EURASIAN INTEGRATION IN THE FOCUS OF FOREIGN POLICY OF KAZAKHSTAN

Abstract. Last year our country celebrated the 30th anniversary of its independence. For many years, Kazakhstan has managed to achieve success not only in building its own statehood, but also to develop an effective model of foreign policy based on pragmatism and national interests. The Kazakh direction of public diplomacy is developing very dynamically. At the beginning of the second decade of the XXI century, the idea of Eurasian integration plays a significant role in the Eurasian economic region. It has proven its historical significance as a path to the prosperity and well-being of countries and peoples.

Keywords: Eurasian region, foreign policy of Kazakhstan, public diplomacy, cooperation.

The process of integration of peoples and countries has become an integral part of the modern world. Various integration takes place almost everywhere, in many regions, therefore, regional integrations are being formed. And the Eurasian region is no exception. Since ancient times, this region has been a platform for fruitful cultural, social, economic and political cooperation, with deep traditions, as well as many years of historical experience. At the moment, the Republic of Kazakhstan plays an important role in the integration processes of the region, moreover, in many aspects it is the initiator [2].

Kazakhstan is steadily developing on the path of becoming a modern industrial state, having a predictable and balanced foreign policy, a competitive economy,
actively uses numerous diverse integration associations to further promote, achieve and protect the national interests of the country. Since gaining independence, the Republic of Kazakhstan has periodically acted as the main initiator and active participant of projects on integration processes of the post-Soviet states. Kazakhstan's active position in the field of integration processes of the Eurasian region is expressed in such initiatives as the idea of creating a Customs Union, then the Eurasian Union, as well as a Single Economic Space. In addition, Kazakhstan is an active participant in all regional organizations, such as, for example, the CSTO, ECO, SCO and others.

During the formation of the CIS as an organization, the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, N.A. Nazarbayev, during a speech at Lomonosov Moscow State University in 1994, put forward an initiative on the creation of the Eurasian Union. The essence of this idea was “voluntary, equal integration, joint political and economic development of the post-Soviet states, the general promotion of the CIS countries to strong positions in the global world” [1].

The Republic of Kazakhstan is an initiator and active participant of many integration processes. The idea of Eurasian integration was outlined for the first time by President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev in 1994. This initiative, which was considered audacious at that moment, had had an ambiguous perception at first. However, over the course of time it has been developed and received support.

As a result, the Customs Union and later the Common Economic Space were established, while on January 1, 2015, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia founded the Eurasian Economic Union. At that year the Republic of Armenia and Kyrgyz Republic became the full-fledged members of the EAEU [5].

Along with the European Union that started to develop in the middle of the 20th century, the EAEU became the second example of the sound economic union in the world [5].

At the moment, the Eurasian idea of the President of Kazakhstan N. Nazarbayev has been embodied in three dimensions of integration at the regional level – first of all, the economic dimension, then the military-political and
humanitarian. It is safe to say that no leader of any state in the world shows such persistence in developing the idea of integration, and Eurasian integration in particular. First of all, it is necessary to mention Kazakhstan's further striving for the development of integration processes. For us, Eurasian integration is one of the important parts of Kazakhstan's overall integration into the world economy and global economic ties.

Within the framework of this process, according to the Concept of Kazakhstan's Foreign Policy, “fundamental principles such as the inviolability of political sovereignty, the economic validity of decisions taken, step-by-step, pragmatism and mutual benefit, equal representation of the parties in all integration bodies and consensus at all levels of integration interaction will be observed” [2].

The First President of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev noted that “Kazakhstan is a unique state in Asia, in which European and Asian roots are intertwined. Representatives of different peoples make up unity in diversity. The combination of different cultures and traditions allows us to absorb the best achievements of
European and Asian cultures” [2].

At this stage, the priority in Eurasian integration belongs to the economic aspect rather than the political one. The creation of the Eurasian Economic Union has become the crown of many years of efforts and aspirations for integration, now it is an association of Kazakhstan, Russia and Belarus, which will soon be joined by Armenia and Kyrgyzstan. That is, this union is purely economic in nature, which is quite logical, since at one time European integration had an exclusively economic purpose [3].

The solution of common problems in the region depends on the interaction of politicians and their policies: either the neighbors will establish relations of cooperation and mutual understanding, or they will face a state of confrontation in the face of increasing pressure from the outside. In this sense, the idea of the Eurasian Union is objectively justified, theoretically possible, and in the conditions of mutual understanding and the manifestation of political will, it is implemented in practice.

A coordinated investment policy will contribute to the development of integration processes in the region. It is necessary to create financial and industrial groups, which can include enterprises and banks of all Central Asian countries. It is difficult to create a common economic space without a high-quality system of collective security. Economic cooperation cannot develop properly without proper provision of military and political security. Therefore, ensuring the security of one's state is a top priority both for Kazakhstan and for other countries in the region.

Thus, the ideas of Eurasianism of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N. Nazarbayev and their development in modern history are progressive and dynamic. Further prospects for the implementation of this initiative are large-scale and represent one of the priority directions of the country's development, moreover, a considerable part has already been translated into reality. Eurasian integration clearly demonstrates that the formation of the same type of national models does not abolish the political independence of the states of the region. At the same time, numerous prerequisites are being created for a modernized type of their relationship, which is based on trust, partnership and the application of the same principles and
In the first half of the 2010s, Eurasian integration made a big leap. A common customs tariff has been introduced, internal customs borders have been removed, and Eurasian integration institutions have been created. In 2015, a full-fledged common labor market was created – in terms of benefits for specific people, perhaps the greatest achievement of Eurasian integration. There have also been successes in recent years – progress has been made on unified technical regulation, the Customs Code has been adopted, a common pension space has been formed, and the first free trade agreements have been signed. But in general, the pace of Eurasian integration has significantly decreased [4]. Complex coordination processes on the formation of sectoral common markets are conducted at the level of relevant departments and at the sites of the EAEU bodies. There are problems with the real content in the packages of documents on common markets. The formation phase has passed, and further steps in the development of integration processes will require more time, effort, and political will.

Now the Eurasian integration is faced with the issues of intensifying mutual trade, promoting EAEU goods on foreign markets, promptly eliminating internal restrictions and obstacles in trade, carrying out digital changes, and completing common markets.

Prospects for the development and practical application of public diplomacy in Eurasian region depend on two fundamentally important circumstances: firstly, on expanding the substantive dialogue, including more specific issues of Eurasian integration convergence, and, secondly, on the creation of a system of a multilateral dialogue platforms with the participation of state and non-state actors not only of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) countries, but also of their regional environment. Kazakhstan serves as a “bridge” of communication between Asia and Europe, between the great cultures of the West and the East.

**Conclusion**

Based on its geographical location and taking into account strategic interests, the Republic of Kazakhstan intends to further strengthen economic and political cooperation in the previously chosen foreign policy areas, while creating a solid
foundation for stability, open dialogue and interaction in the Eurasian region.

Thus, it can be concluded that the multi-vector nature of foreign policy is an objective necessity, which during the existence of independent Kazakhstan has made a lot of positive things on the way to worthy entry into the world community. One of its results can be considered that Kazakhstan is a successful regional state, the initiator and locomotive of integration processes in the region, as well as an active participant in regional and global structures.

References: