

President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev's State of the Nation Address to the People of Kazakhstan "Kazakhstan in the Era of Artificial Intelligence: Current Challenges and Solutions through Digital Transformation"

Dear Members of Parliament,

Last week, a new session of Parliament was opened. I wish you success in your work. It is safe to say that the previous session was productive. Many laws necessary for the country were adopted, and issues that concern citizens were thoroughly discussed.

During the summer recess, deputies visited the regions and met with local residents. Now it is time to analyse the issues raised by the people, work them through with the Government, and take them into account during the current session. Overall, Members of Parliament play an important role in implementing fundamental reforms in our country. I express my deep gratitude to you.

Dear compatriots!

Dear Members of Parliament and Members of the Government!

The world has entered a new historical era, which, evidently, will not be easy for humanity. Tensions and contradictions between global powers and international alliances are intensifying. As a result of escalating tensions and growing aggression in international relations, the number of wars and conflicts is increasing.

Trends of extreme nationalism are gaining strength in the domestic and foreign policies of some countries. Disparities and inequalities in global economic development are widening: some states are falling further behind, while others are achieving remarkable progress in the field of artificial intelligence.

The erosion of international law is becoming increasingly apparent, and the role and status of the United Nations in addressing key global issues is being undermined. Environmental and man-made disasters are occurring more frequently, causing significant damage to national economies.

The Western concept of multiculturalism, interethnic, and interfaith harmony is experiencing a crisis. National cultures and traditions are being shaken under the influence of destructive globalist forces. The migration crisis is worsening: refugee flows are increasing, along with human trafficking, arms trafficking, and drug smuggling.

Entirely new types of threats to human security have emerged, including those related to the use of extremely dangerous weapons powered by artificial intelligence.

Other factors also point to a fundamental shift in the geopolitical paradigm. In other words, a new world order is emerging.

Kazakhstan is an integral part of the global community – a country located in the very heart of the Eurasian continent. Despite global instability, we have taken a bold step into the era of total digitalisation and artificial intelligence.

My main mission is to ensure the stable socio-economic development and security of Kazakhstan during this turbulent and dangerous time. Our younger generation must live in happiness and prosperity. To achieve this, we must work hard as a united nation. This is our common cause – our civic and patriotic duty.

No matter how difficult it may be, we must succeed. There is no alternative, as the future of our country and the fate of our people depend on it. Therefore, we must approach all reforms thoughtfully and carefully, paying particular attention to their effective implementation.

As you know, thanks to the large-scale reforms carried out in recent years, our political system has become more progressive and open. Citizens' mindset and consciousness are changing, showing increased trust in state institutions. The principles of law, justice, and order are being established in society. However, much work remains in modernising our society.

Comprehensive economic reforms have been launched. Significant investments are being made in infrastructure development and the creation of new industries. It is clear that all these measures are aimed at improving the well-being of the people and strengthening the nation's potential.

The rapid development of artificial intelligence is already influencing the worldview and behaviour of people – especially the youth. There is no alternative to this, as this process is fundamentally changing the world order and the lifestyle of all humanity. We must be prepared. We must act decisively – any delay could lead to the most severe consequences. That is why I have set a strategically important goal: to turn Kazakhstan into a fully digital nation within three years.

We must modernise the economy through large-scale digitalisation and the active integration of artificial intelligence technologies. As a first step, we need to accelerate the adoption of the Digital Code. This document should define the key directions for digitalisation, including artificial intelligence, the platform economy, big data usage, and other areas.

To become part of the new technological order, we must restructure the entire system of public administration – dramatically increasing its transparency, efficiency, and human-centeredness. That is why I believe we must establish a Ministry of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Development on the basis of the existing relevant ministry. It should be headed by a specialist with the rank of Deputy Prime Minister.

The Government is tasked with ensuring the full-scale integration of artificial intelligence across all sectors of the economy. To enhance Kazakhstan's competitiveness, we must rethink our approaches to governance. In this regard, I would like to highlight the following key priorities.

FIRST. Despite intensifying global competition for capital, our country must attract large-scale investment.

A new investment cycle must be launched. The current policy in this area cannot be considered effective. A significant portion of investments goes into the raw material sectors.

Overall, this is not a bad thing – we need such investments. But now, our task is different: we must direct investments into manufacturing industries. Therefore, the Government must revise its investment policy. If necessary, preferential terms may be offered to investors working in high-tech sectors.

At the same time, it is equally important to support both public investment and large-scale private initiatives. We will need to work broadly – with large, medium, and small investors. It is crucial to clearly define where, why, and how much funding we require. An “investment mandate” must be developed in line with the needs of the production sector.

Currently, we have a cumbersome and fragmented system for working with investors. It inevitably leads to bureaucracy and duplication of functions. In today's complex environment, attracting investment is a top priority that demands new approaches.

I want to emphasize that all organisational work related to attracting investment shall be entirely the responsibility of the Prime Minister. There is no need to create a new ministry. However, it is noteworthy that none of the current government structures include the word “investment” in their titles. This issue falls under the jurisdiction of three or four different bodies and remains unresolved. Therefore, I am giving the Prime Minister ten days to develop concrete proposals.

In addition, I instruct the Government to develop an action plan as soon as possible for a comprehensive overhaul of the investment attraction system.

In my view, the time has come to rename the Asset Recovery Committee of the Prosecutor General's Office as the Committee for the Protection of Investors' Rights. It should be noted that the Prosecutor General's Office has achieved significant results in its work with the owners of illicit assets, returning approximately 850 billion tenge to the state. These funds have been directed towards the construction of ten schools and four sports facilities, as well as the building and modernisation of 235 healthcare facilities and 177 water infrastructure projects. Additional inflows into the national budget are also expected.

It is important to carefully examine the principles of granting tax incentives to investors and apply them prudently, giving preference to projects that are significant for the country's economy and financially viable. The mechanism of investment agreements has generally proven effective.

In order to create additional sources of investment, it is necessary to reconsider the role of the National Fund as a tool for sustainable development. The Fund's resources should be strategically deployed to finance promising small-scale projects with strong market potential in our country. Above all, the allocation of funds must be approached responsibly. If necessary, this work may involve international managers and investors with solid expertise.

The Government, together with the National Bank, should develop an investment programme in high-tech sectors of the economy with a volume of up to one billion US dollars. To successfully launch a new investment cycle, it is necessary to more actively engage second-tier banks in financing the real sector. This issue has been widely discussed for a long time. The time has come to make concrete decisions.

Today in Kazakhstan, banking assets and capital are on average several times more profitable than in developed countries. This is due to the fact that domestic banks find it more advantageous to invest in low-risk instruments rather than in lending to the economy. This matter has been repeatedly raised by members of Parliament and experts. The National Bank and the Government must urgently find effective tools to channel the free liquidity of banks into economic circulation.

