brought so fundamental changes in society that many traditions of the Ottoman society began to disappear, and the whole system of the society of the former Ottoman Empire was revised and overturned.

For instance, in 1924, a new Turkish constitution was adopted which replaced the interim constitution of 1921. It was formulated in accordance with the European norms of the time. In addition, reforms in governance and education were implied to secularize the country even more. Shariah court proceedings were abolished, Shariah laws were beginning to be replaced by codes and laws from developed European countries and adapted to Turkish realities [205]. In addition, Swiss civil, Italian criminal and German commercial codes were introduced and polygamy was

prohibited. the ban on the wearing traditional, religious clothing was introduced. Some of the reforms were objected by the conservative part of society [206]. However, thanks to single party system and military control reforms were finally implemented.

The reforms of the political system were incremental. One of the last stages took place in 1935, when religion was separated from the state, the state was officially proclaimed as secular and democratic. Islam was no longer public religion of Turkey. Unicameral parliament (Majlis) was established. The basic principles of the constitution were laicism, social equality, equality of all citizens before the law. The Republic of Turkey was declared a unitary national state based on the principles of secular democracy. For the first time, the government was officially divided into legislative, executive and judicial branches.

Economic Reforms. Like in Kazakhstan, great importance was attached to economic policy. Ataturk's reforms in the economic sphere were aimed at the development of industry and entrepreneurship. To maintain the rate of the Turkish lira, first a temporary consortium was created, which included the Ministry of Finance and the country's largest banks. Under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal and the members of the Majlis in 1924, Business Bank was created, whose activities are aimed at assisting in the development of industry and the economy [207].

Social sphere experienced a number of changes as well. Secular educational institutions have come to replace religious schools, and all the educational institutions were unified under state's leadership. Along with that, Kemal attached great importance to the emancipation of women, fought against wearing religious veil, instilled European dances in Turkey, so thanks to his reforms in the field of education, women-doctors, lawyers, teachers, etc. started to appear. In 1934, women of Turkey received voting rights [204, p. 391].

One can find resemblance of Kazakhstan and Turkey's transformations in the reforms of language. As Kazakhstan has planned out to introduce Latin alphabet, in Turkey in November 1928 Arabic alphabet was replaced by the Latin as well. All citizens between the ages of 16 and 40 were required to attend educational institutions to learn the new alphabet. Officials who did not know the new alphabet were dismissed. Prisoners who did not master the new alphabet were not released. In 1934, the Turks got their surnames; the National Assembly gave Mustafa Kemal the surname Ataturk which means 'Father of the Turks.' By special law it was forbidden to carry this name to anyone else.

As Kazakhstan in the beginning of its independence, Turkey's foreign policy was focused on international agreements of friendship, neutrality, good-neighboring policy. Having no means to conduct large-scale goals, the country preferred to refrain from active participation in international affairs. Turkey acted through the International Court of Justice or settled disputes through negotiations. This gave rise to a policy of neutrality, which was carried out up until a new great war.

Turkey appeared to secure itself with a number of defensive treaties, while trying not to spoil relations with the major powers of the anti-Hitler or Hitler coalition. On the other hand, the strategic location of the country provided an

opportunity to restore sovereignty over the Turkish straits after signing the 1936 Montreux Convention, lost at the Peace of Lausanne, and also to regain control of Antioch-Alexandretta, which the French tried to include as a part of 1939 Syrian Mandate.

Turkey remained neutral throughout the Second World War. When the Allied forces seized insisted on using Turkish territory to fight the Nazis, Ankara did not consent and demanded the weapons promised in the agreements to take care of its own protection. This decision is believed to protect the country from 'liberation' by Soviet troops, otherwise it would have become the part of socialist world [208].

When the war ended, President İnönü realized that in the face of heightened rivalry between the Western and Soviet blocs, Turkey should join the West. The decision was taken mostly because of security interests rather than ideological or spiritual adherence. Turkey was expecting to restructure its domestic policy, so it would be better assimilated into the western camp that encourages political competition.

Foreign Policy. Turkey began to receive economic assistance from the United States, first in accordance with Truman's program providing for economic support to underdeveloped countries and then with the Marshall Plan. In 1949, Turkey became a member of the Council of Europe and other international organizations such as NATO and later OSCE [208, p. 274].

At the height of the Cold War, individual members of NATO had to have close relations with the American leadership. For Turkey, this leadership was acceptable for two reasons. First, it was vulnerable to the threats posed by the Warsaw Pact countries. Second, it was economically weak and dependent on the military and economic assistance. Relationship with the alliance gave Turkey an opportunity to modernize its military equipment, improve military training and increase defense capabilities.

On January 4, 1980, the Council of Ministers changed the rules protecting the Turkish lira introduced during the Second World War. Numerous restrictions on the possession, transfer and sale of foreign currency were lifted. Turkey has become a 'trading state,' where economic considerations were taken over governmental protectionism.

The choice was made to favor export-oriented economic growth that caused a radical transformation mechanism. Soon, exports went into growth, hard currency increased, the economy began to grow by leaps and bounds. These changes marked the beginning of the growth on the basis of export, which is still continuing today [209]. After a relatively short period of time, the Turkish economy was integrated into the international market and turned into the 17th economy in the world and the 6th economy of Europe in terms of GDP. Turkey has also become a member of the G-20.

End of the cold war marked the collapse of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact. This meant that NATO countries had fewer restrictions on foreign policymaking and closer relations with former adversaries, including Russia [210]. This was the starting point of a new foreign policy.

Focus on trade encourages Turkey to look for new markets around the world. In addition to the immediate neighbors such as Russia and the former Soviet republics, it also included the Balkan states and the countries of the Middle East, Africa, China and the rest of Asia, as well as major Latin American states. All of these markets have become important targets for Turkish economic expansion [211].

To summarize, it can be noted that Ankara successfully balanced its weaker and stronger positions which made it a significant member of international community. It can be clearly seen from the relationship built with great powers over the years as well as domestic policy.

Testing the Model: the case of South Korea

Surrounded by such giants as China, Russia and Japan, adversary North Korea as well as having a limited set of natural resources, the Republic of Korea has managed to become a middle power. Today, many researchers in International Relations not only recognize the country as a middle power [150, p. 23; 212-214], but also as a leader in many sectors - cyber security, electronics and IT, transport engineering, etc. The developments in the number of population, GDP, military spending can be seen in the table 3.2.

Table 3.2 – Information on population, GDP and Military Spending of South Korea in selected years

Years	Population (people)	GDP (million USD)	Military Spending (million USD)
1960	25 012 374	3 958	760
1970	32 240 827	8 999	2 129
1980	38 123 775	64 981	9 520
1990	42 869 283	279 349	15 346
2000	47 008 111	561 633	20 395
2010	49 554 112	1 094 000	31 117
2017	51 466 201	1 531 000	37 560
Note – Compiled from source [158, p. 1; 217]			

Politics and Society. In just about four and a half decades, the Republic of Korea has demonstrated its rather successful path of foreign-oriented economic development. Modern modernization of South Korea is linked with Park Chung-hee, who despite having contradictive views on his personal qualities and political activities, has played an enormous role as head of state.

General Park Chung-hee came to power in May 1961 as a result of a coup d'état by the military junta. This was the beginning of a 30-year period of reign in the history of South Korea. In October 1963, Park Chung-hee retired and was elected the President of the country, then he was re-elected twice in 1967 and 1971 [215]. His 18-year authoritarian leadership was marked by great changes and his main achievement was the Korean Economic Miracle or Miracle on the Han River. In his three presidential terms, Park Chung-hee went from mainly authoritarian to 'Korean-style democracy [215, p. 749].'

Like Kazakhstan, South Korea has focused on the economy. However, this economic growth was achieved through the promotion of the national idea and social reforms. Park Chung-hee published the book *Korea Reborn. A Model of Development* [216] written in his youth, where he very accurately and specifically described his vision of the revival of Korea and the ways of building a strong and economically advanced country.

The national idea was defined as follows: the centralization of power to achieve the goals of economic growth, well-being of the citizens and industrial development; strong nationalist democracy of world standards based on the revival of national identity and independence of the nation through stable economic growth. The basis of the economic recovery of the country was chosen mechanism of long-term strategic planning, rather than daily orders and decrees, and elimination of corruption in the government. The President encouraged the nation to cooperate with the government and vowed to respect economic freedoms and the material rights of the individual. By this he united the nation and ensured the stability of the development of society. He urged them to fulfill the ancient Confucian canon, according to which everyone must first achieve economic freedom and only then think about freedom of spirit [215, p. 745].

Thus, seven national development priorities were identified, which were included in the first five-year development plan of 1962-1966 [215, p. 746]:

- development of energy sources for the needs of the national industry;
- correct, but constant transformation of economy structure;
- growth of industries affecting the improvement of people's living standards;
- education;
- creation of economic conditions for the growth of individual entrepreneurship;
- improving the balance of payments;
- advancing technological development based on global advances.

The state also employed slogans such as:

- We Koreans are the most industrious nation.
- We Koreans are the best workers in the world.
- We Koreans are the most disciplined nation of working people.
- We are ready to bear any hardship for the greatness of the spirit of the Korean nation.

Economic Reforms. Having taken the path of export-oriented development, South Korea pursued a policy of strict import restrictions from the early 1960s to the mid-1970s. Its priorities were to protect the interests of national producers and ensure the needs of export industries in the necessary industrial equipment, as well as raw materials, semi-finished products and other components.

The ruling circles effectively mobilized the entire potential of South Korean society for the development and conquest of worthy positions on world markets, but at the same time used the entire arsenal of trade policy for a limited and controlled rapprochement of their country with the world community. An important factor contributing to the effectiveness of such a strategy was the special nature of the

generation of South Korea at the time and the specifics of US-South Korean relations. Allied contacts with the United States were and continue to be extremely important for Republic of Korea not only for economic processes (including the creation of all elements of a market economy), but for providing the key condition for the development of an export-oriented economy as well as the possibility to use United States as the main market for South Korean industrial products [218].

It should be noted that in the 1950s – 60s the economy of South Korea depended on the inflow of American aid, which in those years accounted for up to 40% of the budget (in 1970 there was a decrease to 5%). The main part of this aid was directed to create infrastructure and heavy industry enterprises. From 1946 to 1976 Korea received \$ 4 billion as gratuitous aid and \$ 1.2 billion in the form of concessional loans [218, p. 179].

Established with the cooperation with American TNCs, the companies, manufacturing electrical and electronic products, were mainly aimed at the manufacture of goods for export. In the 70-80s, about 70% of the products produced at these firms were exported abroad. Thus, American TNCs, using South Korean manufacturing enterprises as links of their global economic structure, within the framework of intra-firm trade and the system of subcontracts, ensured the inflow of South Korean electrical products to the United States. As a result, the share of South Korean products in US imports for 1965-85 increased 10 times (from 0.3% to 3%). In 1985, imports from South Korea accounted for 13% of all textiles and clothing import into the United States, 12% of consumer electronics, and almost 9% of steel [219].

