

Answer to Question

Political Repercussions in Kazakhstan

(Translated)

Question:

Russia intervened in the name of the Collective Security Treaty Organization in Kazakhstan after its president, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, requested its help in quelling the protests that erupted in his country, after the price of liquefied gas doubled, and then suddenly swelled... Russia accused external forces, especially America, of interfering in the country's affairs and inciting protests. It was also announced that the director of the National Security Committee had been accused of orchestrating an attempted coup. What is the background to these protests? Why did Russia intervene so quickly in the name of the Collective Security Treaty Organization? What is the US position on that?

Answer:

In order to clarify the answer to the above questions, we review the following matters:

1- Kazakhstan, as part of West Turkestan in Central Asia, is a large Islamic country with an area of more than 2.7 million km², but its population is small in relation to its area, as they number about 19 million, most of whom are Muslims, whose percentage exceeds 75%. There is a large Russian minority in Kazakhstan, who are said to make up 20% of the population, or about 3.5 million. The country is important to Russia economically and geopolitically, as it was under direct Russian control during the Soviet Union, until its independence in 1991, but remained linked to Russia within what is known as the Group of Independent States, as well as the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Shanghai Treaty. The Russian spaceport, in Kazakhstan, is at the Baikonur Cosmodrome, from which rockets carrying spacecraft are launched. Russia was controlling its vast wealth. It is rich in oil as it constitutes 21% of the country's GDP and produces more than 1.5 million barrels of oil per day.

It is one of the largest producers of uranium in the world. This Islamic country has uranium reserves of 1.5 million tons. It contains large quantities of manganese, iron, chromium, coal, as well as natural gas. So far, about 2 trillion cubic meters of natural gas have been discovered. Thus, Kazakhstan is important for Russia, as it is situated at second place after Ukraine in what Russia considers its vital area of influence in the former Soviet space. For this reason, it exerts every effort to continue its acquisition so that what happened to Ukraine, which actually became independent from it not just by name like Kazakhstan, is not repeated!

2- America is also aware of the importance of Kazakhstan, as its location is important as it is located on the southern borders of Russia, and on the western borders of China, and hence America aspires to extend its influence in the country to encircle Russia from this side and deprive it of regional influence in the region. In addition to its encirclement of China from the other side. Moreover, the departure of this country from the hands of Russia may lead to the departure of the rest of the Central Asian countries from Russian control and out from its influence. This American interest has appeared since the declaration of the independence of Kazakhstan, as it was the first country to recognize Kazakhstan's independence, and then American companies began to enter Kazakhstan and acquired much of the oil and gas industry in the country. For example, the American company Chevron acquires 50% of the Tengiz oil field, which constitutes a third of the country's annual output. European companies also began to acquire part of Kazakhstan's energy resources. It is stated that ["about 90% of Kazakhstan's exports are energy resources such as oil and gas, almost all of which are restricted and owned by Western capital, and the largest American and European oil companies." (Russian Sputnik Agency 8/1/2022)]. America's attempts

were not limited to oil and gas companies, but went beyond that to signing some military agreements during the Nazarbayev administration, ruling since 1989 until he announced his resignation in March 2019. Then during his successor's period after that. But their close relationship with Russia prevented America from concluding effective military agreements. However, America did not despair of its attempts; during his testimony before the Senate in February 2019, the commander of the US Central Command at the time, General Joseph Votel, said regarding the US-Kazakhstan relations: ["It is considered the most mature relationship in Central Asia" citing Al-Jazeera 6/1/2022)]. Communication between the US and Kazakh armies constitute an important aspect of the bilateral relations between the two countries. Since 2003, Kazakhstan has hosted multilateral military maneuvers, including one which was conducted in southeastern Kazakhstan in June 2019, in which US forces participated. Although it was closer to the normal exercises, but it indicates the American interest in Kazakhstan, and Russia is undoubtedly afraid of this interest.

3- Russia's fear increased when those protests occurred and suddenly expanded! These events began spontaneously, as it seems, with protests against the double rise in liquefied gas prices, from the residents of the cities of Zanauzin and Aktau in the west of the country on 5/1/2022, but it expanded and spread to other cities, Almaty which is the old capital of the country and its largest and one of the most important commercial cities. It was reported that the fire consumed the presidential residence in the city, as well as the municipality building. The Russian Sputnik agency reported that "the security forces imposed a security cordon around the capital's administration building, Nur-Sultan (formerly Astana), and that the residents of the capital rushed to withdraw their money from banks on a large scale, amid the cessation of non-cash payments due to the interruption of the Internet."