An important step in this direction would be the adoption of a law on banks that reflects technological changes and the needs of the economy. The law should provide for measures to strengthen competition and attract new market participants, as well as promoting financial technologies and liberalising the circulation of digital assets. The Government, together with the Agency for the Regulation and Development of the Financial Market, should thoroughly prepare this draft law. I urge members of Parliament to adopt it before the end of the year.

The formation of a full-fledged digital asset ecosystem must be accelerated. The introduction of the digital tenge is already supporting this process, and the National Fund is currently using it to finance projects. Now it is time to scale up the use of the digital tenge within national and local budgets, as well as in the budgets of state holdings.

Given today's realities, we must place greater focus on crypto assets. On the basis of the National Bank's Investment Corporation, a State Digital Assets Fund should be established to accumulate a strategic crypto reserve consisting of the most promising assets of the new digital financial system.

While total digitalisation, including in the banking sector, offers obvious advantages and opportunities, it also presents certain challenges. In recent years, one of the most

serious threats to the financial security of the state and its citizens has been online fraud. To counter cybercrime, an anti-fraud centre has been established and biometric identification introduced, while the responsibility of banks, microfinance organisations, and telecom operators for preventing fraudulent operations has been strengthened. Yet the problem requires constant attention and the continuous improvement of the work of the competent authorities.

It is necessary to build an intelligent system for combating cybercrime. If necessary, adjustments should be made to legislation and to the practices of law enforcement agencies.

In many rapidly developing countries, so-called advanced development cities have become magnets for investment and technology. Our new centre of business activity and innovation is set to be Alatau City. For the implementation of this truly nationwide project, land has been allocated, initial planning has been completed, and key infrastructure networks have been connected.

During my recent visit to China, multi-billion-dollar agreements were signed with world-class companies. One of these companies, which took part in the construction of the global technological hub of Shenzhen, will be directly involved in the implementation of the Alatau City project.

The next step must be the creation of a solid institutional foundation for Alatau City. A draft presidential decree granting the city special status and direct subordination to the Government should be prepared within ten days. Within no more than six months, a separate law should then be adopted to define the city's governance regime, financial model, and other critical aspects.

I would like to emphasise that a special legal status is not a privilege, but a necessary measure, an instrument without which all plans risk remaining only on paper. Alatau City must become the first fully digital city in the region, from the application of Smart City technologies to the ability to pay for goods and services in cryptocurrencies. The city will embody Kazakhstan's vision for the future, combining technological progress with a living environment that offers maximum comfort.

Next. In attracting investment to the regions, a special role is assigned to special economic zones, but the performance of most of them remains unsatisfactory. This has been noted more than once. To improve the effectiveness of special economic zones, and on the basis of thorough expertise, the Government must prepare to take decisive measures. The management of special economic zones can be carried out by private companies, including foreign ones.

Social-entrepreneurial corporations must also become key drivers of regional economic growth. However, in practice many of them are limited to managing

municipal property and implementing minor projects that have little impact on regional economies. The Government must transform such corporations into full-fledged development institutions.

Successful investment attraction is the result of coordinated work not only by central government agencies but also by local executive bodies. Under the Agency for Strategic Planning and Reforms, an index of regional investment attractiveness should be introduced to establish direct accountability of all akims (mayors). Independent experts may also be engaged in this work.

The most critical factor in creating a favourable investment climate is macroeconomic stability. But today the main issue is high inflation, which “eats away” economic growth and household incomes. There is no ready-made recipe to solve this problem, as it is faced by most countries and is essentially universal. However, in our circumstances it has taken on a particularly acute form.

We must break out of this macroeconomic vicious circle. Long-standing difficulties must be addressed by drawing on advanced international experience, while being prepared to take responsibility for unpopular measures.

The Government and the National Bank must act as a single team, given the nationwide nature of the challenge. Now is not the time for a tug-of-war.

SECOND. It is time to give fresh impetus to the development of the manufacturing industry.

Over the past five years, we have achieved tangible results. The gross value added in manufacturing has doubled, reaching nearly 17 trillion tenge. The share of the manufacturing sector in GDP has grown to 12.4%. Last year alone, 163 new production facilities were established, creating 12,500 permanent jobs.

For example, large machine-building and metallurgical enterprises have been launched in the Almaty, Kostanay, Karaganda, and Atyrau regions. Earlier this year, Kazakhstan’s largest multi-brand automobile plant opened in Almaty.

Yet this is not enough. We must accelerate the pace of economic diversification. Priority should be given to producing high-value-added goods that are competitive both domestically and internationally. Work in this area has so far been fragmented. Support measures are typically implemented through various institutions with inconsistent approaches and requirements, which creates confusion for entrepreneurs. We need to streamline these approaches and ensure coordinated efforts.

The mining and metallurgical complex has traditionally been a solid pillar of Kazakhstan’s industrial framework, accounting for 8% of the national economy. However, the sector still holds significant growth potential, particularly in the production of high value-added products. In light of global trends, rare earth

elements and other critical materials are becoming increasingly important. Kazakhstan possesses all the necessary resources to firmly integrate into global production and trade chains.

Within the next three years, we must launch at least three enterprises specialising in the production of high-tech goods in this area. The Government also needs to implement a number of flagship projects in the deep processing of hydrocarbon feedstock.

It is essential to ensure the timely commissioning of a major gas chemical complex in Atyrau and a liquefied gas processing plant in Pavlodar. A fundamental change is needed in how we utilise associated and liquefied petroleum gas, which must become a fully-fledged economic resource.

Investors implementing projects currently face a shortage of gas. To address this issue, we must develop a mechanism for guaranteed and long-term gas supply. Sufficient electricity generation is also required to launch all planned projects on time and to carry out the digital transformation of the economy.

A large-scale modernisation of power sources has already begun, and major projects are being implemented with the participation of foreign investors. For instance, over the next five years, 6.3 GW of renewable energy is expected to be commissioned, significantly increasing its share in the energy mix.

For Kazakhstan, the energy transition is not an end in itself but a tool for sustainable development, based on the real capabilities of the energy system and the state's long-term interests. In this regard, the development of nuclear energy is a strategic priority. A month ago, work began in the Almaty region on Kazakhstan's first nuclear power plant in partnership with Rosatom. However, for stable economic growth, this alone will not suffice. We should now begin planning the construction of a second and even a third nuclear power plant.

At a recent meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping, an agreement was reached on a strategic partnership between our countries in the nuclear industry. Kazakhstan is open to cooperation with global companies on a mutually beneficial basis, in line with our goal of ensuring energy sovereignty.