Having signed the agreement on accession to the GATT in 1967, South Korea managed to preserve significant import restrictions until 1975. But since the second half of the 1970s foreign economic policy has come to a new stage based on gradual liberalization of imports. However, the process was uneven, having occasional setbacks. Thus, the oil crisis of 1979-80 forced the government to suspend the adjustment of import policy [220]. At the same time, the level of import liberalization by 1983 has grown to 80.4%. In 1984, the government adopted a three-year program of foreign trade liberalization. All this allowed the country to achieve to 95% by mid-1990s.

The next stage in the liberalization of the South Korean import policy was the preparation of national economy to modify the rules of international trade in the transformation of the GATT in the WTO in 1989-94. Government measures suggested streamlining tariffs, that is, eliminating import preferences for individual companies, reducing the average tariff burden on importers. By lowering quantitative restrictions on the import of foreign goods, South Korea closed the thirty-year stage of protectionist policies and adopted an economic strategy for greater openness.

In the 1990s, South Korea had to accept the loss of the preferential regime of access of its goods to the American market. In December 1996, the Republic of Korea, after three and a half decades of successful economic development, with the entry into the club of the world's leading economies, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) acquired the status of a developed country.

At the same time, it also had its negative consequences such as the loss of preferences that developing countries get in foreign markets. As a result, in the 1990s, there were significant changes in the geographical distribution of South Korean foreign trade. The share of the United States was almost halved (from 35.5% in 1985 to 14.4% in 2004) in exports and (from 22% in 1985 to 11.9%) in imports of South Korea. At the same time, the share of East Asian countries and, mostly, China, in the foreign trade turnover of Korea has almost doubled. Thus, the share of the East Asian region in South Korean exports increased from 27.2% in 1985 to 47.6% in 2006, including China and Hong Kong from 5.2% to 28%. During these years, South Korean exporters began to feel increasing pressure from Chinese and other competitors from developing countries in the American market [221]. The trend was marked when the share of light industry products and assembly production from South Korea in American imports of products from these industries was successfully superseded by products from China. For example, the share of South Korean consumer electronics has declined over the years from 6% to 4.6%, whereas the share of similar products of the PRC grew in US imports from 5.5% to 7.5%.

Contrary to the concerns expressed, the gradual liberalization of foreign trade not only did not harm the national industry, but also pushed for progressive changes and competitiveness, for example, in such industries as ferrous metallurgy and shipbuilding. In 2001, South Korea became the world's largest shipbuilding power, concentrating on the production of specialized vessels for transportation of liquefied gas (70% of world production), large tankers and container ships.

With the exception of the remaining limits on the import of agricultural products, import restrictions now apply only to a small segment of goods and services (medicine and cosmetics). Still, South Korea is accused by foreign trade partners in the hidden support of the domestic automotive industry by countering car imports. However, these cases represent only the latest relapses of state protectionism and do not affect the government's strategic course towards import liberalization.

Another important tool to regulate foreign economic policy was currency regulation. After using the multiple exchange rates until the early 1960s, South Korea adopted export-oriented course of development. Korean Won was fixed at a single exchange rate which exporters sold the currency to the Central Bank. In 1965-74 a policy of floating exchange rate was pursued. However, in order to maintain the preferential balance between export and import for the economy, a devaluation of Won was carried out several times during these years. In 1975-80 securing the exchange rate to the dollar allowed on a significant scale to attract from abroad short-term loans to finance export industries. Since January 1980, South Korea began to use the principle of maintaining the exchange rate on the basis of a 'currency basket.' This made it possible to maintain the stability of the national currency and take into account the diversification of foreign economic relations. Since March 1990, South Korea has set Won at market rate at is keeping its monetary policy unchanged since then [222].

Foreign Policy. In this regard, it is worth mentioning the pillars of South Korea's foreign policy. While transforming into a middle power, South Korea's foreign policy has been shaped around next internal and external constraints [223]:

1 North Korea: North Korea has always been an issue in South Korea's foreign and security policy. The constant threat from Pyongyang has affected Seoul's public policy since the end of Korean War.

2 Cooperation with the United States: The role of United States defending South Korea from North Korea has been an important factor in country's defense and foreign policy.

3 The economy: The development of the South Korean economy was an important factor that influenced relations between South Korea and the outer world, as it led Korean companies to look for markets outside of Korea. Another factor was the rising need for energy, which caused Korea to depend on Persian Gulf's oil and gas.

4 Changing status: South Korea has transformed in political, economic, and military power, which has affected its regional and global status. Since the 1990s, South Korea has debated the meaning and essence of its new global role as a middle power.

5 China: Since China and South Korea have established relations in 1992, the economic relations have improved. China has become the biggest trade partner of South Korea and it became leverage on Korea's economic policy in Asia.

Thus, the emerging need to modernize the South Korean economy prompted the government to pursue a liberal course in foreign economic policy. However, one can notice that Korea did not curtail state participation in the development of foreign economic relations straightaway. Although the state rejected methods of direct intervention in the economic activities of private commercial structures, as well as avoiding direct forms of export support and import restrictions, it involved in using other mechanisms of influence. The priority was to maintain partnerships with large businesses, which determined the scale, dynamics and nature of the development of foreign economic relations of the country. Another important place was occupied by economic diplomacy, which was actively pursued both at the bilateral and multilateral level. Information and analytical support for the foreign economic activity of private businesses also took a large place in state policy [224].

To sum up, for South Korea, openness and desire to integrate with the regional economy has become part of a strategy to preserve sovereignty. It went along with large South Korean businesses. Joining international business alliances has become an important condition for strengthening their position in the competitive struggle on world markets. At the same time, in its relations with outer world, South Korea seeks to find a balance of interests, based on the prevailing nature of the development of bilateral trade and economic relations. In an effort to preserve the diversification of its foreign economic relations, South Korea, from the beginning of the 21st century, initiated negotiations and signing free trade agreements with a number of countries, including Chile, Singapore, the United States, Mexico, India, Japan, China, and Canada.

Testing the Model: the case of Malaysia

Currently, 40% of Malaysia's total exports are electronic and electrical products. With the growth of industrial exports, its raw material component decreased from 95% in 1957 to 30% in 2010. According to 2017, the country's GDP amounted to 314.7 billion US dollars, while population achieved substantial 30 million people and military expenditure accounted for 3.5 billion US dollars (table 3.3).

Table 3.3 – Information on population, GDP and Military Spending of Malaysia in selected years

Years	Population (people)	GDP (million USD)	Military Spending (million USD)
1960	8 157 106	1 916	205
1970	10 803 978	3 864	727
1980	13 798 125	24 488	1 513
1990	18 038 321	44 024	1 488
2000	23 185 608	93 790	2 010
2010	28 112 289	255 017	3 447
2017	31 624 264	314 700	3 505

Note – Compiled from source [158, p. 1; 225]

Politics and Society. Like in Kazakhstan, the effectiveness of the economic development strategy of Malaysia is determined by many factors: political stability and continuity of economic policy, political will and high professionalism of the leader Mahathir Mohamad, flexibility of social and economic policy and the creation of a system of economic partnership between the state and business. The strategic approaches of the state were based on the quick response to changes in the external and internal conjuncture, professional measures that correspond to the broader goals of economic development, modern approaches, taking into account the specifics of the country.

Having become prime minister, Mahathir Mohamad began the practical implementation of his ideas, which turned Malaysia into a modern state with a highly developed economy, independent domestic and foreign policies, and building a society based on 'Asian' and 'Malaysian' values [226]. He pursued an active policy of positive ethnic discrimination, which significantly increased the role of Malays in all spheres of the country's life, and most importantly, the economy. Over the period of 30 years, thanks to his efforts, the New Economic Policy (1971-1990) and the National Development Policy (1991-2000) were successfully implemented in Malaysia.

Economic Reforms. In order to track the transformation of Malaysia into a middle power, we shall take a closer look into strategic priorities of Malaysia from the moment of independence and up until now. This is because strategic priorities changed following progress of Malaysia's economy and society and can be divided into three main defining stages.

At the *first stage* of development of Malaysia (1957-1968), a policy of import substitution was carried out. Like Kazakhstan before independence, the national

economy of Malaysia was almost entirely dependent on its metropolitan state, British capital, which was primarily interested in investing in natural rubber production (32% of world production in 1957), tin (37% of world production in 1957), extraction of forest resources and their further export abroad. For labor support of this activity, migrants from India and China were attracted. This had turned the country into a multinational society [227].

After independence was gained, the government concentrated its efforts on the rapid development of labor-intensive industrial enterprises (those with low capital intensity and high labor intensity, and using local raw materials) and diversification of agricultural production produced in Malaysia at that time. For example, there was a shift of emphasis from the production of natural rubber to the production of palm oil and other crops.

As a result of the efforts made to diversify agricultural products, the share of natural rubber in Malaysian GDP fell from 38% in 1952 to 15% in 1967. Palm oil production increased significantly: from 90 thousand tons in 1960 to 396 thousand tons in 1970.

Also significant success was achieved in industrial development. The share of agriculture in Malaysia's GDP declined in constant 1960 prices from 46.5% in 1955 to 36.1% in 1966. By creating infrastructure at public expense and then transferring these plots to private capital, the government began to create industrial centers such as Petaling Jaya, located close to Kuala-Lumpur.

The share of manufacturing in GDP grew from 11.2% in 1955 to 15.4% in 1966. From 1964 to 1968, GDP increased by 38%, increasing annually (at current market prices) by 6.5%. As a result, the volume of GDP from 1965 to 1970 increased from 8,637 million to 11,190 million ringgits [227, p. 440].

During *the second period*, from 1968 to 1982, unlike Kazakhstan, Malaysia had to cope with ethnic problems. Therefore, the country attempted to enter a new phase of economic development by accelerating manufacturing industry. To change the country's economic course, the government introduced New Economic Policy (NEP) since 1971.

The main goal of the NEP was to eradicate poverty of certain ethnic and increase the participation of the indigenous population, Malays (Bumiputera) in the corporate sector, where in 1970 only 2.4% belonged to the Bumiputera, 33% to the non-indigenous population (Chinese, Indians) and 63 % - to foreign investors. The goal was to achieve by 1990 the ratio of 30-40-30, respectively [227, 450]. The government began a policy of nationalization, buying and transforming companies with foreign capital, creating companies whose equity capital belonged to the indigenous population.

The new economic policy envisaged an active, essential role of the state in the economy of Malaysia. On the one hand, state intervention in the economy through the granting of all possible licenses and quotas (the Industrial Coordination Act of 1975) and state regulation of prices limited the development of the market. On the other hand, the state pursued a policy of comprehensive support of the private sector and the promotion of private investment in export-oriented sectors of the economy.

In the 1970s Malaysia's GDP increased by an average of 8% per year, largely due to high commodity prices on world markets. The previous policy of import substitution, due to the natural limitations of the domestic market, was already holding back the growing potential of the national industry. Malaysia has embarked on export-oriented industrialization, a gradual transition to the production of industrial products with higher value added.

The third period (1982–1999) was directed at export growth. The government's policy on FDI at this stage was caused by a number of factors, including the economic downturn of the mid-1980s, a sharp appreciation of the Japanese currency in 1985, which led to the opening of enterprises in Malaysia (mainly focused on production of electronics) thanks to investment flows from Japan and Taiwan. The investment attractiveness of Malaysia for foreign investors was greatly promoted by the labor policy pursued by the government, the main focus of which was placed on the creation of new jobs, giving the protection of workers' rights and the development of labor legislation a secondary role. Malaysia in this period occupied one of the leading places in attracting foreign FDI.

At present stage (2000 - present), the strategy of turning Malaysia into a modern, high-tech state by 2020 is being successfully implemented. 'Doctor M' has established himself as a tireless critic of double standards in the international policies, policies of Western countries and the IMF, a fighter for the rights of developing countries, Asian countries and Islamic states.

The new economic policy and the National Development Policy have built the main core of the development strategy of Malaysia. For example, the state provided various fiscal and non-fiscal benefits to enterprises only if 30% of the corporate capital belonged to the indigenous population [228]. In the light of the instability of the world economy and the dependence in this connection of the export-oriented economy of Malaysia on the world situation, certain liberalization is being carried out at the present.

The key role of the economic development strategy of Malaysia at the present stage is played by Vision 2020, with the goal to achieve Knowledge Economy by 2020. The implementation of the concept of building Knowledge Economy is considered logical, consistent step towards enhancing the competitive advantages of the national economy.

Summing up the economic development, it can be noticed that Malaysia has successively gone through the phases of import substitution, export orientation, has created an industrial economy and is currently developing the concept of building Knowledge Economy. Thanks to the import substitution strategy implemented in the first years of independence, it was possible to create the country's industrial base. The development of exporting has become a continuation of import substitution. The main focus was on attracting foreign investment in the export-oriented industry. The result of export-oriented growth was changes in both the export structure and the Malaysian GDP structure. Implementing a policy of stimulating the inflow of foreign investment, specialists, and technologies to the development of export-oriented

sectors of the economy, Malaysia managed to change the raw material nature of the national economy, becoming a new industrially developed country [229].

Foreign Policy. As for the international affairs, Malaysia's foreign policy is based on its strategic position in Southeast Asia, which contributes to the development of trade relations. Since the country's independence, foreign policy has undergone some changes under the influence of internal and external factors, but this has not affected the basic principles [230]. For Malaysia, participation in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations as well as the development of relations with the states of this intergovernmental organization is important. Since 1970s, foreign policy of Malaysia is characterized by a far-sighted and pragmatic view, as well as the focus on attracting additional foreign investment in the economy of the country.

Malaysia has become a member of the United Nations, supports the policy of multilateralism in promoting global freedom and security. Malaysia is actively involved in UN peacekeeping operations. The country actively cooperates with developed countries in the development of production. Since the majority of the population in the country is Islam, it is important for Malaysia to participate in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. Malaysia pays special attention to the development of relations with its neighbors: Brunei, Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines.

Malaysia has gradually expanded its foreign representation. For example, it now has 110 diplomatic missions in 84 countries of the world, which include embassies, high commissions, consulates general and consulates. The Malaysian government believes that international relations should be based on respect for independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, the peaceful resolution of disputes and close cooperation to achieve common goals [231].

In summary, it should be noted that Malaysia's experience in becoming a middle power confirms the aforementioned patterns. The country focuses its development on social as well as human capital development, economic growth directed at export, and finally peaceful foreign policy. Malaysia's development strategy is based on advanced techniques for qualitative and quantitative assessment of the commercial success of innovations.

Analyzing and testing various aspects of the new idea for the main success factors, ranking them by importance for a particular industry, sub-sector, individual region, country as a whole, the Malaysian government succeeds in implementing large-scale economic construction projects. At the same time, assessment, monitoring and reaction are carried out taking into account internal and external changes in the situation, development factors, social environment, and also taking into account the analysis and systematization of the component selection criteria: marketing, technological, economic, and human [232].

In general, Malaysia managed to create political, economic and legal conditions for business activities and a modern institutional form of economic partnership between the state and business. In most rankings Malaysia is considered one of the most favorable countries for the development of innovation, international investment and cooperation.

It can be clearly seen from the case studies that Kazakhstan's transformation resembles in most features of political, economic and social development of Turkey, South Korea and Malaysia. For example, Kazakhstan has employed taking on a strong political leadership to secure the statehood and power, considerable focus on the economic reforms, governmental regulation of the economy, attempts for social or human capital transformation etc.

However, Kazakhstan's economy can still learn from the experience of these countries in choosing development trajectory, identifying determining factor in comprehensive modernization of its core industry and infrastructure. To be specific, international experience shows particular importance of involvement of new technologies, new knowledge, and new investments. The successful experience of Turkey, South Korea and Malaysia encourages Kazakhstan to modernize and reduce dependence on the export of raw materials, to diversify both the economy as a whole and country's exports. All three countries have used export-oriented growth which led to a substantial development in their respected economies.

Another feature to point out is planning and control. International experience shows that main factors contributing to the successful diversification of the economy is usually developed through national planning and strict control system. State development programs of the country are determined by five-year, ten-year and long-term twenty-year plans developed by the government. However, it is vital to monitor the proper use of financial and infrastructural means and control the implementation of state programs in its full capacity.

Last but not least, what Kazakhstan may also employ in its own development is constant improvement of the system. Over the years of existence, the governmental systems of leading economies of the world have been constantly improving. The development of information technology, knowledge economy as well as financial transactions has brought the system of business and trade to a whole new level. Using these opportunities would allow Kazakhstan to maximize the effectiveness of its economy structure and public investment. It seems that the introduction of such a system would be useful for Kazakhstan.

3.2 Priorities of Foreign Policy of Kazakhstan as a Middle Power

In the previous chapters it was elaborated on how the experience of Turkey, South Korea and Malaysia relate to the transformation of Kazakhstan and lessons to be learnt. Learning the experience of middle power international behavior one might predict the core directions of foreign policy of a state. In particular, the most recent addresses and initiatives of the President of Kazakhstan have sent a clear message that the state is going to be focused on social and economic well-being of its citizens. These issues along with international agenda are to set the priorities for foreign policy of Kazakhstan.

Since sovereignty and independence, Kazakhstan embarked on the difficult path of entering the world community, determining its place and role in modern international relations, identifying priorities in the foreign policy of the state. The young state had to solve a number of problems: to show what our state really is, to

ensure international recognition, its security and territorial integrity. Foreign policy challenges facing the Republic of Kazakhstan were outlined by N. A. Nazarbayev in a number of his works: *On the Threshold of the 21st Century*, *Five Years of Independence*, *In the Stream of History*, *Strategy of the Formation and Development of Kazakhstan as a Sovereign State*, *Strategy of Independence*, *The epicenter of the world*, *Critical Decade*, *Era of Independence* etc.

In these works, the First President of Kazakhstan always prioritizes predictability and consistency in its foreign policy. It is well known that Kazakhstan's foreign policy's main objective was formulated as to create and maintain favorable conditions for steady development of the Kazakhstan based on political and economic reforms. The nature of these reforms determines the nation's foreign policy priorities, impartiality, and a desire to be fully involved in both international and regional events [233].

In a short historical period, Kazakhstan achieved noticeable success in the field of foreign policy: the sovereignty of Kazakhstan was recognized practically by all countries of the world and the international organizations, the multi-vector foreign policy has brought investments, the reputation of the country has increased in the world community.

As implication of the theory of middle power behavior it can be claimed that one of the highest priorities for Kazakhstan as a middle power is expected to be its role in international relations. It has now completed the process of entering into all respected and influential international organizations. At present, the task is to immerse into practical implementation the strategic interests of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the international arena according to the following priorities.

1 Kazakhstan is interested in the politically stable, economically sustainable and safe development of Central Asia. Realizing its responsibility and role in the region, Kazakhstan makes comprehensive efforts to ensure regional stability and security, and to counter new challenges and threats, including those emanating from neighboring territories.

Kazakhstan strives to develop intraregional integration in Central Asia in order to reduce the conflict potential, solve socio-economic problems, decouple the water and energy node and other contradictions.

A promising goal is the transformation of the region into a single integrated subject of international politics and economics.

Kazakhstan prioritizes the defense the common interests of the states of Central Asia and Afghanistan. It is guided by the need for a harmonious combination of the interests of all countries in the region, building a model of a regional zone of peace, security, cooperation and development.

The priority on the "economization" of international efforts to stabilize Afghanistan, with the active role of the Central Asian states in this process, has become an innovative approach proposed by Kazakhstan [168, p. 34].

The expression in the Security Council of the common interests of Central Asia, regular consultations on topical issues on the UN Security Council agenda have been highly appreciated by the neighbors in the region.

As for security diplomacy of Kazakhstan, it is important to take into account its various levels. The first level includes the countries of Central Asia: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. The second level, except for five new independent states, includes China and Russia. The third level assumes the CICA participants, and the fourth level includes European countries and the USA. In Kazakhstan's foreign policy, there are five key priority areas which include:

- development of integration processes;
- optimization of bilateral cooperation;
- implementation of functional tasks of foreign policy;
- rationalization of cooperation with international organizations;
- institutional and personnel development of the Foreign Ministry, its central and overseas offices [169, p. 57].

In this regard, N. Nazarbayev stressed that there is no alternative to the idea of multi-factorism in international relations. Only by combining the potential of all countries can we meet the challenges of our time and create effective mechanisms for combining national interests and international efforts. This approach will allow diplomats to solve the most important tasks of our time.

2 Considering Eurasian economic integration as one of the effective ways to promote the country to sustainable positions in the system of world economic relations, Kazakhstan strengthens its work on Eurasian Economic Union.

As part of this process, such fundamental principles as the inviolability of political sovereignty, the economic feasibility of decisions, pragmatism and mutual benefit, equal representation of the parties in all integration bodies and consensus at all levels of integration is respected.

Eurasian Economic Union aims at facilitating regional economic integration. Since 2015 freedom of movement of goods, services, capital and labor is ensured in the EAEU. Kazakhstan is a part of the organization along with Armenia, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan and Russia. At the moment, the population of the Union exceeds 182.7 million people, and the territory occupies 14% of world land - more than 20 million square meters [234].

As N.A. Nazarbayev, noted, this union is a long-term vector of peace, harmony, mutual consent and benefit. Because all economic changes in one country directly affect changes in the economic indicators of another, this organization ensures the implementation of a coordinated, unified policy.

3 Kazakhstan continues to work on strengthening stable and friendly relations with the coastal states of the Caspian Sea based on generally accepted principles and norms of international law.

On August 12, 2018, in Aktau, during the Fifth Caspian Summit, the Presidents of Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Russia and Turkmenistan signed the Convention on the Legal Status of the Caspian Sea. This document is a fundamental international treaty that defines and regulates the rights and obligations of the parties with respect to the Caspian Sea, including its waters, bottom, subsoil, natural resources and airspace [103, p. 46].

The convention regulates the issues related to the delimitation of national zones, jurisdictions and sovereignty; the exercise of mineral rights; transit and transportation; laying underwater pipelines and cables; protection of the natural environment and biological resources of the Caspian Sea. Special attention is paid to security issues in terms of countering modern challenges and threats, preventing and eliminating emergency situations, and military activities of the Caspian states.

According to the Convention, the sea area of the Caspian Sea is divided into zones with different regimes. The parties establish territorial waters not more than 15 nautical miles wide, while their external borders acquire the status of state. Ten-mile fishing zones adjoin the territorial waters, where each state has exclusive rights to fish.

In order to preserve a unique population of biological resources, fishing throughout the entire water area is carried out on the basis of agreed national quotas. Outside the fishing zones, a common water area is preserved. Outside the state's maritime boundaries, there is freedom of navigation for ships under the flags of coastal countries.

4 Kazakhstan, as a responsible participant in the activities of the United Nations, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia, the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Cooperation Council of Turkic-speaking States and other international organizations and forums, with their main tasks in the framework of their activities, consider [45]:

- 1) ensuring that national interests are taken into account in the process of developing and adopting decisions of a regional and global nature in various fields;
- 2) constructive participation and contribution to international efforts to strengthen regional and global security;
- 3) promotion of Kazakhstani foreign policy initiatives;
- 4) the establishment of optimal and mutually acceptable forms of cooperation between regional and international organizations and forums in the interests of ensuring stability and security in the world;
- 5) improvement of political, legal and organizational-administrative functions of regional and international organizations in order to increase the efficiency of their work.

Kazakhstan participates in the work of regional and international organizations whose activities are in its national interest and brings practical benefits.

First of all, Kazakhstan recognizes the leading role of the UN in solving the most important issues of the modern world. On March 2, 1992, at the 46th session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, the Republic of Kazakhstan was unanimously admitted to membership in the UN. Since 1992, Kazakhstan has managed not only to successfully integrate into the international community of states, but also to occupy a prominent place in it. Kazakhstan's participation in the work of the UN system is one of the main directions of Kazakhstan's multilateral diplomacy, which contributes to strengthening the sovereignty and independence of our country,

creates favorable international conditions for the implementation of further transformations in the socio-political, economic and other spheres of public life.

Over the years of independence, it has made an enormous contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security [235]. The rejection of nuclear weapons, the creation of confidence-building measures in Asia, the strengthening of integration processes in the Eurasian space, the promotion of a dialogue of civilizations and religions are the steps taken by Kazakhstan to further the goals and principles of the UN Charter. The Republic has earned wide recognition in the UN as a state that has a balanced and constructive approach to solving world problems.

On December 31, 2018 Kazakhstan completed the biennial membership to the Security Council, the main organ of the United Nations responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The work was built in order to fully implement the Political Address of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N. Nazarbayev to the members of the Council ‘Kazakhstan’s conceptual vision of strengthening the global partnership to build a safe, just and prosperous world’, which was based on the Manifesto ‘Peace. XXI Century.’

The main message of Nur-Sultan was an inclusive dialogue between the leading powers which is necessary to overcome the so-called ‘bloc thinking’ and reach a consensus on key issues on the world agenda.

The culmination of the Kazakhstan’s work in the UN Security Council was a thematic briefing on Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction: Confidence-Building Measures chaired by the First President of Kazakhstan, held on January 18, 2018 [236].

It was the first time when the First President of Kazakhstan chaired the UN Security Council and spoke in the Kazakh language in the hall of the official meetings. Based on the experience of Kazakhstan, the President dedicated his speech to a particularly important role of confidence in strengthening the non-proliferation regime, thereby underlining the attainability of the strategic goal of building the world free of nuclear weapons.

The meeting chaired by the leader of Kazakhstan was one of the few Security Council events that took place in an atmosphere of mutual understanding and allowed to consider pressing contemporary challenges, including the situation on the Korean Peninsula, in a new light.

As a result of the discussion, Kazakhstan was able to achieve the adoption of a presidential statement, which included the topic of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the UN toolkit on conflict prevention and resolution.

Second of all, Kazakhstan has been actively working to resolve conflicts and crises in the Middle East, Africa and other regions of the world. Kazakhstan fully supports peacekeeping activities and the efforts of the United Nations to strengthen its peacekeeping capacity. Evidence of Kazakhstan’s active participation in this activity is the creation of the Kazakhstan Peacekeeping Battalion (Kazbat), whose units served in the stabilization forces in Iraq, Afghanistan and other hot spots of the planet, participating in peacekeeping operations.

It is worth recalling that in 1992, during the 47th session of the UN General Assembly, during its first speech at the UN, our President proposed using confidence-building measures to ensure peace and security in Asia [168, p. 12].

Not all countries at that time accepted the initiative of convening a Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia. Today, the CICA has acquired particular relevance and has received support from the majority of Asian states, who are convinced that this structure is the imperative of the time.

The reputation of an honest and unbiased mediator has become one of the characteristic features of Kazakh diplomacy. Vivid evidence of this was the practical results of the Astana process to resolve the situation in Syria.

Joint efforts with the guarantor countries ensured a cessation of hostilities and the operation of de-escalation zones, conditions were created for the safe return of refugees. Through strengthening confidence-building measures between the warring parties, significant work has been done to create a solid foundation for a political settlement of the Syrian conflict in Geneva under the auspices of the UN.

Kazakhstan has also managed to achieve tangible results in peacekeeping. In October 2018, the Kazakh peacekeeping company of 120 military personnel in the Indian peacekeeping battalion joined the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). Due to this, Kazakhstan has become the largest supplier of peacekeepers in the Eurasian region.

Together with the Ministry of Defense, MFA obtained the UN certification of the Kazakhstan Peace Training Training Center (KAZTSENT) in Almaty. In fact, it is building a regional peacekeeping hub, the demand for which will only increase in the coming years.

Next is countering international terrorism, according to which a proposition to create a global counter-terrorism coalition of states under the UN auspices was made at the 70th session of the UN General Assembly in September 2015.

As a basis for the formation of such a coalition, the Political Address of First President to the UNSC member states was proposed to adopt a Code of Conduct Towards Achieving a World Free of Terrorism.

In January 2018, the presentation of the Code was held at the UN, and in September of the same year, this document was signed by representatives of seventy states. Today it brings together 78 countries.

The main objectives of the Code are to achieve a world free of terrorism by 2045 and to create a broad international coalition of counterterrorist partner countries.

Many countries see the initiative of Kazakhstan as an important basis for strengthening international instruments and cooperation in the fight against terrorism amid a lack of trust [237].

Kazakhstan has skillfully built the work of the most important Security Council sanctions committees on countering ISIS, Al-Qaida and the Taliban. It managed to adequately cope with the task, bringing dynamism to the work of these structures of the Security Council.

Separately, it is worth noting that Kazakhstan has joined all nineteen international instruments in the fight against terrorism. The activities of Kazakhstan

in the UN Security Council in the field of counterterrorism allows to work successfully in practical operations. Clear evidence was the recent operation called 'Zhusan [112, p. 128].'

At the same time, Kazakhstan pays a great attention on cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which is rightfully considered to be the largest regional organization currently involved in security and conflict prevention.

The basic principle of the OSCE is a broad and comprehensive approach to security with close connection of three main areas: military-political, economic-environmental and humanitarian. Protection of fundamental human rights and freedoms, cooperation in the field of economics and environmental protection are considered as the most important components of peace and stability.

Kazakhstan joined the OSCE on January 30, 1992. On July 8 of the same year, the Republic signed the Helsinki Final Act of the CSCE, and on September 23, the Paris Charter for a New Europe [238].

In the first years of independence, Kazakhstan needed the support of world powers and reputable international organizations, including the OSCE. At the same time, the world community was also interested in the owner of the fourth largest nuclear arsenal to have a constructive foreign policy line. Given this, the country has made an informed choice in favor of balanced approaches in foreign and domestic policy.

In November 2007, at the Madrid meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council, a decision was made on the chairmanship of Kazakhstan in the Organization in 2010. The candidacy of Kazakhstan was unanimously approved by all 56 member countries of the organization, which recognized the real achievements of Kazakhstan in building a democratic society and a liberal market economy. The OSCE Chairmanship is largely a consequence of the high prestige of the First President N. A. Nazarbayev, whose active international, reforming and peacemaking activity was a significant asset to the Kazakhstani application. At the same time, the new international status provides an opportunity to more successfully promote Kazakhstan initiatives of interest to the entire international community.

Within the framework of the military-political dimension, Kazakhstan continues to support multilateral efforts to ensure Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security, strengthen confidence-building measures, and resolve protracted conflicts. Special attention is paid to the OSCE activities in connection with the situation in Ukraine and the work of the Special Monitoring Mission.

The development of transcontinental transport corridors connecting Asia and Europe, sustainable development, the fight against corruption, and good governance remain an important priority on the OSCE economic and environmental track. Work continues on the use of the OSCE's potential in the field of environmental protection, including in addressing the Aral problem and effective water management in Central Asia.

In the human dimension, issues such as the fight against all forms of intolerance and discrimination, tolerance, protection of human rights, the rule of law,

the independence of the judiciary, the promotion of gender balance and the fight against human trafficking remain important for Kazakhstan.

Work continues to support the OSCE member states in their efforts to reform the OSCE / ODIHR, to establish uniform requirements for the implementation of election observation, as well as the adoption of the Organization's title document.

Kazakhstan has built a trusting relationship with the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC) as well. The accession of the Republic of Kazakhstan on December 12, 1995 to the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC) as a full member was a significant event in the foreign political life of the country.

Membership of the Republic of Kazakhstan in this international organization, which unites 57 Muslim states, including all Arab and Turkic-speaking countries, making up one third of the UN members, was aimed at integrating Kazakhstan into the Muslim community. At the same time, the political and economic and financial and investment potential of the OIC was taken into account. The goals and objectives enshrined in the OIC Charter are fully consistent with the principles of the UN and international law [239]. The organization has earned respect for itself from the world community balance, restraint and objectivity of its policies.

This organization demonstrates a serious attempt by Muslim countries to establish themselves as an independent force in the system of modern international relations. The principle of Muslim solidarity on the public consciousness of both the Muslim and the Western world has a significant propaganda effect. Participation in the OIC allows many Muslim states to solve their specific economic, domestic and foreign policy tasks.

Kazakhstan's participation in the OIC's work and a positive image of the republic in the Muslim community is in turn an important prerequisite for further strengthening bilateral relations with the leading countries of the Islamic world: Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Pakistan, Malaysia, Indonesia, Egypt and the Persian Gulf countries.

Membership in the OIC provides an opportunity to verify the position of the Republic of Kazakhstan on such key issues of international life as the situation in the Middle East, the situation around Iraq, the issues of post-conflict reconstruction of Afghanistan, the fight against terrorism, extremism and drug trafficking.

In the context of the increasing urgency of the problems of the convergence of cultures and the dialogue of civilizations, the transformation of the OIC towards democratization and liberalization, both within the organization and in its relations with the outside world, appears to be important. In this process, due to its geopolitical position, Kazakhstan could play a positive role, being at the crossroads of Europe and Asia.