Local media reported that "mining workers in the eastern Balkhash region joined the protests and stopped working." Thus, the protests began to turn into violence... The Kazakh ambassador in Ankara commented on the events of his country, saying: ["The beginning of the protests was with the aim of demanding better living conditions and opposing the rise in liquefied gas prices. After moving to the city of Almaty, it took a different path and became punctuated by inflammatory and illegal practices." (Anadolu Agency 6/1/2022)]. The resignation of the Kazakh government was announced on 5/1/2022 in an attempt to calm the situation and lower the prices of liquefied gas. but the protests did not stop, but rather expanded and developed!

4- This expansion prompted Russia, before Kazakhstan, to accuse two sides:

a- The motive behind it, was that news was reported that some security men were turning a blind eye to the protests and disturbances, and then the accusing finger was pointing to the director of the National Security Committee (intelligence service) Karim Masimov, who is responsible for maintaining security in the country. As if this man took advantage of the situation to seize power. Therefore, he was dismissed on 8/1/2022 and accused of treason. [The National Security Committee of Kazakhstan announced the arrest of its former head, Karim Masimov, on suspicion of "treason." According to the statement of the National Security Committee: "On January 6 of this year, the National Security Committee launched an investigation for the purpose of the high treason trial, according to Article 175 of Part One of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan."(RT 8/1/2022)], Yermukhamet Yertysbayev, former advisor to the former President of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, recently stated [that one of the reasons of the crisis in the country is the betrayal of some senior officials. He described what happened in the country recently as an "attempted coup and armed rebellion," and said: "The scale of this coup attempt and armed rebellion is shocking, and it is an organized and strong attempt, which was impossible to implement without traitors in the highest levels of power, especially the executive authorities." (RT, 8/1/2022)]

b- Kazakh President Kassim Tokayev later announced his request for the intervention of the Collective Security Treaty Organization led by Russia, saying: ["His country was subjected to a

terrorist attack and an organized and premeditated act of aggression with the participation of foreign militants..." He added that "acts of violence by terrorists resulted in the fall of many victims among the members of the security services and civilians. About 1,300 business facilities were damaged, more than 100 trade and banking centers were attacked, 500 police cars were burned, and losses ranged between 2 and 3 billion dollars." He added, announcing "The arrest of 10 thousand people, and announced the stability of the situation, and that it is under control, the centers of terrorist threats have been neutralized, and important strategic installations and places for storing weapons and ammunition have been secured." (Russia Today 10/1/2022)].

c- Thus, President of Kazakhstan Tokayev asked Russia to intervene, and the Russians responded quickly, as if they had decided to intervene before he asked them to! So, they initiated the military intervention in Kazakhstan through the Collective Security Organization, which it established in 1992, and it sent the first military battalion on 6/1/2022... (Al-Jazeera Net 6/1/2022). Then, in the next two days, 2500 soldiers with their equipment and military vehicles were shipped by air. More than 70 Russian military cargo planes participated in this emergency mission, including the transfer of troops from Armenia and Kyrgyzstan into Kazakhstan, and for this Tokayev said: ["I address special expressions of gratitude to Russian President Putin, who responded quickly to my request for assistance." (Russia Today 7/1/2022)].

After that, Putin stated in a video conference of the Collective Security Council of the Collective Security Treaty Organization on 10/1/2022, saying: ["Some external and internal forces have taken advantage of the economic situation in Kazakhstan to achieve their objectives. The Collective Security Treaty Organization was able to take important measures to prevent the deterioration of the situation in Kazakhstan. I have taken the necessary decision on time and that these forces will remain in Kazakhstan for a period determined by the presidency of this country. The events in Kazakhstan are not the first and will not be the last for external interference. The countries of the Collective Security Treaty Organization have shown that they will not allow colour revolutions. And the recent events in Kazakhstan confirms that some forces do not hesitate to use cyberspace and social networks to recruit extremists and terrorists and form sleeper cells of militants." (Russia Today 10/1/2022)].