Given Kazakhstan's vast reserves of high-quality coal, we should also pay special attention to developing coal-based energy using advanced technologies that guarantee its cleanliness. We must skilfully use our natural advantages to benefit national development.

Another key task is advancing geological exploration. The comprehensive airborne geophysical surveys carried out in the country are now completely outdated.

We must create modern maps of our mineral resources using digital tools. This will enable a qualitatively new assessment of our deposits' potential. This work may also

involve international expertise. Successful geological exploration is impossible without a strong scientific foundation.

By mid-next year, a certified laboratory meeting advanced international standards should be established within the National Geological Service. The process of digitising and systematising all geological data must be accelerated, primarily through the use of artificial intelligence. Legislative and practical reforms in geological exploration and subsoil use must be completed by the end of this year.

THIRD. The agricultural sector must be elevated to a new level.

In recent years, the state has carried out systemic reforms and allocated substantial resources to ensure a breakthrough in the sector. This year alone, a record one trillion tenge has been allocated to support farmers, with the necessary loans issued on time. Such an unprecedented level of funding has never been seen before in our country. However, these measures are still insufficient to fully unleash the immense potential of the national agro-industrial complex. The issue is not the volume of resources, but their effective use. For the transition to a progressive agro-economy, the Government must have a clear plan.

Currently, several large projects in the deep processing of agricultural products are being implemented with the participation of Kazakh and foreign investors. The total investment exceeds two billion dollars, and more than 3,000 jobs will be created. The products are export-oriented to various countries. Such projects must be scaled up. Taking into account local specifics in each region, it is important to build end-to-end supply chains from producer to retail shelf.

In many regions, vertically integrated agricultural enterprises are already well known to the public. These enterprises are characterised by extensive use of digital technologies that enhance production efficiency. The success of leading agricultural producers is also due to the establishment of a full production cycle – from the cultivation of agricultural products to their deep processing. Therefore, systematic conditions must be created to spread the experience of such agro-holdings.

This is the responsibility of the relevant ministry and public associations. Such measures will form the foundation for the wider application of innovations and scientific developments in agriculture.

The main focus now should be on the development of agro-hubs and logistics centres, as well as building strategic partnerships with foreign investors. However, to establish productive investment cooperation, domestic entrepreneurs should be aware of and understand current business trends, and apply the latest technologies in their work, including artificial intelligence.

The Ministry should also develop a plan to support agribusiness in the livestock sector and launch effective financing mechanisms. The goal is not only to fully supply the domestic market with meat, but also to strengthen export potential.

The strategic task of the Government is to reduce the dependence of the national food market on imports to a minimum. Of course, 100% self-sufficiency is impossible and, probably, not necessary. However, the current situation in our market is shameful.

In addition, we should actively promote traditional national products in foreign markets. Therefore, a specific agricultural export plan is needed, taking into account logistics, veterinary and phytosanitary standards, as well as a competent marketing strategy. This is not the task of the Ministry of Agriculture alone, but of several government agencies. That is why it requires coordination at the level of the Government's leadership.

The Government is obligated to firmly insist on fair conditions in the development of Eurasian trade, and Members of Parliament must protect the rights of domestic producers through legislative initiatives.

It has become clear that our entrepreneurs do not receive sufficient state support compared to enterprises in other EAEU countries. Therefore, they are in an unfavourable position and are forced to cede even their own market to competitors, particularly milk producers.

Land is certainly a strategic resource that should serve the country's development and the well-being of all citizens. I initiated large-scale work to reclaim unused and illegally acquired agricultural land for subsequent redistribution. Land must not remain without an owner; it should be given only to those who recognise its value. Since 2022, more than 13.5 million hectares of agricultural land have been returned. However, akims have redistributed only six million hectares of this land to new users. It is clear that previously unused land must become centres of production, investment, and employment.

Therefore, the task of akims is to bring all returned land into permanent circulation by mid-2026. This measure will also help solve the problem of pasture shortages.

It is necessary to fundamentally change the mechanism for granting agricultural land to eliminate malpractice and bureaucratic obstacles in land relations. Land allocation decisions should be made digitally, through electronic tenders. The Government must propose the necessary legislative changes by the end of the year.

It is crucial to make wider use of digital technologies in this area. Space monitoring and geoanalytics are already helping to identify unused land. We need to move further.

It is necessary to increase the efficiency of satellite monitoring of agricultural land using artificial intelligence. This will form the basis for in-depth analysis of land

quality, crop yields, condition, and distribution. By the way, this also applies to forestry: 9,000 hectares of ownerless forest were recently discovered in the North Kazakhstan region.

In addition, we need a single digital map of land resources integrating cadastral data, information on subsoil use, and infrastructure.

Long-term, dynamic growth of the agro-industrial complex is no longer possible without the accelerated development of applied agricultural science. However, despite significant budgetary investments, the return from agricultural science still remains low. The level of commercialisation of research results does not exceed 17%, and only 40% of specialised graduates go to work in the field. The gap between agricultural science and “life on the land” remains.

Earlier, I instructed that the National Agricultural Research and Education Centre be transformed into an agro-technological hub. We need a clear plan for the development of agricultural science, aimed at the use of digital technologies and a significant increase in industry productivity. The focus should be on veterinary science and phytopathology, as their weak development seriously limits the competitiveness of our agro-industrial complex.

FOURTH. It is necessary to further develop the transport and logistics sector.

Our country is known as the most important link between Europe and Asia. The volume of cargo transported across our territory exceeded one billion tonnes last year.

However, there are significant opportunities to expand the country’s transit potential. The North–South corridor opens direct access to the markets of the Persian Gulf and South Asia. The East–West corridor and China’s global Belt and Road Initiative are strengthening Kazakhstan’s role as the main land bridge of Eurasia.

The development of the Trans-Caspian Transport Route is also of key importance for Kazakhstan. All these routes should function as a single system, bringing tangible income and new infrastructure investment to our country, as well as creating high-quality jobs. Digital solutions should be widely implemented to achieve efficiency. It is necessary to deal with issues of regional transport connectivity in a meaningful way. This matter is being actively discussed, including at international forums. This direction is of particular importance for Kazakhstan as a major transit territory.

Recently, we were able to send the first batch of grain to Vietnam via the Chinese Lianyungang port. There are plans to construct a railway along the Turghundi–Herat route in Afghanistan with the prospect of entering the Pakistani market. However, the possibilities of opening new transport routes and markets are not limited to this. Much work lies ahead.

At the same time, global competition for transit is intensifying, with cheaper alternative routes and solutions being offered. It is necessary to act proactively to increase the volume of transit transportation.

I would like to reiterate that we must fully utilise the capabilities of digital technologies and artificial intelligence to modernise infrastructure and ensure competitiveness in the transport and transit sector.