A significant event was the chairmanship of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the 38th session of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs (OIC Ministerial Council), which met on June 28-30, 2011 in Nur-Sultan. One of the main outcomes of this event was the decision to rename the organization to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

In the framework of the 38th session of the OIC Ministerial Council, the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N. Nazarbayev announced the creation of the Islamic Organization for Food Security (ILI). The main goal of this initiative is to consolidate the capabilities of the OIC member states in the field of food security.

Currently, 32 OIC member states have signed the Charter, and 12 of them have already ratified it. In March 2018, the IOPS Charter entered into full legal force. The headquarters of the Organization is located in Nur-Sultan [240].

Another major event in the line of cooperation between Kazakhstan and the OIC was held on September 10-11, 2017 in Nur-Sultan on the initiative of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N. Nazarbayev the First in the history of the OIC Summit on science and technology on the theme Science, Technology, Innovation and Modernization of the Islamic World. The main outcome of the Summit was the adoption of the Astana Declaration and the OIC Program for the Development of Science, Technology and Innovation until 2026.

In this regard, the Republic of Kazakhstan nominated Ambassador A. Musinov for the post of Deputy Secretary General of the OIC for Science and Technology, the election of which took place on May 5-6, 2018 in Dakka, Bangladesh, during the 45th session of the OIC Ministerial Council. Ambassador A. Musinov won the election and officially takes up his duties since July 1, 2019.

At present, the current agenda of cooperation between Kazakhstan and the OIC is formed by the initiatives of the First President of Kazakhstan N. Nazarbayev for the Islamic world:

- Strengthening the capacity of the Islamic Organization for Food Security;
- Promotion of Islamic reconciliation (Islamic Rapprochement);
- Promotion of Islamic Infrastructure Integration (Triple 'I') [241].

Also, work is underway to include on the agenda of a new initiative of Kazakhstan to create an OIC-15 platform in the field of science and technology.

Cooperation with member states of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) is one of the strategic objectives of Kazakhstan's foreign policy. It is carried out both at the level of bilateral relations and in a multilateral format within the framework of the Commonwealth.

Within the CIS, there are about 70 sectoral bodies that coordinate cooperation of interested states in the areas of economy, military cooperation, border protection and the fight against organized crime, in the field of transport, ecology, culture, tourism, the press, etc.

To sum up, Kazakhstan has fully realized its potential as a 'fair and honest broker,' connecting countries on a common platform of mutual understanding and cooperation in solving complex international problems.

Respectful attitude towards the country, First President of Kazakhstan, building Kazakhstan's foreign policy on the basis of trust, respect and partnership, allows to ensure the full implementation of all priorities in international arena and to take important actions and final documents reflecting the initiatives of the young state.

In general, the non-permanent membership of Kazakhstan in the UN Security Council has allowed to strengthen the authority of Kazakhstan as an active and

responsible international player; strengthen international security cooperation; to give new impetus to solving problems in our region; gain unique practical experience and bring the professionalism of Kazakhstan diplomacy to a qualitatively new level; promote our specialists in the UN structures; get access to current information on important international issues.

3.3 Ways to Improve Efficiency and Economic Effect of Kazakhstan's Foreign Policy

Currently, having defined its development priorities as a middle power, the Republic of Kazakhstan is striving to build an effective foreign policy that will bring favorable conditions for further economic development of the country.

At the present historical stage, politics, including international, has been substantially economized, and the economy has become politicized. Diplomatic activity in the field of foreign economic policy has begun to increasingly take on the features of interstate regulation of the economy [242]. A so-called 'economic diplomacy' is to take a priority position for Kazakhstan as well.

The main purpose of economic diplomacy is the creation of favorable conditions for access and promotion of domestic goods and services to foreign markets, the protection of national strategic and economic interests abroad, as well as the promotion of means and methods of this diplomacy to the country's social and economic development, increasing its competitiveness in the world, ensuring its national and economic security.

In the conditions of a globalizing world, increasing international competition and deepening regional integration, economic diplomacy at the present stage has acquired a number of new features, which affected its content, forms and tools.

Various forms of state support identify the success of domestic companies and the country as a whole, on the world market. This is not to say the government should change the market principles, but it should increase the competitiveness of national producers working in a tough competitive market environment. Strengthening national competitiveness implies a set of interrelated and complementary measures in the field of domestic economic (facilitating technological development and innovation) and in the field of foreign economic policies (promoting exports, improving access to foreign markets, attracting foreign investment, technology). Therefore, economic diplomacy is expected to occupy a special place in the future foreign policy of Kazakhstan, creating a favorable external environment for the practical solution of the tasks of increasing competitiveness.

Confirming this course of action, at the extended meeting of the Government on January 30, 2019, the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev set the task of attracting investments in fixed capital at the level of more than 30% of GDP per year [243].

To achieve this goal, the government is building a set of measures to contribute in the stimulation of export-oriented production by increasing the productivity of the economy, attracting foreign capital by actively implementing the development potential of the regions, increasing and diversifying the kind of investments.

In order to strengthen the policy of promoting domestic goods to foreign markets, as well as increase the efficiency of protecting the domestic market from low-quality goods, Ministry of Trade and Integration was created in Kazakhstan in June 2019. The new Ministry incorporated some of the functions of the Ministry of National Economy in terms of domestic and foreign trade, trade promotion, as well as the functions of the Technical Regulation Committee from the Ministry of Industry and Infrastructure Development as well as the function of coordinating export promotion was transferred from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The importance of investments, diversification of the economy, growth of productivity, exports and creating jobs has been noted in several documents of the State Planning System (including Kazakhstan-2050, Strategic Development Plan of the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2025, State Infrastructure Development Program Nurly Zhol, Plan of the Nation ‘100 Concrete Steps,’ State Program for Industrial-Innovative Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan, State Program for the Development of the Agro-Industrial Complex of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2017-2021, ‘Modernization 3.0.’).

Attempts to improve the economic effect of foreign policy have already been made in the frame of the First President’s Address to the Nation: Growth of the Welfare of Kazakhstanis: Increase in Income and Quality of Life [68, p.1].

According to this Message, *promotion of export-oriented products* of domestic enterprises, *attracting foreign investment* and innovative technologies in the priority sectors of the Kazakh economy as well as *enhancing investment climate* are stated as a key element of Kazakhstan’s foreign economic policy and one of the fundamental priorities of trade and economic diplomacy.

To implement this job, heads of Kazakhstan’s agencies overseas conduct a direct dialogue with the foreign business community, hold meetings and negotiations with heads of foreign companies, organize round tables, business forums, exhibitions and presentations, visits of business delegations.

With the direct assistance of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, hundreds of trade, economic, and investment events are held annually in the country and abroad, as well as visits of foreign business circles to Kazakhstan and Kazakh economic delegations abroad are organized. All available resources of the Ministry are involved, including foreign agencies, investment, economic and trade advisors, the WTO, trade missions, front offices, and honorary consuls of Kazakhstan abroad [197, p. 12].

Promotion of export-oriented products. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Investment and Development (now Investment Committee of Ministry of Foreign Affairs) signed Joint Action Plans to strengthen cooperation in promoting exports of Kazakhstani products, as well as the Ministry of Agriculture to strengthen cooperation in attracting foreign investment in the agro-industrial complex of Kazakhstan and the development of trade for 2017-2021, and the Ministry of Defense to strengthen cooperation in promoting the export of Kazakh defense products and attracting investment.

In particular, one of the most important priorities in the work of the MFA is the issue of protecting and supporting the rights of Kazakhstan’s business abroad. In

2017, the MFA assisted a number of Kazakhstani companies which requested to promote export or attract investments: Kaynar-AKB, Kazakhstan Garysh Sapary, Kazspecexport, Aktobe Oil Equipment Plant, KazGerKus, Semey Engineering, Milk stories and others [47].

A striking example is the first in the history of the Republic of Kazakhstan transportation of wheat with a volume of 720 tons to Vietnam via the new transport corridor Kazakhstan - Lianyungang (PRC) - Vietnam. This delivery was organized by a subsidiary of NC Kazakhstan Railways - KTZ Express together with Chinese-Kazakhstan International Logistics Company Lianyungang.

Attracting foreign investment. N. Nazarbayev personally pays special attention to the development of economic diplomacy. Virtually all official visits abroad and visits by foreign heads of state to Kazakhstan include its separate meetings with the foreign business community, commercial agreements are signed.

For example, in 2016, during the visit of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan to Iran, 48 agreements were signed for a total of 1.4 billion US dollars, to Turkey - 20 documents for 520 million dollars, to Saudi Arabia - 10 agreements for 200 million, to Japan - 13 documents for 1.2 billion, to South Korea - 24 contracts for 640 million dollars.

As part of the visits in 2017 to Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Belarus and other countries, investment and trade agreements were signed for more than \$ 1 billion.

At the same time, during the visits of heads of foreign states to Kazakhstan in 2017, a large number of commercial agreements were concluded. For example, during the visit of the President of Germany F.-V. Steinmeier signed 21 agreements totaling \$ 1 billion, during the visit of the President of Turkey R.-T. Erdogan 9 commercial documents were signed worth \$ 590 million [244].

In addition, local authorities (Akimats) organize international investment forums aimed at presenting the economic potential of the regions of Kazakhstan and attracting foreign investors. In 2017 over 50 documents worth about \$ 5 billion were signed within the framework of regional business forums (Aktobe Invest 2017, 11 memoranda worth 209 billion tenge were signed; Almaty Invest 2017, contracts for \$ 15 million; Kostanay Invest 2017 - 26 documents for 200 billion tenge; Atyrau Invest 2017 - 9 memoranda of 3.3 billion dollars.

To improve interaction between investors and interested entities, a specialized national investment company Kazakh Invest was created, which is endowed with broad authority and functions in operational and technical field, including relevant public services.

This company acts as a 'single negotiator' with TNCs and large investors on behalf of the Government, including support when interacting with government agencies and solving emerging issues.

To enhance the work on attracting investment from abroad, investment advisers from Government have been seconded in 10 priority countries such as Germany, France, China, Great Britain, South Korea, Japan, USA, Italy, Iran, India as well as opening Front Offices of JSC Kazakh Invest for targeted work with investors.

Enhancing investment climate. Today, Kazakhstan has created a favorable investment climate: a simplified tax regime, national legislation prioritizing international agreements, and investment preferences being expanded. For those investors implementing investment projects in priority sectors of the economy the stability of tax legislation is guaranteed.

However, Kazakhstan is now focused on carrying out radical transformations to create an investment climate in accordance with the best standards and practices of OECD countries.

In accordance with the Entrepreneurship Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan [245], the following investment benefits and preferences are provided for investors:

- exemption from payment of customs duties when importing equipment, components, raw materials and spare parts necessary for the implementation of the investment project;

- public natural grants (land, buildings, structures, machinery and equipment, computer equipment, measuring and regulating devices, vehicles, with the exception of cars, production and household equipment).

Additionally, for investment projects which worth at least 2 million monthly calculation index (about \$ 13 million) and implemented in priority sectors of the economy, it is possible for the investor to have access to a new package of incentives, including:

- tax benefits for corporate income tax and land tax (for 10 years), property tax (for 8 years);

- stability of tax rates (except for VAT and excises), environmental charges and payments (for 10 years);

- investment subsidy - compensation up to 30% of the investor's capital expenditures;

- simplified procedure for importation of foreign labor.