The second side, it is external:

Although Putin did not mention in his statement during the organization's collective security conference, that America has anything to do with the events, in his words, but this is clearly understood from the meaning. What was reported by the Russian media before confirms this understanding, they spoke about an assumed American role in the protests. It is also confirmed by the response of White House spokeswoman Jen Psaki when describing what was reported by the Russian media as ["crazy allegations by Russia" about the supposed responsibility of the United States in the riots that rocked Kazakhstan, stressing that these allegations are "completely untrue", and exposing "Russian disinformation strategy." (The Independent Arabia, 7/1/2022)]. In order to justify the Russian intervention through the Collective Security Organization, the current head of the organization, the Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, confirmed (that the coalition responded to a request that came as a result of "external interference." (The Independent Arabia 7/1/2022)). In other words, all these statements indicate that Kazakhstan, with Russia behind it, but rather in front of it, sees that these events are not only for internal reasons, but that America is involved in them... This American involvement in these events is evident from the review of the following American statements:

A- Blinken called, during a telephone conversation with his Kazakh counterpart, to find a peaceful solution to the turbulent situation in Kazakhstan and respect media freedom. US State Department spokesperson Ned Price said that, "Blinken stressed the United States' full support for Kazakhstan's constitutional institutions and advocated for a peaceful, rights-respecting resolution to the crisis." He said, "America is concerned about events in Kazakhstan, but believes that the republic can deal on its own without the help of the Collective Security Treaty Organization.

(AFP 6/1/2022)

B- Blinken said, commenting on Kazakh President Kassym Tokayev's statements about shooting at protesters ("I condemn that statement. And if that is the national policy, I condemn it." (CNN 9/1/2022). The Kazakh President had declared, "I issued orders to shoot terrorists without warning," he added, "20,000 terrorists participated in the attack on the city of Almaty."

C- America demanded the departure of the Russian forces from Kazakhstan. The US State Department spokesperson said: ["The CSTO forces must promptly leave Kazakhstan... and their presence raises questions. to uphold their commitment to promptly depart Kazakhstan." (RIA Novosti 11/1/2022)].

From all this America's opposition to summoning Russian forces to Kazakhstan appears, and demanded that its problems should be resolved without Russia's intervention, and that it must not use violence against the protesters. America is aware that this strengthens the Russian presence in Kazakhstan and the regime's association with Russia... It denied accusations against it of meddling in the events, but the tone of its speech was calling for the protests not to be suppressed and for human rights to be observed.

Conclusion:

A- It is clear from the above the extent of the importance that Russia attaches to Kazakhstan. Russia stood behind activating the provisions of the Collective Security Treaty in order to quell Kazakhstan's protests with iron and fire, and this is the first time since the establishment of the organization of the same name in 1992, despite the events that afflicted some countries of that treaty without the intervention of the organization, and this indicates the extent of that importance.

B- On the other hand, the disruption of the security situation in Kazakhstan has exposed new weaknesses of the Russian influence in the surroundings of the Soviet region, and this may tempt the West to surround Russia with a ring of crises extending from Central Asia to Belarus!

C- Nevertheless, America was not able to achieve everything it wanted from its attempts to extend its influence in Kazakhstan, and it appears that it was satisfied with the progress of the protests and wanted to use it, and took advantage of it to have men inside, and then be able to put pressure from inside and outside.

D- It is sad that enemies conflict over an Islamic country like Kazakhstan, plunder its wealth, and exploit its position and capabilities for their interests. At a time when the agents, of the people of the country, only care about the struggle for chairs and obtaining the highest positions, leaving the people of the country poor and suffering while their country is rich in its land and its bounties, although most of its people are Muslims, and Islam commands them not to make a way for the Kuffar to dominate over them... Hence, the necessity of working to establish the Khilafah Rashidah (rightly-guided Caliphate) on the method of the Prophethood is confirmed in order to save the country and the people. Then this Ummah will return as it was the best Ummah that was brought out to mankind, strong and victorious.

﴿وَلَيَنْصُرَنَّ اللَّهُ مَن يَنْصُرُهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ﴾

“And Allah will surely support those who support Him. Indeed, Allah is Powerful and Exalted in Might” [Al-Hajj: 40]

12 Jumada II 1443 AH

15/1/2022 CE