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## REVISTA DE PRENSA

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### Kazajstán



#### Is Kazakhstan expecting another devaluation of tenge?

ALMATY (TCA) — Following the monetary shake-up of almost a year ago, the Kazakh Government and Parliament announced that “spreaders of rumours” concerning the eventuality of further financial turmoil in the country would be prosecuted. This apparently never deterred them, and assurances from authorities that the value of the national currency will be guaranteed are met with a lot more doubt than trust.

Hopes for an oil price recovery have proven vain so far. The ongoing trend contradicts all predictions made so far. The average price for Brent in 2014 stood at \$99.45 per barrel. For this year, the most upbeat forecasts target \$70 a barrel against the most downbeat ones put the average price at \$40. So far, trends point strongly in the latter’s direction. Both OPEC and its counterpart lobby the International Energy Agency warn that the “downward pressure” on oil prices is poised to continue through the current year and most of the next year.

Earlier this month, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development lowered its forecast in terms of overall economic growth for Kazakhstan through the year 2015 to 1.5 per cent, down from its 5.1 per cent estimate as of September last year. In 2014, according to preliminary calculations, Kazakhstan’s GDP valued 224 billion US dollars, up from \$204 billion in 2013 – the first year in which it exceeded \$200 billion. Given the fact that oil accounts for about two-thirds of Kazakhstan’s overall external income which in turn accounts for 40 per cent of the country’s GDP, the EBRD’s figures, though, simply fail to add up and the possibility of a major contraction in the economy should be far from ruled out.



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According to Chief Researcher at the Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of Kazakhstan Vyacheslav Dodonov, in 2014, Kazakhstan produced 80 million tons of oil, and the contribution of mineral products to Kazakhstan's total exports amounted to 82%, KazTAG reported. The latest data on Kazakhstan's external trade show that in the month of November the gross value of Kazakhstan's exports amounted to \$5.485 billion, down from \$6.585 billion for October. The country's external trade surplus in November stood at \$2.056 billion, down from \$2.829 billion for October.

As Russia's Central Bank has done, the most logical step would be to put limits on Kazakhstan's National Bank's interventions on the currency market with the effect that by slipping against the US dollar the local currency's purchasing power will be upheld within realistic boundaries. This would be a better tactic than the overnight devaluation of 19 per cent that shook Kazakhstan's economy in February last year.

High devaluation expectations are due to two factors: low oil prices and the depreciation of the Russian ruble, but the more important factor for Kazakhstan is the price of oil, the expert said. "We will closely monitor them. But today I believe that we will not allow sharp fluctuations of the tenge," he concluded.

Trends in the value of the ruble and in oil prices go in opposite directions. There are different opinions as to what the price of oil will be but many analysts are now saying that the average annual price will be around \$50 per barrel. The Kazakh Government and the National Bank have calculated various scenarios that envision appropriate changes in fiscal and monetary policy.

Fuente: Timesca



### **\$870 million to be invested in modernization of Kazakhstan airports**

ASTANA (TCA) — More than 160 billion tenge (around \$870 million) will be invested in modernization of 11 airports in Kazakhstan until 2020, Novosti-Kazakhstan reported citing Claude Badan, general director of Airport Management Group (AMG).

Established together with Zurich Airport International AG, AMG is a management company of Kazakhstan's national network of airports.

“State-owned stakes of Astana, Kostanai, Kokshetau, Petropavlovsk, Kyzylorda, and Shymkent airports are given to AMG in trust management for seven years. The company is to consolidate under its management a total of 11 airports in Kazakhstan, adding the airports of Aktobe, Atyrau, and Pavlodar, and later Ust-Kamenogorsk and Semei,” Badan told a media briefing in Astana yesterday.

In his words, the period between 2015 and 2017 will see reconstruction of landing strips, passenger terminals, and airfield infrastructure in the airports of Astana, Petropavlovsk, and Kostanai. New passenger terminals meeting the international requirements will be built in the airports of Astana, Kyzylorda, and Shymkent.