The construction of the second Dostyk–Mointy railway line, 836 kilometres long, will be completed this year. This project, implemented with our own resources in the shortest possible time, is of particular importance. It will significantly increase the capacity of the East–West route.

We cannot rest on our laurels. The Government should ensure the timely implementation of projects such as Bakhty–Ayagoz and Kyzylzhar–Mointy. Their launch will complete the framework of the railway infrastructure.

It is also essential to develop highways within key corridors. Today, 13,000 kilometres of highways are being built and repaired throughout the country. At the same time, priority must be given to transit corridors. It is necessary to accelerate the construction of the Saksaul–Beineu road, which will reduce transit time from China to Europe via Kazakhstan’s territory by almost one third.

A strong impetus must be given to container transportation. At about 7%, its share in the country is still extremely low. By comparison, container transportation accounts for more than 16% of dry cargo worldwide.

The Government needs to adopt a special programme aimed specifically at stimulating container transport. It should also provide for effective measures to support the development of multimodal routes.

In enhancing competitiveness and expanding domestic transportation, a rational and transparent tariff policy plays a key role. The current system of tariff formation is fragmented and insufficiently flexible. By the end of this year, the Government should develop a competitive tariff policy that takes into account all modes of transport.

Freight carriers have submitted numerous complaints about the excessive length of all procedures. In practice, they must obtain every service through different digital systems and, in some cases, still resort to the outdated practice of running around with paper documents. Even more frustrating is the lack of reliable internet access at certain border and customs posts. There is an urgent need to resolve this situation. I also instruct that the introduction of a multifunctional digital freight management platform using artificial intelligence be accelerated. By the end of October, the unified digital system of customs and logistics services – Smart Cargo – must be launched. This system will provide private companies with equal automated access to infrastructure.

Work is underway to modernise border checkpoints. This year, eight checkpoints will become fully operational. Over the next three years, another 34 will be reconstructed. This is a large-scale and significant undertaking, as many checkpoints are wholly inadequate, fail to meet modern standards, and negatively affect the image of our country.

I instruct the Government and the akimats (regional authorities) to improve the quality of services provided to road carriers at the border. Ensuring the unhindered movement of goods throughout the country is of great importance. All necessary conditions must be created to facilitate the transit of freight under a “green corridor” principle.

Many citizens have voiced dissatisfaction with the condition of railway carriages. An important step in resolving this long-standing issue has been the launch of a carriage-building plant in Astana. With the participation of a foreign investor, the production of modern passenger carriages, equipped to advanced international standards, will be established.

In recent years, large-scale work has been carried out to upgrade aviation infrastructure. Last year, new terminals were opened in Almaty, Shymkent, and Kyzylorda. Construction of new airports in Zaysan, Katon-Karagai, and Kenderli will soon be completed. Restoration of the airport in Arkalyk has also begun.

The launch of these projects will boost economic activity in the regions, create new jobs, and give impetus to the development of a wide range of related industries. This work will continue. Particular attention from the Government must be directed to the socio-economic development of the Torgay region.

Another important issue is the development of air cargo transportation. Despite positive dynamics, there remains substantial potential for further growth. I have previously instructed that the volume of processed air cargo be doubled.

This can be achieved primarily through the establishment of a National Cargo Carrier with the involvement of major foreign partners. In the context of growing e-commerce and the supply of high-tech products, air cargo is a highly profitable and increasingly in-demand segment. Therefore, we must actively develop air hubs, ensuring their integration into global logistics chains. At the same time, order must be brought to the regulation of the express cargo segment. This is essential to protect the interests of consumers.

Worldwide, unmanned modes of transportation are developing, including specialised vehicles and drones for the delivery of goods and parcels. The Government should create all conditions for the accelerated introduction of such technologies, including the adoption of the necessary regulations.

As I have repeatedly stated, our strategic objective is to become the leading aviation hub in the Eurasian space. This work must be carried out with the participation of

the best experts and entrepreneurs in the industry. However, the primary responsibility lies with the Government. Progress in implementing these instructions will be reviewed at the beginning of next year, following the Government's annual report, at a special meeting.

The next important sector, where numerous problems have accumulated, is tourism. In particular, the shortage of professional personnel must be acknowledged. The competitiveness of this sector remains low.

In July, I instructed that all tourist facilities be brought into proper condition as soon as possible. I am keeping this work under constant supervision. Alongside popular holiday destinations, it is important to strengthen the potential of other promising areas.

Tasks must be clearly defined. From now on, the comprehensive development of tourism infrastructure will be a permanent priority and the responsibility of local executive bodies. At the central level, the focus must be on attracting international tourists and ensuring legislative support for tourism policy.

In this regard, I would like to highlight mountain and ski tourism in Almaty and the Almaty region. The most urgent task in this area is the creation of modern infrastructure. If we fully address this, our resorts will become known worldwide and turn into a national brand of Kazakhstan.

FIFTH. A key factor of sustainable development is the modernisation of housing, utilities, and water infrastructure.

Due to the inaction of the Government and local executive authorities over decades, the country's housing and utilities sector has gradually fallen into a critical state. Measures are now being taken to reverse the situation and to reduce infrastructure deterioration, including through the liberalisation of tariffs and the establishment of a new model of energy and utilities management. This model must enhance the reliability and quality of services in line with tariff increases.

Here, the concept of creating "Smart Cities" will undoubtedly prove useful, and it must be scaled up across all regions. The best international practices should be applied, and competent managers, including foreign ones, should be invited.

In today's realities, the modernisation of the housing and utilities sector is impossible without a partnership between the state and business. This is an axiom. It is necessary to reconsider, in a new light, the advisability of keeping certain utility facilities on the balance sheets of akimats.

Therefore, the state must focus on oversight and regulation of the sector, while the modernisation of infrastructure and the introduction of technologies are the responsibility of the private sector. Government bodies are obliged to ensure

transparency in infrastructure projects, primarily through the use of digital tools, which will strengthen citizens' trust in both the Government and the akimats.

The modernisation of public utilities must also be accompanied by improvements in energy efficiency across infrastructure and the housing stock. In the housing and utilities sector, new environmental and sanitary standards must be established to encourage responsible consumption.

As for the culture of conserving natural resources, especially water, we must acknowledge that serious problems remain. As the saying goes, we have hardly begun. This is a separate area requiring awareness-raising, even ideological work among citizens, particularly the younger generation.

We are already facing a shortage of natural water, and the culture of consumption leaves much to be desired. I will return to the water issue below. Particular attention must also be given to the housing construction sector, which has demonstrated strong growth in recent years: 19 million square metres of housing were commissioned in 2024.

At the same time, to improve construction quality, it is essential to use Building Information Modelling alongside artificial intelligence technologies. The Government should launch a national digital platform to ensure integrated accounting, planning, and monitoring at all stages of construction.