Also, there are 11 special economic zones (SEZ) in Kazakhstan, which provide tax and customs benefits (exemption from corporate income tax, land tax, property tax, VAT for goods consumed in the SEZ territory, land lease is free for 10 years).

However, Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan is working on measures to move away from the narrow sectoral focus of the SEZ in order to more flexibly respond to investors' needs [246]. Since the beginning of 2016, all regions of Kazakhstan launched a new mechanism for investors to avoid bureaucracy when interacting with governmental agencies.

In order to solve the problematic issues of foreign investors arising in the course of investment activities in Kazakhstan, dialogue platforms have been created: Council of Foreign Investors under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Council on Improving the Investment Climate under the Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

To ensure the protection of the rights and legitimate interests of the investors, an Institute of Investment Ombudsman was created to serve as a platform for interaction between investors and the state to solve current problems of investors in extrajudicial proceedings.

However, all the above-mentioned measures still do not fully allow to reach the highest investment level. Despite the fact that in 2017 Kazakhstan launched a new investment attraction program, the amount of investment did not grow. According to UNCTAD, FDI flows have declined sharply in developed countries and countries with economies in transition, while flows to developing countries remain stable [247].

In particular, countries in transition, that is, countries of Southeast Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), attracted 47 billion dollars, which is 27% less than in 2016. This is the second lowest since 2005. The recession is associated with low flows to the four main CIS recipient countries: Russian Federation, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Ukraine. Kazakhstan meets the challenges such as weak level of personnel training, lack of new technologies, as well as ineffective intergovernmental cooperation. For this reason, the following SWOT analysis of contemporary development of the investment field should be taken into account (table 3.4).

Table 3.4 – SWOT analysis of contemporary development of the investment field

<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Weaknesses</i>
1) favorable business climate supported by economic and political stability; 2) investment attractiveness due to the presence of rich natural and mineral resources; 3) favorable geographical position of Kazakhstan to the large consumer markets of Central and Western Asia, Russia, India and China	1) instability of the legislation and the lack of mechanisms to ensure compliance with laws and contractual relations; 2) low competitive conditions for attracting investment (foreign exchange regime); 3) underdevelopment of the infrastructure ensuring attraction of investments (special zones, financial, banking, information-analytical, consulting, transport and others)
<i>Opportunities</i>	<i>Threats</i>
1) positive investment image of the country in the global capital markets; 2) formation of an effective public and private infrastructure to attract investment; 3) ensuring sustainable and balanced economic growth due to the redistribution of investments from the mining to the processing sector of the economy; 4) formation of specialized institutions such as Kazakh Invest, International Financial Center Astana aimed at facilitating the inflow of investments	1) loss of investment attractiveness as a result of natural resources depletion and increased regional competition for investment; 2) remaining high-risk economy due to disproportion of raw material industry over the rest of the economy; 3) loss of existing industrial and production potential due to low volumes of investment in fixed assets; 4) corruption and bureaucracy (at the customs, when paying taxes)

On top of that, it is necessary to consider the developments in the international system. Currently, there are three main players that influence global FDI flows: United States, developed countries of Europe and China. Taking into account the changes occurring in the global investment capital markets, there are several trends to point out that will have a direct impact on the Republic of Kazakhstan and its prospects for attracting FDI:

- 1) changes in commodity market prices, primarily oil and gas, are the main reason for the decrease in FDI worldwide and the reroute of investment flows;
- 2) competitive advantage of many countries providing new investment incentives, as well as the simplification of bureaucratic procedures;
- 3) access to new economic sectors for foreign investment, including privatization tools and public-private partnerships with restrictions on strategically important sectors such as defense industry, energy and transport;
- 4) singularity of niche markets across developing – developed countries;
- 5) increasing role of service sector in investment flows. Although it is inferior in absolute terms, the growth rates and shares in the total volume have significantly strengthened;
- 6) skewed distribution of foreign investments toward strengthening of intraregional industrial relations among ASEAN, China and India.
- 7) rapid growth of Chinese companies in such areas as high-tech chemical products, electronics, cars and aircraft. New Chinese brands, their own innovation and global distribution networks are emerging;
- 8) cities have become a key point for investment. Not just numerical increase of inhabitants, but economic concentration in and around cities (United Nations, 2019).

The combination of the listed trends determines the need to develop mechanisms that will allow not only to overcome the risks posed by these changes, but, on the contrary, to be used to increase the investment potential. Therefore, economic uncertainty and a change in the global structure of FDI entails both difficulties and opportunities.

Most states are strengthening their institutional and organizational base, raising the status of economic diplomacy in the system of international relations. The number is increasing, functions are expanding, and the quality of the countries' trade and economic missions is improving in supporting foreign trade, lobbying the interests of domestic companies abroad, trade and political assistance, and mobilizing effective external resources for development [248].

Providing the state with favorable conditions for international economic cooperation, which ultimately contribute to improving the level and quality of life of its people, is also a priority task of economic diplomacy. A large role in this is played by trade and economic missions, which act as 'islands' of a state in a foreign country, accumulate extensive knowledge of the host country, have direct political and other contacts, aiming at obtaining accessible and reliable information about the level and seriousness of the interests and priorities of the host country, the degree of objective interest in investments and mutual benefit.

To improve efficiency and economic effect of Kazakhstan's foreign policy, diplomatic institutions should be aimed at achieving practical goals. First is setting a clear indicator reflecting the level of the contribution (depending on the host country) to the assistance in the export of products manufactured in Kazakhstan. Second is indicator on the level of contribution in attracting foreign investment, advanced technologies and knowledge for the modernization and development of industry and

infrastructure in the country. Third, embassies should have key performance indicator on the conduct of effective and systematic work to expand the tourist flow to Kazakhstan.

To achieve the *first indicator*, diplomatic institutions should hold negotiations with the authorities of foreign countries on such important issues as:

- minimizing the use of tariff and non-tariff barriers to Kazakhstani exports;
- study of optimal transport routes abroad;
- inclusion in the lists of allowable for the importation of products;
- signing trade agreements, including on free trade zones;
- providing favorable conditions for the participation of Kazakhstan business in international exhibitions and fairs.

Another element in the MFA's instruments may be direct interaction with the Kazakhstan export-oriented private sector. It is also necessary to provide the essential information on doing business and taxing rules in certain countries, organizing meetings with foreign partners, searching for buyers, etc. at the request of entrepreneurs.

As the regards *the second indicator*, it is important to realize that the work of the diplomatic missions is seen as an element in the complex mechanism. Therefore, the suggestions are sectorized as follows.

It is proposed to improve the investment climate by (1) creating straightforward conditions for attracting investments, (2) increasing the level of protection of investors' rights, as well as (3) improving trade logistics and developing production and marketing links between foreign investors and local companies.

At the same time, implementation of effective operational measures and development of new approaches to attracting investments can be done by (4) facilitating institutional mechanisms and taking proactive approaches for attracting and retaining investments. Along with this, government should (5) prioritize attracting foreign investment in public-private partnership projects.

Also creating an enabling environment for attracting investment involves increasing the transparency of investment management. This is an important factor in building investor confidence. In this part, improvement of legislation and strengthening of mechanisms of interaction with the investment community is required. A translation of the regulatory framework governing the state's investment policy into English is also necessary.

Along with this, it is required to allow full and detailed access to relevant information on the official website. The content of the information function of diplomatic agencies, as well as other departments on attracting investments, includes three aspects: informing foreign partners about the official position of their state, receiving similar information from other countries and exchanging views. Direct participation in the information support of the foreign policy of the state in the countries of accreditation and in strengthening the positive image of your country in the international arena, as well as explaining the investment policy of the state are important tasks of any overseas representation. Due to the significant intensification of the development of mass media, they contribute to the emergence of new forms

and methods of influencing international audiences. In this regard, this activity is preferably carried out primarily through electronic mass media.

For this reason, all procedures and conditions for granting investment preferences should be transparent and set forth in a generally accessible form. This site should become a single window of interaction with investors, where both potential and existing investors will be able to get comprehensive information on requirements, preferences, offers, as well as answers to complaints.

In addition, there is a need to create a favorable environment for meetings of exporters and their potential partners to define and articulate priorities and show all the beneficial aspects of exported goods and technologies. Also it is necessary to emphasize the importance of a detailed state export strategy, which should determine the main directions of export of goods. This has to be the main task of trade and economic missions.

It is important to work to simplify the regime for issuing visas and work permits for foreign specialists, expanding the list of countries for visa-free entry to the Republic of Kazakhstan, exemption from quota requirements and work permits for foreign individuals working in enterprises that have signed an investment contract for the implementation priority investment projects.

As for the third indicator, one of the most important tasks for diplomatic missions is to creating a positive image of the perception of the country, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and professional diplomats in general – although their actual capabilities to radically or temporarily influence the change in the existing perception of their country abroad are often limited.

According to recent studies conducted by the World Bank [249], in 72% of the cases, the country's perception is the basis for making decisions on investing or other forms of economic cooperation with this country. Even those experiencing political issues often keep having intense economic exchange. Moreover, bilateral relations based on a positive perception of national identity are the basis for a more dynamic and easy development of trade and economic relations. Initiative, innovation and ingenuity are the qualities of a successful organization of actions that should be in service with diplomatic missions. All methods of conducting diplomatic activities are important, including consular and cultural-educational work, relations with the media, diaspora and other areas of the work.

Basic methods of work of economic diplomacy includes diplomatic missions which serves as the main structural unit in presenting information about the principles, structure and development trends. The work of the mission should include collecting information on the economy of the host country, its plans and programs, monetary and financial condition, the development of foreign economic relations, the conjuncture of goods and services markets; its export and import potential, on requests for direct investment in the country's economy, collected through official sources to which the mission has direct access. All this allows to create the potential for further economic cooperation.

As a whole, summing up the above, it can be stated that for Kazakhstan, the implementation of a balanced and responsible foreign policy that takes into account

the interests of the society and the dynamics of world development is of paramount importance. Foreign policy should be built on the understanding of the necessity to compromise, including the most sensitive issues.

Kazakhstan is to continue, guided by the vision of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, to make efforts to strengthen the security environment and expand its influence on international processes.

In this regard, the tasks of searching for the optimal balance of interests, harmonization of the main directions of foreign policy, foreign economic, military policy, assessment of the real opportunities of all participants involved in cooperation from the Kazakh side to enhance the role of Kazakhstan in international processes are becoming very important for the Kazakh foreign ministry. This can be achieved only in the framework of multi-vector diplomacy, the development of integration processes at the regional and interregional levels. Successful implementation of foreign policy priorities will, in turn, be the key to the further stability of Kazakhstan, both politically and in socio-economic terms.

Undoubtedly, today Kazakhstan has taken a strong position in the international arena as a middle power, committed to building a stable and secure world, working in the foreign policy arena. The growing influence of Kazakhstan in the region and the world as a whole is supported by the successful implementation of a number of foreign policy initiatives, ensured by the existence of a strategic partnership with leading states of the world, active work in international organizations and is based on the dynamic growth of Kazakhstan's economic power, and onward expansion of trade and economic relations the world. The perspective foreign policy of modern states can no longer wander in the history of everyday life. And the main guideline today should be the idea of multi-vector, integration and balanced cooperation.