“We will be working to develop domestic and international routes from regional airports to destinations of the United Arab Emirates and Turkey. For this purpose the airports must meet international requirements in order to increase passenger and cargo flows. In 2014, a number of airports saw a consistent growth of cargo and passenger traffic. In general, passenger traffic grew 10 percent compared to 2013. In line with the development strategy of the state-owned airports network, we expect a more than four-fold increase in the passenger and cargo traffic by 2030,” Mr. Badan said.

Fuente: Timesca

### **EEC told about price control in EEU**

ASTANA. KAZINFORM - Almaty hosted seminar "Innovations in anti-monopoly regulation of Kazakhstani business in accordance with the agreement on establishment of the EEU".

The event is organized by "Center for development and protection of competition" JSC jointly with "Eurasian Analytical Agency Expert" LLP with the support of the Eurasian Economic Union, "Market and Competition" magazine writes.

Deputy director of the department for competition policy and policy the policy in the sphere of procurement of the EEC Dauren Zhandarbek told the participants of the seminar about the competition policy in the context of the agreement on the EEU, in particular, about the common principles and rules of the completion and about the introduction of the state regulation of prices for the goods and services in the territory of the member-states of the EEU.



"Introduction of the state regulation policy over the prices on the markets of the EEU member states is held in extremely rare situations, for example, emergencies, disasters, national security. It is also done in case of a lack of mechanisms to solve the problem in a different way. Besides, the member states of the union may introduce state regulation of prices for some types of socially important products on some territories up to 90 days during one year total. The terms of the regulation may be extended if approved by the Commission," he noted.

Fuente: KazInform

### **Kazakhstan may produce military equipment for CSTO instead of Ukraine**

ASTANA (TCA) — The Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) is considering the use of Kazakhstan's plants for production of military hardware and equipment previously imported from Ukraine, Novosti-Kazakhstan reported citing CSTO Secretary General Nikolai Bordyuzha.

In his words, in line with amendments to the regulations of the CSTO Interstate Commission for Military and Economic Cooperation, the Commission now includes deputy prime ministers of the CSTO member countries that supervise the defense industries.

"It will allow us considering and making the maximal use of all the possibilities existing within the CSTO member states for production of military hardware and equipment previously produced in Ukraine," Bordyuzha told a press conference in Moscow last Friday, adding that such possibilities exist in Kazakhstan, as well as in Belarus, Armenia, and Kyrgyzstan.

Bordyuzha also said that the Ukrainian crisis has not led to a worsening of relations between the CSTO member states.

"There has been no cooling down in relations between the CSTO members or attempts to distance from collective security issues," he said when speaking about the situation inside the organization over the recent developments in Ukraine.

The CSTO Secretary General did not deny that the CSTO member states have different views on some issues, but "we have been able to reach a consensus so far," he said.

The CSTO, an intergovernmental military alliance, grew out of the framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States, and first began as the CIS Collective Security Treaty (CST) which was signed on 15 May 1992 by Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, in the city of Tashkent.

The CSTO now includes Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan. Uzbekistan suspended its participation in the organization in 2012.

Fuente: Timesca



### **Chinese and Karaganda companies sign memo on complex alloys plant construction**

KARAGANDA. KAZINFORM - The Chinese company «Sinosteel» and Karaganda complex alloys plant have signed a memorandum of joint project implementation on the territory of Saryarka special economic zone, the press service of Karaganda region administration reports.

According to the statement, 31 January was held a meeting between the business community of the region and China. The round table discussed the issues of realization "Construction of the Karaganda complex alloys plant". It was noted that the event was organized in the framework of the Kazakh-Chinese cooperation in the field of industrialization and investment.

According to the Mayor of Karaganda region Nurmukhambet Abdibekov, the plant will be constructed with the use of innovative technologies. The project's implementation will attract investment in the amount of 82.5 billion tenge and create about 3 million jobs.

