

dependence on Russia.⁴³ The relationship with Iran appears to proceed along pragmatic, essentially economic lines, with little concern about the religious factor in Iranian foreign policy.

Similarly, the principal motivating factor of the developing relationship with Turkey is economic, though Turkey is also active in the educational and cultural spheres.⁴⁴ Building close ties with Turkey also plays to that body of nationalist opinion in Kazakh politics attracted by pan-Turkic ideas. The major problem in relations with both Turkey and Iran is that they do not have the economic capacity to provide a credible alternative to reliance on Russia. This places clear constraints on the utility of these other regional options in the effort to balance against Russia.

With regard to the West, the Kazakhs now understand that there is precious little that Western states (or for that matter the CSCE) can or will do to provide meaningful security guarantees and assistance.⁴⁵ The principal thrust of Kazakhstan's policy, therefore, is a pursuit of economic assistance and investment. They take the view that the West has an important role to play in the recovery and further development of the country's economy as a source of capital and technology. This is particularly relevant in the natural resources sector. As a result, Kazakhstan (by former Soviet standards) has been remarkably accommodating to joint venture activity, as was noted above.

Priority has also been placed on securing technical assistance in the modernization of the agricultural sector of the economy. There is also some hope that, either through multilateral organizations or through bilateral agreements, substantial assistance can be obtained to address the countries environmental problems, and notably the Aral Sea crisis.

One substantial irritant in relations with the United States in particular has been political conditionality. The United States has attempted, with some success, to link the availability of economic aid to Kazakh acceptance of political development assistance focussing on party building and the creation of independent functional

⁴³ In this vein, during a visit by Iran's President Rafsanjani in October 1993, the two states signed agreements on the expansion of road, rail, and pipeline links.

⁴⁴ Over 2000 Kazakh students are currently enrolled in Turkish educational institutions.

⁴⁵ Kazakhstan's adherence to NATO's Partnership for Peace does not reflect any strong expectation that this will substantially affect Kazakhstan's security.