A solid legislative framework for the sustainable, transparent, and safe development of the construction industry must be established through the new Construction Code. This document should be adopted before the end of the year, and I call on Members of Parliament to support this effort.

One of the main factors of social stability, sustainable economic development, and national security is solving problems in the water sector.

We have formed an institutional foundation for this over the past two years. In particular, the Water Code was adopted and a sectoral ministry was established. The ministry faces large-scale tasks that must be addressed not on an ad hoc basis, but systematically, through comprehensive work. At the same time, it is important to train qualified personnel and to prepare specialists in the sphere of water diplomacy. Currently, the relevant authorities do not have accurate data on the available volume of water resources. Water losses in some canals reach 50–60%. Accounting technologies are hopelessly outdated, and water intake points are not equipped with modern devices.

Water is a strategic resource; without water there is no life. Therefore, this sector must become one of the key areas of national digital transformation.

It is necessary to create a unified digital platform for water resources, leveraging artificial intelligence to integrate data on surface and groundwater. The launch of the platform will make it possible to fully address the task of

hydrogeological monitoring. This work must be accompanied by the development of a National Water Balance – an essential tool for long-term water policy planning. Without all this, it will be impossible to establish proper control within the sector or to secure necessary investments.

The implementation of water-saving technologies is proceeding at an insufficient pace and without tangible results. Well-known foreign companies should be engaged in this work; in particular, Chinese technologies, which are among the most advanced in the world, may be purchased.

Despite previously identified risks, water-intensive crops are still being cultivated locally. Moreover, numerous cases of irrigation water being drawn without any permits or contracts have been recorded. Another issue for law enforcement agencies to address is the illegal sale and purchase of water on the “black market”.

Nevertheless, there is also positive experience associated with the Aral Sea. Kazakhstan has certainly learned serious lessons from the Aral Sea tragedy and has been systematically working on its restoration for more than 20 years. As a result, we have managed to preserve the Northern Aral. The surface area of the reservoir has increased by 36%, and the volume of water has nearly doubled, reducing salinity levels by half. However, efforts to raise the water level in the Aral must be actively continued.

Citizens are expressing concern over the declining level of the Caspian Sea. If appropriate measures are not taken, the situation may worsen, even leading to a large-scale environmental catastrophe. Therefore, at the recent extended meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation in China, I specifically addressed this problem and put forward an initiative to establish an SCO Water Issues Research Centre.

The condition of the Caspian Sea concerns not just the fate of one country but of the entire region; therefore, the issue can only be resolved through joint efforts. The Government should begin developing an interstate programme for preserving the Caspian Sea’s water resources in coordination with partners.

Overall, the fate of our children and grandchildren depends directly on how wisely we address water issues today. A caring, respectful, and responsible attitude towards the environment must become an integral part of our national ideology.

As you know, since last year the nationwide project “Taza Kazakhstan” (Clean Kazakhstan) has been implemented, bringing together millions of concerned citizens across the country. Thanks to joint efforts, about 860,000 hectares of land have been cleaned, and more than four million trees have been planted. If such active efforts continue, Kazakhstan will truly become a green country, serving as a worthy example and legacy for future generations.

It represents a striking manifestation of the creative values and aspirations of our fellow citizens. I express my gratitude to all citizens who joined this work, especially the youth. To instil a culture of cleanliness in society, the Government should introduce a unified standard of environmental education covering all levels – from schools to universities.

SIXTH. The driving force of the country's digital development must be entrepreneurs.

The share of small and medium-sized businesses in GDP has already approached 40%, and in employment structure – almost 50%. These are encouraging figures. But without further systematic development of this sector, we cannot achieve a breakthrough either in economic growth or in improving quality of life.

It is no secret that of more than two million active small business entities, fewer than six per cent are engaged in manufacturing. In the medium-sized business segment this figure is higher, but still not encouraging.

Last year, I signed a Decree “On Measures for Further Liberalisation of the Economy,” which laid the foundation for the transition to a more open, business-oriented regulatory model. However, the Decree has not been fully implemented.

Revitalising entrepreneurial initiative remains on the agenda; therefore, the legal framework must be modernised. The country currently has 21 Codes and more than 300 Laws. They are overloaded with amendments that often contradict each other and ultimately hinder business development. A deep revision of legislation must be carried out. Artificial intelligence technologies make it possible to accomplish this quickly and effectively.

A Regulatory Intelligence Centre will be established on the basis of the Agency for Strategic Planning and Reforms (ASPR). Its task will be to streamline legislation and prepare clear, effective solutions.

We must focus not on complicating legislation, but on adapting it to the needs of entrepreneurs, and on strengthening the personal responsibility of ministers and regional akims (mayors) for final results. I am receiving signals that government bodies still take the most severe administrative decisions against businesses instead of preventive measures. This is unacceptable.

An important tool for protecting businesses from excessive inspections should be the Registry of Mandatory Requirements. Its full implementation must be accelerated, with an additional review of norms to ensure compliance with the Entrepreneurial Code.

We have achieved significant progress in the digitalisation of public services, but for businesses, bureaucratic procedures still pose a serious barrier, and digitalisation is not fulfilling its intended purpose.

This situation must be urgently addressed, first and foremost in the area of tax administration. The State Revenue Committee must become a flagship of digitalisation among government agencies, effectively applying the potential of artificial intelligence in the interests of taxpayers. These systemic measures are aimed at building a fundamentally new, service-oriented model of relations between the state and business.

The new Tax Code should not merely change rules and procedures, but foster a new mindset among taxpayers – one based on honesty and transparency. The state will protect the interests of conscientious taxpayers by directing their contributions towards the country's development. Every tenge paid in taxes must return to society in the form of quality public services, infrastructure, and government support measures.

Development institutions must play an important role in boosting entrepreneurial activity. However, their work still suffers from a number of shortcomings. There is a pressing need to reset their activities. These structures must operate as fully fledged development institutions, with clear sectoral specialisation, in-depth analytics, and a mandate for investment.

Another critically important issue is the long-standing task of reducing the role of the state in the economy. State organisations and companies continue to multiply without justification, hindering the full development of private enterprises.

There are already nearly 25,000 organisations in the country with state participation. The functions and structures of most of them do not withstand criticism and often defy logic.

As a result of the entrenched practice of excessively using commercial entities to solve non-commercial tasks, various costs are rising, corporate bodies are multiplying, and focus on tangible results is being lost.

I instruct the Agency for Strategic Planning and Reforms, together with the Government, to prepare concrete proposals for reforming the public sector. If necessary, I am ready to issue the corresponding decree.

In addition, the Government must update the Law on State Property, clearly defining the boundaries of state participation in the economy and setting permissible legal requirements for management.