He clarified that the manufactured products will be used in steel industry, as well as during drilling and blasting.

Sinosteel company - Chinese state-owned enterprise. The company has extensive experience in the construction and maintenance of metallurgical furnaces and related service centers

Fuente: KazInform

### **Zhambyl region: About \$500 million invested in alternative energy development**

TARAZ. KAZINFORM - The head of the department of energy, housing and communal services of Zhambyl region Mukhtar Toleuliyev noted at a report meeting that last year the department spent over 10 billion tenge for the development of alternative energy projects in the region.

"The lion's share of funds - about 4.8 billion tenge - went to the development of water supply systems. We carried out work in the field of gas and electricity. In addition, we updated main, street and block heat networks," said M. Toleuliyev.

According to his words, over the past five years \$464 million have been invested in the development of alternative energy. Total power capacity of the implemented projects amounted to 230.5 MW.

Recall that in 2009 Kazakhstan adopted the law on support for renewable energy. Zhambyl region has commissioned 5 objects of renewable energy sources including the first in Central Asia industrial solar power (Otarskaya SES) 504 kW, the first commercial wind farm in Kazakhstan in Kordai area with capacity of 1.5 MW, the largest in Kazakhstan small hydroelectric on Tasotkelskom dam of 9.2 MW, Merke 1.5 MW hydroelectric, 2.3 MW hydroelectric called Karakystakskaya.

Fuente: KazInform



### **Housing construction growth in Kazakhstan in 2014 amounts to 10%**

ASTANA. KAZINFORM - Kazakh construction companies in 2014 commissioned 7.5 million square meters of new housing, which is a historical maximum in the number of proposals on the primary housing market of the country, Trend.az reported citing the analytical service Ranking.kz.

"In 2014, Kazakh companies commissioned 672,200 square meters of housing (10 percent) more than in 2013," said the statement.

The positive construction trend is observed in 15 regions of Kazakhstan, according to the report. More than one third of the constructed housing in Kazakhstan accounted for megalopolises.

An absolute record in terms of construction belongs to Almaty. The annual growth in the commissioning of housing in Almaty has reached 60 percent (from 498,800 square meters to 1.3 million square meters).

The second place belongs to Pavlodar region, where the increase amounted to 24 percent. It is followed by Mangistau region, where 586,400 square meters of housing (10 percent growth) were commissioned.

Fuente: KazInform

### **Kazakhstan to provide 300 bln tenge in financing to entrepreneurs in 2015**

ALMATY. Jan 30 (Interfax-Kazakhstan) – The Kazakh government will provide 300 bln tenge from the National Fund to finance entrepreneurs in 2015, First Deputy Prime Minister Bakytzhan Sagintayev said at a Friday meeting in the Almaty city administration.

The meeting was discussing measures to support entrepreneurship activities.

Current FOREX rate is 184.45/1\$.

The first tranche of the monies for entrepreneurs was provided in December 2014 in the amount of 100 billion tenge and the second tranche of 100 billion tenge will be made available soon.

Also, the government plans to provide 100 billion tenge in 2016 to finance entrepreneurs. However, there is a proposal to utilize this money in 2015, which could bring the total financing to entrepreneurs to 300 billion tenge this year, Sagintayev said.

Kazakhstan spent 100 billion tenge in 2014 to support entrepreneurs.

Fuente: Interfax Kazakhstan



## Kirguistán



### **By 2030, the level of gasification of Kyrgyzstan may reach 60%**

Bishkek, January 30 / Kabar /. In case of implementation of the provisions of the General Scheme for gas supply and gasification till 2030, the level of gasification in Kyrgyzstan can reach 60%. Director General of Gazprom Promgas Yury Spektor told today at an extraordinary meeting of the Kyrgyz government in Bishkek.

He also said that about 400 settlements and over 845 thousand apartments and households may also be gasified in full. The length of the gas pipelines between villages can reach nearly 2 thousand 750 km, gas distribution pipelines in settlements - more than 4 thousand 400 km.