CONCLUSION

Since the Republic of Kazakhstan gained independence and it has chosen its own unique way of development and so has been built its foreign policy. Over the twenty-eight years of the history, the state has led an active and balanced foreign policy aimed at strengthening bilateral and multilateral cooperation transforming into a middle power. First of all, Kazakhstan has managed to gain the credibility of a reliable foreign policy partner and take its rightful place in the system of international relations.

This dissertation has made an attempt to recreate the path of Kazakhstan into middlepowermanship showing the specific internal and external variables in the formation and realization of state economic and social policy, analyzing the characteristics of Kazakhstan foreign policy behavior, highlighting the role of individuals in the implementation of state policy, as well as suggesting the ways for further development. Summing up the gained experience will help to mind map the evolution of Kazakhstan, determine the most valuable, and eliminate the negative practice and suggest refined solutions.

The results of the study allow us to draw the following conclusions:

1 Mainstream theories of international relations such as realism, liberalism, neo-Marxism to one degree or another all imply the stratification of states in international arena. Although having formal legal equality, states cannot ignore the fact that they differ in their territory, population, natural resources, economic potential, social stability, political authority, arms, etc. These differences are summarized in the inequality of states in terms of their national power. Thus, there is an international stratification, with its characteristic actual hierarchy of states in the international arena. For this reason, states may need to act actively or passively in international arena. Moreover, every state is forced, in one way or another, to follow certain foreign policy strategies depending on their power, role and place. In this regard, it is implied that all considered mainstream theories admit the possibility of the transformation of states from one category to another (from small state to middle power).

Defining whether a state is small, middle or great power depends not only on its political, economic and social development, but also on its foreign policy behavior. The study of debates on defining states small or middle involve those who believe there are certain parameters in economic and social development with the help of which states' status can be directly measured; and those who suppose it is state's own international behavior as well as perception the world community that regards one a smaller or greater state. In particular, there are approaches such as hierarchical, behavioral and functional. The hierarchical approach explores capabilities, self-positioning and recognized status of a state. The behavioral approach takes on 'agential' view and looks at how states act and what instruments they use to achieve their goals. The functional approach asserts that states exercise their peculiar influence in certain areas of interest, serving particular role in

international arena i.e. they serve particular function in the world. This dissertation takes upon all the mentioned criteria to follow the transformation of states.

2 Transformation of small states into middle powers goes through enhancement of its economic indicators, security matters as well as state's foreign policy scope of operation and internationalization. This is to say, to complete the transformation, states need to go through not only quantitative changes, but also engage in qualitative changes as well. The study suggests that prospective middle powers should undertake actions to change the following areas: demographic policy, economic policy, government, education and healthcare, security policy, intelligence policy, military policy, foreign policy.

The results of such changes should be founded on following:

Socio-economic parameters: increasing population; high adult literacy rate; qualified human capital; low infant mortality rate; fully functioning domestic market; affordable finance; efficient economy of scale; diversification of economy; higher GNP; economic independence.

Military-political parameters: well-organized bureaucracy; developed institutional infrastructure; providing human, energy, economic and institutional security; autonomy for the use of natural resources; ability to withstand any kind of informational, religious, or other imposition; sufficient military spending; having sufficient resources to apply power against or oppose attacks from similar-sized states; border protection.

Foreign policy behavior: expanding foreign services; taking concrete, proactive, innovative initiatives; imposing will through building coalitions by using media and political mobilization etc.; focusing on particular 'niches'; taking leading position in resolving international issues; mediating conflicts and cooperation with NGO to affect global security; willingness to accept responsibility and commitment to implement international treaties; gaining reputation of 'a good citizen' of international relations.

3 Kazakhstan meets the definition of a middle power. Kazakhstan's territory is 2 724 900 square kilometers making it the ninth largest state in the world. Although in economic terms Kazakhstan's capacity is still around small state level, as the country's nominal GDP has not yet exceeded the world's average, accounting for 9,220 USD per capita compared to world's average of 11,310 USD per capita, Kazakhstan's PPP GDP is twice as high as emerging market and developing economies PPP GDP, making up 26,930 USD against 12,430 USD per capita respectively [250]. Kazakhstan has a population of only 18,5 mln people [251], but engages on a number of international initiatives from world disarmament process to chairmanship in different international organizations including the UN Security Council. In addition, despite the fact that Kazakhstan does not demonstrate its ability to maintain as full a spectrum of military capabilities as great powers, it does join peacekeeping operations in distant regions of the world [252].

Kazakhstan's foreign policy thoroughly matches all the behavioral characteristics of middle states from both a liberalist and realist perspective. On the one hand, being a trustworthy partner in world affairs, it contributes to the

strengthening of international peace and security by maintaining balanced relations with all its neighbors. It has no particular agenda to intervene in the internal policy of conflicting states, and therefore is capable of being an impartial broker in solving conflicts. On the other hand, Kazakhstan is an actor with a limited influence on deciding the distribution of power in the regional system, but is capable of using a range of instruments to change the position of great powers and protect its own position on issues concerning national or regional security that directly affect it [253]. With a historical legacy of multiculturalism, Kazakh mentality of hospitality directs the state's 'niche diplomacy' to focus on building trust of both other states and the world's population in order to lay a stable foundation for peace and public consent.

4 Internal factors that contributed to the transformation of Kazakhstan into a middle power are natural resources, political stability and ideology.

Natural resources and oil and gas in particular have been paramount for the development of economy and vital element of transformation of Kazakhstan into a middle power. Kazakhstan is one of the richest countries in the world in terms of both reserves and diversity of minerals and natural resources. However, this is not to say a mere possessing natural resource has guaranteed Kazakhstan leverage. The most important was how it was used: increasing the state's share of ownership in major projects; rational use of profits to develop social infrastructure and implement social programs; and third, tightening the laws placing more of the burden of cost on the international oil companies themselves.

Another factor that contributed for Kazakhstan to become a middle power is political, economic and social stability. It was not enough to win freedom and independence, it was necessary to defend and consolidate the statehood. The main goal at dawn of independence was national security, territorial integrity, and consolidation of statehood and sovereignty.

The last but not least is ideology. Having experienced a period of deep ideological crisis, Kazakhstan's society is gradually returning to the awareness of the importance of national ideology as a socio-political institution uniting the citizens of the country into one nation with their goals, values and interests.

5 External factors that contributed to the transformation of Kazakhstan into a middle power are geopolitical position, international system, and international issues. Of all the Central Asian states, Kazakhstan appears to be the most equipped to integrate into world economic relations. The country occupies a leading position in Central Asia in terms of economic growth and accounts for more than 60 percent of the entire region's GDP. A powerful economic foundation, laying the foundations for a liberal market economy, timely modernization of the political system and other factors allowed Kazakhstan to take a worthy place in the world community and set ambitious foreign policy goals.

One of the reasons why Kazakhstan has managed to transform into a middle power is the influence of the international system itself. The highest interest of major nuclear powers such as US, China and Russia in the development of the region as well as Caspian Sea has made Kazakhstan to take a proactive position. For this reason, the foreign policy concept of the Republic of Kazakhstan defines its national

interests and foreign policy efforts focus on strengthening peace, regional and global security, further integration in the system of regional and international trade and economic interdependence.

On top of that, international issues such as activity of non-state actors make countries like Kazakhstan urge to take collective security actions. Among all international issues countering terrorism has always been one of the top priorities in ensuring Kazakhstan's national security. Kazakhstan believes that international cooperation in the fight against terrorism should be carried out in full compliance with the norms of international law, and also supports the further improvement of anti-terrorism treaty mechanisms.

Transformation model of Turkey, South Korea and Malaysia prove true the transformation model of Kazakhstan. It can be clearly seen from the case studies that Kazakhstan's transformation resembles in most features of political, economic and social development of Turkey, South Korea and Malaysia. For example, Kazakhstan has employed taking on a strong political leadership to secure the statehood and power, considerable focus on the economic reforms, governmental regulation of the economy, attempts for social or human capital transformation etc. However, Kazakhstan's economy can still learn from the experience of these countries in choosing development trajectory, identifying determining factor in comprehensive modernization of its core industry and infrastructure. The successful experience of Turkey, South Korea and Malaysia encourages Kazakhstan to modernize and reduce dependence on the export of raw materials, to diversify both the economy as a whole and country's exports. All three countries have used export-oriented growth which led to a substantial development in their respected economies.

6 Priorities of Kazakhstan as a middle power are to protect its national interests and be responsible international player of international relations. In particular, firstly, Kazakhstan is interested in the politically stable, economically sustainable and safe development of Central Asia. Realizing its responsibility and role in the region, Kazakhstan makes comprehensive efforts to ensure regional stability and security, and to counter new challenges and threats, including those emanating from neighboring territories. Secondly, considering Eurasian economic integration as one of the effective ways to promote the country to sustainable positions in the system of world economic relations, Kazakhstan strengthens its work on Eurasian Economic Union. Thirdly, Kazakhstan continues to work on strengthening stable and friendly relations with the coastal states of the Caspian Sea based on generally accepted principles and norms of international law. Lastly, Kazakhstan participates in the work of regional and international organizations whose activities are in its national interest and brings practical benefits to its economy.

To improve its foreign policy, Kazakhstan is to focus on export-oriented policy and attracting investment. To achieve the most favorable result in implementing export-oriented policy, diplomatic institutions are to hold negotiations with the authorities of foreign countries on such important issues as: minimizing the use of tariff and non-tariff barriers to Kazakhstani exports; development of optimal transport routes; getting permits for the importation of products; signing trade agreements,

including on free trade zones; providing favorable conditions for the participation of Kazakhstan business in international exhibitions and fairs. For attracting investment, the state is likely to increase the level of protection of investors' rights, as well as improve trade logistics and develop production and marketing links between foreign investors and local companies.

Summing up, the empirical case of Kazakhstan's transformation into a middle power should be recognized as such by both practitioners and theorists of international relations.

Taking into account the practical result of this transformation, it is important to point out that middlepowerness has brought many changes not only to Kazakh citizens' economic and social life, but also to the surrounding countries and international system as well. Therefore, being a part of the international agenda, the country is contributing to the development of interstate relations as well as the standing international regime.

Along with this, it is important to note that the transformation of Kazakhstan into a middle power as well as its foreign policy behavior, the main feature of which is the successive balanced and meticulously thought-out steps, is a major area for study by many countries in the world.

