

Q4: MAJOR CHALLENGES FOR KAZAKHSTAN AND ARMENIA

Tatiana Kastouéva-Jean, Research Fellow and Director of IFRI's Russia/Eurasia Centre

Since we have just three minutes and no questions, I would like to summarize briefly at the end of our session. Can you name, please, three major challenges for your country today on the national, regional and global level? Who would like to start? Mr. Vassilenko.

Roman Vassilenko, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kazakhstan

I can go. On the national level, it is, as always, ensuring sustainable economic growth in the very challenging environment. Thankfully, we have a positive growth of around 4% this year. However, we are not complacent and we need to make sure that this economic growth is spread and the benefits benefit as wide a scope of the population as possible.

On the regional level, I already mentioned several things, but perhaps I should highlight that the biggest challenge or opportunity that we face on the regional lies in the word 'connectivity'. This is the buzzword right now. We want it to be developed. We see this Belt and Road, this Global Gateway, the PGII by G7 all as complementary and as benefiting not just our region, but all these outside players.

On the global level, I think the biggest challenge is how to make sure that the United Nations system works again. Our President addressed this issue in numerous statements, including at the United Nations General Assembly, stating that the role of the General Assembly needs to be strengthened as the most representative body and the Security Council needs to be reformed. And the voice of the middle powers, of which Kazakhstan is one, should be strengthened. Thank you.

Tatiana Kastouéva-Jean

Thank you very much. Mr. Kostanyan?

Vahan Kostanyan, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia

I guess the challenges are pretty much the same. For national level, it is to continue the ambitious democratic reform agenda that we started in 2018, after a Velvet Revolution. These reforms will be, and are, supporting the economic growth of my country.

On the regional level, this is the normalization of relations with our neighbors, and opening of regional communications.



On an international level, this is to make the international tools and mechanisms adequately working without any reluctance. Because sometimes the geopolitics prevails and, in that case, some of the regions are under a shadow.

The presence in this panel and in the audience is a clear example of this because, during the panel of very honorable Minister Kuleba, the audience was full. During this panel, when we are talking about the challenges in Central Asia and South Caucasus – and I do believe that these regions are not less important, the hall is half empty, although it is half full as well. And there were no questions.

Tatiana Kastouéva-Jean

Thank you very much. We are perfect with our timing and I would like to thank Roman Vassilenko, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, and Vahan Kostanyan, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia. Thank you so much for this substantial conversation.