Fuente: Kabar

### **Alexey Miller: "During 3 years Gazprom will invest in gas sector of Kyrgyzstan 45.5 billion soms"**

Bishkek, January 30 / Kabar /. During three years, from 2015 to 2017, Gazprom will invest in gas sector of Kyrgyzstan 45.5 billion soms. Chairman of the Board of Gazprom Alexey Miller said in Bishkek.

"As they say, the goals - that's half the success. We set a goal to raise the level of gasification in Kyrgyzstan tripled, from 20% to 60%. It is realistic. We have an absolutely clear and understandable action program – the General Scheme of gas supply and gasification of Kyrgyzstan until 2030, and the work will be carried out throughout the country in all 7 oblasts, " said Miller.

He noted that the General Scheme will help identify priority sites and work. "Initially, Gazprom has taken on a commitment to invest 20 billion rubles during 5 years. But when developing a scheme, it became clear that it



takes a lot more investments. Gazprom has decided to fund fully all necessary measures in accordance with the three-year priority investment program ", said the Chairman of the Board of Directors of Gazprom.

Gazprom is a strategic partner and always fulfills its obligations. And with the general scheme will be exactly the same ", assured Miller.

He recalled that gasification of the country - is a joint work. Getting land, approval of permits, preparation of consumers - the responsibility of public authorities of Kyrgyzstan, he added.

Fuente: Kabar

### **Djoomart Otorbaev: "One of the best gas transportation systems in the world will be created in Kyrgyzstan"**

Bishkek, January 30 / Kabar /. One of the best gas transportation systems in the world will be created in Kyrgyzstan. Prime Minister Djoomart Otorbaev told journalists after a meeting between representatives of the Kyrgyz Government and Gazprom.

He said that all oblasts of the country will be gasified with the participation of direct investments of Gazprom. The total gasification will be tripled, and by 2030, 60% of the population and businesses will be supplied with gas. Gas consumption will be increased five times and exceed 1 billion cubic meters of natural gas.

"One of the best gas transportation systems in the world will be created in Kyrgyzstan with the participation of Gazprom. The extremely ambitious investment program of 45 billion soms in the next three years," said Otorbaev.

He also said that, except for that Gazprom comes to Kyrgyzstan with an ambitious social program.

Fuente: Kabar

### **Gazprom will build in Kyrgyzstan 16 sports centers**

Bishkek, January 30 / Kabar /. Gazprom promises to build in Kyrgyzstan new socially important objects by 2016. Chairman of the Board of the Russian company, Alexey Miller told reporters in Bishkek that they will implement the program "Gazprom to Children" in all places where they work.

"Today we begin the program in all regions of Kyrgyzstan. As part of this program 16 sports and recreation complexes will be built: one in Bishkek and Cholpon-Ata, and seven in regional centers. Therefore, Gazprom is not only the company that is leader in the global energy market, but also a socially responsible company. Thus, in the near future there will be new sports socially important objects in Kyrgyzstan, " said Miller.

Fuente: Kabar





### **Atambayev and Miller discussed Gazprom's plans on gas exploration in Kyrgyzstan and gasification**

Bishkek, January 30 / Kabar /. President of Kyrgyzstan Almazbek Atambayev met with chairman of the Board of Directors of Gazprom Alexey Miller.

During the meeting they discussed plans of the company on exploration of natural gas in Kyrgyzstan, gasification of the country, as well as reconstruction and construction of facilities of gas supply for the development of gas transportation system, the Kyrgyz President's press service reports.

Atambayev and Miller also paid special attention to the construction of the main gas pipelines in Kyrgyzstan intended to transport natural gas to customers.

In addition, the Chairman of the Board of Gazprom informed the President about the plans on implementation of socially-oriented programs of the company in Kyrgyzstan.

The President stressed the importance of effective work of the company in Kyrgyzstan to ensure energy independence of the country and, in particular, providing the population and industrial facilities with natural gas at an affordable price.