SEVENTH. The large-scale digital modernisation of the economy imposes new demands on the development of human capital.

Here, a special role is assigned to education. Within the framework of the National Project “Schools of the Future”, 150 schools are already operating out of the 217 planned. Construction of the remaining schools must be completed within three months.

Digital technologies are rapidly transforming the global labour market. Worldwide, demand is increasing for specialists with skills in artificial intelligence. Therefore, under my instruction, the “AI-Sana” programme has been launched, aimed at involving up to 100,000 students in high-tech projects.

However, the development of competencies in the field of artificial intelligence must begin much earlier – at school. In this regard, a number of initiatives should be implemented. First of all, a programme and teaching materials on the fundamentals of artificial intelligence must be prepared for school students. It is also essential to equip teachers with the skills to work with AI technologies.

On the basis of distance learning and artificial intelligence, it is necessary to develop a model of a small-scale school – “Qazaq Digital Mektebi”. This platform will provide schoolchildren in rural areas with access to high-quality educational materials.

The capital’s experience in building child development centres with the involvement of private capital should be scaled up. Many entrepreneurs are ready to support this initiative, and akims (mayors) should actively engage them in the implementation of such projects.

In the transition to a knowledge-based economy, it is important to integrate the management of science, education, and innovation. The state continues to make the main contribution to science, but the return on budget investments in the form of new patents, technologies, and production remains insufficient.

Innovation policy should be transferred to the Ministry of Science and Higher Education. Together with the Academy of Sciences, the Ministry must actively coordinate the work of research institutes and universities. More opportunities should be given to universities that prioritise artificial intelligence.

The Government must also adopt additional measures to support talented researchers. Effective mechanisms need to be developed and implemented to bring qualified domestic specialists back to the country. Migration policy should also be adjusted to meet workforce needs.

It is important to attract strong specialists from abroad, regardless of their nationality, who can contribute to the country’s development. Conditions must be created for them to remain in Kazakhstan, as we are in great need of qualified professionals – above all, true masters in technical fields.

In modern terms, what is required are “high-quality human resources”, because educated, responsible citizens form the foundation of the national economy and the future of Kazakhstan.

It is clear that the country needs highly skilled, well-trained specialists in working professions. That is why I have declared 2025 the Year of Working Professions.

Today, thousands of vacancies are open across the country in various sectors, many of them offering fairly high wages. These jobs are being filled by foreign citizens. Every year, thousands of engineers, builders, and agricultural specialists graduate in Kazakhstan, with the state allocating significant funds for their education. However, many of them do not work in their chosen field, instead opting for quick earnings that require no special knowledge. Of course, there is no such thing as “bad” work – every honest job is valuable – but such a trend brings little benefit either to the individual or to the country as a whole.

The state must create conditions that encourage people to enter production and work in the real sector of the economy. One of the key tasks is to raise the prestige of working professions and ensure decent pay for their labour.

The absence of centralised accounting greatly affects the quality of forecasting and the effectiveness of decision-making in labour market regulation, especially in the area of migration. The Government must implement a unified digital system for tracking migration flows, both within the country and from abroad.

Uncontrolled internal and external migration places a tremendous burden on the infrastructure of our largest cities, which serve as major centres of attraction for citizens.

A vivid example is the city of Astana. Over the past three years, the population of the capital has increased by more than 250,000 people, including nearly 100,000 last year alone. This year, growth may exceed even this already high figure. In fact, the daily load on the city’s infrastructure is essentially calculated based on servicing 1.9 million residents, while the official population stands at 1.5 million.

In other words, the capital is serving more than 400,000 people – equivalent to the population of a medium-sized city – without any planning in place. The stability of the city’s heating and water supply systems is under threat.

Since 2022, almost 7,000 apartments have been provided in Astana to those in need. Of these, 1,380 were allocated to large families, 835 to orphans, and 665 to people with special needs.

Faced with the inaction of several regional akims (mayors), who have squandered corporate tax surpluses on ineffective projects such as paving cobblestones, it is only natural that people are drawn to the capital, where such social services and benefits are provided.

This situation is accompanied by serious problems. The number of socially vulnerable citizens has increased significantly, spending on social support is growing faster than budget revenues, and the share of social commitments is approaching a critical level.

The city's school infrastructure is already operating at full capacity, requiring up to 15 new schools each year. There is still a shortage of hospital beds, and clinics are overloaded.

Instead of creating conditions for the city's advanced development, the akimat (regional authority) is forced to allocate significant resources to social expenditures, which already account for 60 per cent of the city budget. To remedy the situation, radical measures are required.

It is urgent to conduct a detailed analysis of the reasons behind migration outflows from the regions to the capital, and to make decisions aimed at creating alternative centres of social and economic attraction across the country. The principle of "funding follows the citizen" should be implemented, with a redistribution of financing for regional social obligations.

It is also necessary to standardise the size of social payments for vulnerable groups across all regions. The Government's short-sighted, conciliatory social policy has led to the emergence of more than one hundred types of benefits, pursued by a specific category of citizens known as "benefit seekers".

We are still providing payments and medical services to participants in conflicts on the territory of the former USSR and beyond. Although the Soviet Union ceased to exist 35 years ago, the number of "veterans" continues to increase, with many appearing even younger.

It must be understood that the Government is not abandoning its fundamental function. However, artificially inflated social benefits represent a massive diversion of funds from genuine development – namely, the construction of schools, hospitals, transport infrastructure, and more.

At one time, our "social experts" created a new category eligible for benefits – single-parent families. As a result, the number of divorces increased sharply, and at one point we even ranked among the world's "anti-leaders" in this regard. There are many such examples where we ourselves have encouraged laziness and dependency. Why work, when one can receive benefits, including targeted social assistance, for nearly every member of the family?

In other words, instead of rational solutions in the social sphere, the Government has, for at least 15 years, essentially encouraged social dependency and, it must be said directly, social fraud.

It is of critical importance to conduct a thorough study of demographic trends and to adopt forward-looking decisions designed to serve the nation for decades to come. However, this area lacks proper data collection and analysis, which makes it difficult to forecast labour market needs, plan infrastructure development, and resolve other important issues.

A Centre for the Analysis and Forecasting of Demographic Processes should be set up within the Agency for Strategic Planning and Reforms of the Republic of Kazakhstan (ASPR), incorporating big data tools and artificial intelligence technologies.

Demographic and labour market trends dictate the need to revise approaches to the pension system. Pension savings remain low, especially among the self-employed. The Government, together with the National Bank and ASPR, should take measures to strengthen the financial sustainability of the pension system, ensure long-term balance, and provide decent pensions.