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ANNEX A

Small States and Middle Powers

Table A1 - List of Small States, by Region

AFR	EAP	LAC	MENA	ECA	SAR
Botswana	Brunei Darussalam	Antigua and Barbuda	Bahrain	Cyprus	Bhutan
Cabo Verde	Fiji	The Bahamas	Djibouti	Estonia	Maldives
Comoros	Kiribati	Barbados	Qatar	Iceland	
Equatorial Guinea	Marshall Islands	Belige		Malta	
Gabon	Federal States of Micronesia	Dominica		Montenegro	
The Gambia	Nauru	Grenada		San Marino	
Guinea-Bissau	Palau	Guyana			
Lesotho	Samoa	Jamaica			
Mauritius	Solomon Islands	St. Kitts and Nevis			
Namibia	Timor-Leste	St. Lucia			
São Tomé and Príncipe	Tonga	St. Vincent and the Grenadines			
Seychelles	Tuvalu	Suriname			
Swaziland	Vanuatu	Trinidad and Tobago			

Note - Compiled by source [136]

Table A2 - Commonwealth small states

Commonwealth small states	
Africa	
Botswana	Namibia
The Gambia	Seychelles
Lesotho	Swaziland
Mauritius	
Asia	
Brunei Darussalam	
Caribbean and Americas	
Antigua and Barbuda	Guyana
Bahamas, The	Jamaica
Barbados	St Kitts and Nevis
Belize	Saint Lucia
Dominica	St Vincent and the Grenadines
Grenada	Trinidad and Tobago
Europe	
Cyprus	Malta
Pacific	
Fiji	Solomon Islands
Kiribati	Tonga
Nauru	Tuvalu
Papua New Guinea	Vanuatu
Samoa	

Note - Compiled by source [135]

Table A3 - Small States by Kurecic, Petar & Kozina, Goran & Kokotović, Filip

Continent/world region	Groups of small states on the continent/world region	The small states included	The criteria used for classification and explanations
Europe (39)	Small states of the EU (20)	Austria Belgium Bulgaria Croatia Cyprus Czech Republic Denmark Estonia Finland Greece Hungary Ireland Latvia Lithuania Luxembourg Malta Portugal Slovakia Slovenia Sweden	The relational criteria were used only on the systemic level (large and small EU members), because the depth of the integration among states, and not on the level of the state (small state and big neighbor etc.). The population cut-off size of 12 million inhabitants was used as a compromise. The Netherlands, with a population of 16.85 million, numbers five and a half million inhabitants more than Belgium, with a population of 11.22 million ⁱⁱⁱ . (...) Of the current 28 EU member states, 20 EU members fell below the limit of 12 million inhabitants. This criterion produced the same results as the second criterion used: the categorization in terms of the number of EU states fitting into two defined groups. Panke (2008) defined small states according to the political weight they possess (with cut-off level of the EU27 average votes in the Council of Ministers (12.78) ^{iv} .
	Small European states that opted to stay outside of the EU (3)	Iceland Norway Switzerland	Iceland and Norway are NATO and EFTA members ^v . Switzerland is neutral and maintains deep economic relations with the EU through bilateral agreements. Countries of high or very high income, which are not in the EU because their population does not want them to be the EU member states.
	Microstates of Europe (5)	Andorra Lichtenstein Monaco San Marino the Vatican City State	Very small states that can be defined as microstates and de facto protected areas, under the protection of larger states (France, Italy, Spain, Austria), from which they benefit ^{vi} .
	The Western Balkans states (6)	Albania Bosnia-Herzegovina Kosovo Macedonia Montenegro Serbia	Former Yugoslavia minus Slovenia and Croatia (the EU member states) plus Albania. Countries with many internal problems that have been torn by wars, corruption, and the overall pauperization for the last quarter of a century. Declared intentions to join the EU. Because of the internal and unsolved mutual problems, perspectives for that remain bleak.
	Small non-integrated states in the European and Caucasian part of the Post-Soviet space (5)	Armenia Azerbaijan Belarus Georgia Moldova	Larger and more powerful neighbors. Dependence on Russia in many spheres (except Azerbaijan).

Asia (19)	Small states of Central Asia (4)	Kyrgyzstan Mongolia Tajikistan Turkmenistan	These states are land-locked, have a low population density, surrounded by the major world powers (Russia and/or China) and/or regional powers and larger states in general (Iran, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan). They are significantly weaker than their neighbors are, economically, demographically, politically, and militarily.
	Small states of the Near East (3)	Israel Jordan Lebanon	Three very different states, classified by the population criterion and their regional position. Israel is of course, because of its international influence, military and economic power a small power, much more than a typical small state.
	Small states of the Arabian Peninsula (5)	Bahrain Kuwait Oman Qatar The United Arab Emirates	These states are petro-dollar monarchies, surrounded and influenced by larger states and powers, Saudi Arabia particularly, which acts like an ally and a protector of most of these states. Iran, as a neighbor across the Persian Gulf, is on the other hand the prime external reason of concern for these states, especially after the overthrow of S. Hussein in Iraq.
	Small states of South Asia (2)	Bhutan Maldives	Bhutan is a small, underdeveloped state. It is land-locked and heavily dependent on India ^{vii} . Maldives are a small island state.
	Small states of Southeast Asia (5)	Brunei Cambodia Laos Singapore Timor-Leste	This group is comprised of two states in the mainland part of Southeast Asia (Cambodia and Laos – a landlocked state) and three states that occupy the parts of islands (Brunei on the island of Borneo, Timor-Leste on the island of Timor) or islands (Singapore) ^{viii} .
The Americas (23)	Small states of the Caribbean (15)	Antigua and Barbuda Bahamas, the Barbados Belize Dominica Dominican Republic Grenada Guyana Haiti Jamaica Saint Kitts and Nevis Saint Lucia Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Suriname Trinidad and Tobago	Guyana and Suriname were included in the Caribbean although they geographically belong to South America. Nevertheless, their history, culture, economic ties position them (geopolitically, economically, culturally etc.) much closer to the Caribbean than to South America. The same argument was used for Belize, located on the Central American isthmus, but was joined to the small states of the Caribbean. The three states are also not a part of Latin America, as a cultural region. Cuba was not included among the small states of the Caribbean because of the size of its population, its unique historical and current geopolitical position and the level of its foreign policy activity and capabilities.
	Small states of Central America (6)	Costa Rica El Salvador Guatemala Honduras Nicaragua Panama	These are the states of the Central American isthmus, between Mexico and Colombia. Except Costa Rica, all these states show a significant level of weakness, besides smallness. They have much larger and more powerful neighbors (The U.S.A., Mexico).
	Small states of South America (2)	Uruguay Paraguay	Uruguay was included because of its small population and larger neighbors (Brasil and Argentina). However, it is not a weak state. Paraguay was included for the same reasons as Uruguay plus a lower level of economic development and a land-locked position ^{ix} .

Africa² (31)	Small states of Northern Africa (2)	Libya Tunisia	The reason for including Libya and Tunisia among small states of (the Northern) Africa is that these states are much smaller than their neighbors are ^{xi} .
	Small states of Western Africa (10)	Benin Burkina Faso Cabo Verde Gambia, the Guinea-Bissau Liberia Mauritania Sao Tome and Principe Sierra Leone Togo	Determining factors were relational criteria. However, population was also taken into account. Mali and Niger were not included because they are primarily weak and not so small states (especially if their territory is counted). However, their weakness is not a direct consequence of their smallness ^{xii} .
	Small states of Central Africa (4)	Central African Republic Congo, Republic Equatorial Guinea Gabon	Central African Republic was included because of its small population, weakness and-locked position. Gabon and Equatorial Guinea especially, and Republic of Congo as well, besides their abundant oil reserves, have small populations and much larger neighbors.
	Small states of Eastern Africa (11)	Burundi Comoros Djibouti Eritrea Malawi	Overall weakness, poor economic performance and the inferior position to their powerful and rather hostile neighbors (Ethiopia and Sudan) were used as the
		Mauritius Rwanda Seychelles South Sudan Uganda Zimbabwe	criteria for including the countries of the Horn of Africa. Rwanda and Uganda have strong armies, but they are economically weak. The island states of the Indian ocean included here are beyond any doubt small states.
	Small states of Southern Africa (4)	Botswana Lesotho Namibia Swaziland	Botswana and Namibia were included primarily because of their small population and proximity to the much larger and more powerful South Africa. Botswana is also a land-locked state (as are Lesotho and Swaziland).
Oceania (12)	Small states of Melanesia (4)	Fiji Papua New-Guinea Solomon Islands Vanuatu	The small states of Oceania were primarily defined by their insular (in some cases archipelagic character and its remoteness). All states of Oceania are small and island states and some of them can be also considered as microstates. Papua New Guinea, although much larger than the other small states of Oceania, was included because of its ties and closeness to the region, and it shares many of the small and weak states' characteristics. New Zealand was not included in this research, although its population is only 4.5 million. However, it represents a true giant for almost all of the small island states (and especially microstates) of Oceania ^{xiii} .
	Small states of Micronesia (5)	Federated States of Micronesia, the; Kiribati Marshall Islands Nauru Palau	
	Small states of Polynesia (3)	Samoa Tonga Tuvalu	

Note - Compiled from source [39, p. 129-142]

Table A4 - Middle Powers by Holbraad

	<i>GNP at market prices (1975) (US\$ millions)</i>	<i>Population (mid-1975) (000)</i>
Japan	496 260	111 570
Germany, Federal Republic of	412 480	61 830
China, People's Republic of	315 250	822 800
France	314 080	52 790
United Kingdom	211 700	55 960
Canada	158 100	22 830
Italy	156 590	55 810
Brazil	110 130	106 996
Spain	97 140	35 348
Poland	88 320	34 022
India	85 960	608 072
Australia	77 010	13 500
Mexico	63 200	59 928
Iran	55 510	33 390
Argentina	39 330	25 383
South Africa	32 270	25 470
Indonesia	29 120	132 112
Nigeria	25 600	75 023

Note - Compiled from source [21, p.273]

Table A5 - Middle Power by Neack

Great States

United States	West Germany	Sweden
Canada	Netherlands	Switzerland
	Norway	
Belgium	Great Britain	Australia
Denmark		
France	Soviet Union	

Middle States

Argentina	Greece	Sri Lanka
Brazil	Italy	
Chile	Portugal	South Korea
Columbia	Spain	Malaysia
Costa Rica		Mongolia
Cuba	Hungary	Philippines
Dominican Rep.	Poland	Taiwan
Jamaica	Romania	Thailand
Mexico		

Panama	Albania	
Paraguay	Ireland	
Trinidad & Tobago	Yugoslavia	
Uruguay		
Venezuela		
Small States		
Bolivia	Algeria	Mauritania
Haiti	Benin	Morocco
Honduras	Burkina Faso	Niger
Nicaragua	Cameroon	Nigeria
	Central Af. Rep.	Senegal
Turkey	Chad	Sierra Leone
	Ethiopia	Somalia
Egypt	Gabon	S. Africa
Iran	Ghana	Sudan
Iraq	Guinea	Tanzania
Jordan	Ivory Coast	Togo
Syria	Kenya	Tunisia
	Liberia	Uganda
India	Libya	Zambia
Nepal	Mali	
Pakistan		
China		
States With Changing Group Memberships		
Ecuador	Bulgaria	Indonesia
El Salvador	Czechoslovakia	Japan
Guatemala	East Germany	
Peru		New Zealand
	Austria	
Iceland	Finland	Madagascar
Luxembourg		
	Israel	
	Jordan	

Note - Compiled from source [22, p. 6-11]