Fuente: Kabar

### **Kyrgyzstan's accession to EEU will be discussed by PMs of Armenia, Belarus, Russia, Kazakhstan**

The first meeting of the Eurasian Intergovernmental Council will take place in Moscow on 6 February, the press service of the Russian Cabinet of Ministers said, according to BelTA.

Heads of government of Belarus, Russia, Armenia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan will attend the meeting.

The meeting will consider Kyrgyzstan's accession to the EEU, the press service said.

The meeting will also address a wide range of issues related to the integration agenda, the operation of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), the development of the legal framework and the implementation of projects in cooperation including in the innovation sector.

Fuente: Kabar



### **World Bank decides to financially support reforms in Kyrgyzstan's energy sector**

The World Bank decided to financially support reforms in Kyrgyzstan's energy sector, the representative office of the World Bank mission in Bishkek informed.

According to it, the Board of Executive Directors of the World Bank today approved an operation to support policy development of the energy sector. Its purpose - to support reforms aimed at ensuring the long-term uninterrupted power supply, through the provision of budget tranche of \$24 million, of which \$13.2 million - highly concessional loan, \$10.8 million - grant money.

Thus, the funds will be used to strengthen the financial sustainability of the energy sector through reform of tariff policy, improved governance, transparency and accountability in the sector through the establishment of an independent regulator, the adoption of an explicit method of formation of tariffs, the introduction of the system of collecting and reporting monitoring, regular communication with the public. And also mitigate the impact of power shortage in the regions of the country due to the preparation and implementation of energy management plan for the region in accordance with the principles of transparency, fairness, predictability and uninterrupted supply of social facilities of the first category.

Fuente: 24h news agency

### **Kyrgyzstan collects over 42 bln soms of taxes in 2014**

Kyrgyzstan collected 42 billion 169.9 million soms of taxes in 2014, the board of the State Tax Service announced such data today.

It is noted that over the plan collected 781.1 million soms. Compared with 2013, revenues increased by 4 billion 585.2 million soms. The most significant tax deductions made by trading enterprises (16 percent), non-ferrous metals (14 percent), communications (10 percent).

"The largest increase revenue tax on gross income from Kumtor (34.3 percent), tax on movable property (17.6 percent), land tax for the use of plots of land (12 percent) is observed at the end of the year," the State Tax Service noted.

Fuente: 24h news agency



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## Tayikistán



### **Tajikistan, WB discuss prospects of cooperation in agricultural sector**

Bishkek (AKIpress) - Minister of Agriculture of Tajikistan Kosim Robar and representative of the World Bank in Tajikistan Patricia Veevers-Carter discussed prospects of cooperation, said the press service of the Ministry. During the meeting, they discussed bilateral relations and the role of the World Bank in the development of the agricultural sector in the country.

Manufacturing has been restored and new jobs have been created owing to financial support of the World Bank since 2000.

The Ministry of Agriculture uses the existing potential for implementation of agricultural reform program for 2012-2020, which is aimed at achieving food security.

Fuente: AKIpress



## **A year of relative stability for Central Asian regimes**

Author: Dr Kirill Nourzhanov, ANU

By local standards, 2014 was a reasonably successful year for the leaders of Central Asian countries. There were no revolutions, insurgencies or mass protests threatening their grip on power. Incumbent heads of state carried out regime maintenance in their customary manner: focusing primarily on managing the inner circle of the ruling elite.

Russian President Vladimir Putin and President of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov inspect an honor guard before their meeting at the Kuksaroi Presidential Residence in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 10 December 2014. (Photo: AAP)

In Uzbekistan, President Islam Karimov continued to dismantle the corrupt business empire of his eldest daughter (and one-time heir apparent) Gulnara, whose financial transgressions and flamboyant lifestyle had become a liability to her father's 25-year rule. Kazakhstan's prime minister was demoted in April 2014, then charged with graft and put under house arrest in November, in what many experts interpreted as a move by President Nursultan Nazarbaev to maintain balance among regional power clans.