The issue of improving citizens' financial literacy remains highly relevant. The "Society Without Debt" project, initiated by the AMANAT party, should continue. Just last year, 845,000 people received training and legal consultations under this programme. The ultimate goal is not only to ease the debt burden but also to ensure sustainable incomes for citizens.

The state is undertaking systemic efforts to develop healthcare. The entire spectrum of medical facilities – from rural feldsher-midwife stations to specialised hospitals – is being gradually modernised.

As part of the National Project "Modernisation of Rural Healthcare", 540 healthcare facilities have been built, with a further 115 expected to be commissioned by the end of this year. Several large healthcare facilities have also been launched in cities, including an oncology centre in Astana and a scientific centre for infectious diseases in Almaty.

At the same time, without bureaucratic delays, it is necessary to put into operation already built multi-profile hospitals in various regions, and to continue building new ones, including through private investment under public-private partnership mechanisms. This will ensure citizens no longer need to migrate to Astana for treatment.

Further effort must also be directed towards other areas, especially the development of the pharmaceutical industry. Expanding the quantity and range of domestically produced medicines is a strategic priority, particularly in light of the recent pandemic.

The financial sustainability of the healthcare system and the effectiveness of monitoring medical services remain in question. Under constrained financial resources, the Social Health Insurance Fund is effectively functioning as a budget regulator, restraining expenditure through stricter control over providers.

The Government must establish a new system for monitoring the quality and volume of medical services using artificial intelligence technologies. Comprehensive

measures are being taken to raise the status and social standing of doctors, and this work will continue.

Another problem directly affecting citizens' lives and health is road safety. In last year's Address, I emphasised this issue separately.

Of course, some work is being done, yet the number of road accidents is not decreasing. Since the beginning of the year, more than 22,000 traffic accidents have been recorded. Clearly, much depends on drivers themselves, as many traffic rules are being violated.

Every individual must be aware of their responsibility for their own life and for the safety of those around them. It is essential for society as a whole to cultivate a culture of responsible driving.

Attention should also be paid to electric scooters, a subject that is widely debated in society. Two years ago, legislative amendments were adopted introducing restrictions on movement along pedestrian paths. However, the situation in public spaces has not improved significantly, and citizens remain exposed to danger.

Legislative amendments regulating this area have now been prepared and must be adopted without delay. The life of every citizen, every child, is priceless, and in this respect there can be no trifles. Ultimately, these are important steps on the path towards building a Safe Kazakhstan.

The next matter concerns the development of culture and the arts in the era of artificial intelligence. As before, we attach great importance to this sphere, building the necessary infrastructure and, when required, repairing and restoring cultural facilities.

Artists promote our traditions and culture abroad, and this deserves recognition. Therefore, we will provide the necessary support to cultural figures. At the same time, in their work they must adapt to the demands of the times.

As you know, I attach great importance to the development of mass sport. Various sport facilities are being built in the regions, and children's access to sport clubs is expanding. In addition, sports clubs are being established for persons with special needs as well as for senior citizens.

For sport and physical activity to become an integral part of daily life, it is important to cultivate family sporting traditions. At the same time, there are encouraging developments in professional sport.

Previously, I instructed that budget funding for foreign players be limited. Members of Parliament supported this initiative and adopted the corresponding law. Yet we cannot stop there; we must go further. Work on the privatisation of football clubs must be accelerated. Today, four Kazakh football clubs have found owners among prominent entrepreneurs, and I extend my sincere gratitude to them.

Nevertheless, the process of commercialising football must continue. Without this, as global practice clearly demonstrates, football in Kazakhstan will not achieve meaningful development. Professional sport should be regarded as a modern business sector, capable of generating substantial revenue.

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The tasks I have outlined are of critical importance for Kazakhstan's continued dynamic development. They are closely linked to the country's digital modernisation. A key component of our strategic course must be the widespread introduction of artificial intelligence and comprehensive digitalisation, which have the potential to multiply our country's capabilities across all sectors.

The launch of a supercomputer in Kazakhstan is undoubtedly a success. However, it should be regarded by the Government and by society at large as only the beginning of intensive and multifaceted work to transform Kazakhstan into a truly digital state.

For the effective implementation of this goal, the Government will develop a unified conceptual document on digitalisation and artificial intelligence – “Digital Qazaqstan”. This document will consolidate all initiatives and projects into a nationwide strategy. At the same time, the country's profound digital transformation is not an end in itself, but merely a pathway toward enhancing the well-being of our citizens.

The state is creating all the necessary conditions for every citizen to earn a decent income, receive quality social services, and have confidence in the future. All ongoing reforms are aimed at improving the well-being of citizens and ensuring the comprehensive development of the country. Our efforts to strengthen Kazakhstan's international standing are also directed toward these goals.

I am confident that a balanced and constructive foreign policy, aligned with our strategic national interests, will bring significant benefits to Kazakhstan's sustainable socio-economic development in the era of digitalisation and artificial intelligence.

The fact that many countries seek to build friendly relations and mutually beneficial cooperation with Kazakhstan speaks above all to the authority and growing international standing of our nation. Kazakhstan contributes to addressing pressing global issues and values cooperation with all interested states, whether neighbouring or distant.

Recently, I paid an official visit to China, where productive negotiations took place covering the full range of bilateral relations, which are developing in the spirit of an eternal strategic partnership. My visits to Türkiye and Kyrgyzstan also proved

successful. At the end of this year, I will visit Russia and Uzbekistan. We are preparing to host the leaders of Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Turkmenistan in Astana, and meetings with the heads of several Asian and European countries are also planned. The Kazakhstan–United States dialogue is actively developing, and we are strengthening multifaceted contacts with the European Union.

This year has also been marked by significant anniversaries, foremost among them the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. The solemn events held in Moscow and Beijing should be regarded as a testament to the eternal memory of the tens of millions of victims who perished in the battles of the bloodiest war in human history, as well as a warning against any attempt to revise its outcomes or to unleash a new global conflict.

For the sake of lasting peace and universal progress, it is essential to seek compromise, for indeed, “a bad peace is better than a good war”. In this spirit, Kazakhstan welcomed the outcome of the Russia–United States summit in Alaska, as well as the signing in Washington of the peace declaration between Azerbaijan and Armenia, mediated by President Trump.

Another landmark date is the 80th anniversary of the United Nations, which has become the fundamental institutional embodiment of the outcomes of the Second World War. The UN remains irreplaceable and, in Kazakhstan’s view, should serve as the key platform for dialogue to ensure a fair resolution of all pressing international issues.

At the same time, the need for reform of the UN has become evident, above all with regard to its principal body – the Security Council. In the near future, I intend to address the anniversary session of the General Assembly in New York, where I will present Kazakhstan’s vision of the international situation, including proposals for reforming the United Nations.

Dear compatriots!