Turkmenistan's President Gurbanguly Berdymuhammedov was preoccupied with raising the efficiency of his security apparatus. He reprimanded its chief twice for the sub-par performance of the military and law enforcement agencies. The Turkmen leader's growing personality cult reached new heights in January 2014 when books written by or about him were made compulsory reading for all secondary school pupils. Meanwhile, Emomali Rahmon, the President of Tajikistan, promoted his daughter to the post of first deputy foreign minister, adding to his family's already significant presence at the summit of administrative and economic power.

Kyrgyzstan was the only Central Asian republic to have experienced a degree of domestic turbulence. The government of President Almazbek Atambaev faced a series of mass protests that periodically cut off roads connecting the national capital with the regions. The protests were organised by regional strongmen, particularly from the south, who mobilised ordinary citizens to seek greater autonomy and access to economic resources. Atambaev, while not as powerful and experienced as his authoritarian colleagues in Central Asia, used their



tried-and-true techniques of resource nationalism, rigged elections, and judicial persecution of dangerous rivals to deal with the problem with some efficiency.

International politics presented greater challenges to Central Asian leaders. The Ukrainian crisis and the situation in Afghanistan following NATO's withdrawal had a considerable impact on their policy choices.

The regime change in Kiev which took place in February 2014, the absorption of Crimea into Russia and the insurgency in the east of Ukraine that followed caused concern in Central Asia. The Kremlin's demonstrated will and ability to project power into a former Soviet republic in the name of protecting ethnic Russians and foiling containment by the West made local ruling elites feel uneasy.

The extent of this anxiety was grossly exaggerated by Western politicians and commentators who glibly prophesied Russia's definitive loss of allies in Central Asia due to Putin's alleged imperialism. In reality, the region's authoritarian leaders were much more alarmed by the prospect of the Ukrainian model of civil dissent being exported to Central Asia. They interpreted the ousting of Ukraine's President Yanukovich as a geopolitical ploy by the US and its allies, and grew wary about Washington's plans 'to create new trouble zones' in their region next. The Central Asian regimes continued to view Russia as a reliable partner with a stake in their stability and prosperity. The clearest indication of this was the advancement of Moscow's flagship integration initiative — the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU). Defying gloomy predictions, it was launched by the presidents of Belarus, Russia and Kazakhstan in May, with Kyrgyzstan joining in several months later. Even Uzbekistan, which had a strained relationship with Moscow since 2012, showed interest in forming a free trade zone with the EEU.

Russia's rising stock in Central Asia was helped by a strategic indeterminacy associated with Afghanistan. The region's states had growing doubts about stability in their southern neighbour as the US and NATO forces continued their withdrawal. Security threats emanating from unstable Afghanistan were complex and manifold, but armed clashes on the border and Islamic militancy embodied by both traditional jihadi groups such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and freshly returned Islamic State fighters of Central Asian origin were particularly salient in the official security discourse in 2014. Once again, for local leaders it appeared that Moscow rather than Washington would protect them from such threats, and even President Karimov asked for the former's greater involvement on the ground.



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Russia readily obliged, mostly in the form of increased military assistance to frontline states, upgrading its forward bases in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and conducting military drills under the aegis of the Collective Security Treaty Organisation.

This year will be crucial in determining whether Central Asia's geopolitical tilt towards Russia is only a temporary phenomenon. A lot will depend on the performance of the EEU: the struggling Russian economy may destroy the bloc before it can provide tangible benefits to all members. At present, large-scale Russian and Chinese trans-Eurasian infrastructure projects seem to be reasonably well-aligned, primarily because both parties are interested in laying to rest the competing US 'New Silk Road' initiative. The next twelve months may indicate whether a functional division of labour is possible in an emerging Sino-Russian condominium in Central Asia, with Beijing underwriting the region's developmental needs (particularly in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) and Moscow ensuring its security.

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Fuente: eastasiaforum