“Law and Order” constitutes a steadfast foundation of our statehood. To firmly establish this principle in society, all relevant institutions should develop a common vision and a unified position.

The principle of zero tolerance toward any violation or act of lawlessness is of primary significance. Therefore, the efforts of state bodies in this area should be fully supported. Only then will public consciousness develop intolerance towards offences, cruelty, and violence, and acquire immunity to any antisocial behaviour.

It must be acknowledged that rudeness, profanity, and brawls have unfortunately become commonplace, often witnessed even in public spaces and on the roads. Unfortunately, among them are also women who cause scandals, use obscene language, and disturb public order. Such behaviour is intolerable in a cultured,

civilised society, as they undermine the authority of our country on the international stage.

If we are to become a truly progressive nation, we must resolutely rid ourselves of such negative patterns of behaviour. The the great Abai wisely noted: “If a Kazakh is not a friend to a Kazakh, life everywhere will become burdensome”. Culture, integrity, and decency must begin with every citizen and with every family.

In these unstable times, when strengthening the country’s sovereignty and territorial integrity has become a paramount task, we must preserve our unshakeable unity. If our people remain united and the domestic situation stable, we will overcome all difficulties and cope with any challenges. Therefore, I call upon all my compatriots to value and safeguard the peace in our country.

Every citizen must be both a statesman and a patriot. Today, the essence and substance of the word “patriotism” are undergoing change. Previously, the concept was largely defined by traditional values, with language, culture, and spirituality regarded as the core of national interests. Undoubtedly, all of these remain the pillars of national identity. No one can take them from us, and there is no cause for concern in this regard.

Today’s educated youth perceive patriotism differently. The younger generation rejects religious radicalism and extreme nationalism. For them, the primary manifestations of patriotism are creativity and innovation.

Young people believe that love for the Motherland lies in serving society by making discoveries and launching new endeavours. They want to see Kazakhstan become a developed and prosperous state, mastering modern technologies so that our nation may stand at the forefront of progress. For the younger generation, patriotism lies in striving towards the future, and this is clearly reflected in the changes taking place in public consciousness. I fully support this view. I believe in the strength, talents, and knowledge of our youth.

We do not forget who we were yesterday; we honour our ancient history. Yet we clearly understand that who we become tomorrow depends on our own actions. Therefore, we will always support young people who strive for knowledge and care about the prosperity of our country.

All the large-scale work we are carrying out is for the sake of a bright future for the younger generation. It is they who will one day reap the fruits of the transformations being implemented and continue this cause with dignity. Younger generation is rapidly adjusting to the profound changes unfolding globally, especially to the onset of the era of artificial intelligence.

The great Abai wrote that reason, knowledge, worthy parents and friends, and wise mentors shape the best qualities of a person. As Head of State, to these words I would

add the following: in a civilised and progressive country, laws must be just, authority must be competent, and citizens must be conscious and active.

The importance of each state decision, made first and foremost to improve people's lives, stabilise the economy, and ensure social justice, must be measured by concrete actions. Only in this way will our state acquire a new essence and become strong.

Thanks to profound and comprehensive reforms, Kazakhstan is confidently embarking on the path of progress. Painstaking work awaits us ahead. We must move only forward, without deviating from the chosen course!

Dear compatriots!

Today, I would like to share my thoughts on a new political reform that will have a significant positive impact on the further course of our country's socio-economic development in the era of artificial intelligence.

I am speaking about parliamentary reform. This reform of the highest representative body will constitute the logical continuation of all previous transformations, including the reform of presidential power.

We have set a course towards building a Just Kazakhstan, establishing an open and honest dialogue between the Government and citizens in the spirit of a "listening state".

During the nationwide referendum held in June 2022, the overwhelming majority of citizens supported the strategy of large-scale modernisation of the state, based on the concept of "Strong President – Influential Parliament – Accountable Government". The events of recent years, both within our country and beyond its borders, have demonstrated the correctness of this course. Yet we cannot stand still; we must think about the future of our country and the generations to come.

At the beginning of this year, in my extensive interview with the newspaper "Anatili" (Mother Tongue), I stated that reforms are a continuous process and will be developed in response to real public demand.

In our country, the topic of parliamentary reform has been debated both publicly and informally for at least two decades, and there is nothing secret about it. Its relevance endures to this day. Therefore, given the evolution of our state system and the growing level of political culture among our citizens, I deem it appropriate to bring this extremely important matter to public discussion.

The Senate, as the upper chamber of the Parliament of Kazakhstan, was established in 1995 under rather difficult and unstable political conditions, at a time when our country had only just begun its thorny path towards building the foundations of statehood. Over the past thirty years, the Senate has honourably and effectively fulfilled its important historical mission of ensuring the stability of state building.

The Upper Chamber has been, and remains, a crucial mechanism and guarantor of the legislative process and other key reforms.

For ten years, I myself had the honour of leading the Senate, and I have always regarded this work as a great privilege and responsibility. Therefore, it is not easy for me to speak about parliamentary reform from this very rostrum. Nonetheless, today I will put forward a proposal for the establishment, in the foreseeable future, of a unicameral Parliament in our country.

At the outset, I would like to emphasise that this is a very serious matter, and any haste in addressing it would be entirely inappropriate. This reform must become the subject of thorough discussion within civil society, the expert community, and, of course, in the current Parliament.

I believe that, given the extraordinary nature of this reform, such a discussion will take at least a year, after which, in 2027, it would be possible to hold a nationwide referendum, followed by the necessary amendments to the Constitution.

I have repeatedly stated that all issues of fateful importance for the state will be decided only with the consent of the people. If we all come to a common decision on the need to establish a unicameral Parliament, then, in my view, such a Parliament should be elected exclusively through party lists. This will be in line with the widely established parliamentary tradition around the world.

Thus, the present composition of the Mazhilis will have the opportunity to calmly carry out its legislative work virtually until the end of its mandate. The Senate, meanwhile, will continue to function until the conclusion of the nationwide referendum and the holding of a new parliamentary elections.

For their part, political parties will have time to prepare thoroughly for serious and competitive elections. I trust that the incumbent members of Parliament, as true statesmen, will approach this matter responsibly and with understanding. As a result, all our political reforms will become an integral part of a unified institutional system.

Naturally, a legitimate question may arise: why does the President announce the need for parliamentary reform so early, when, according to political practice, such measures are often introduced unexpectedly?

Yet, as I have previously stated and now reiterate: I believe that when it concerns the fate of the country and the people, one must adhere to an open policy; a reform of such magnitude cannot be concealed from society.

I am convinced that on matters of such historic significance, an open dialogue with the people is essential. Only then, through our joint efforts, will we advance on the path of building a Just and Strong Kazakhstan.

I wish you all prosperity and success!

May our Kazakhstan endure forever!