**President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev’s State of the Nation Address “Just Kazakhstan: Law and Order, Economic Growth, Social Optimism”**

**Dear Members of Parliament!**

Congratulations to all of you on the opening of the regular session, and I wish you success in your activities for the benefit of the country!

During the past session, a great deal of work was accomplished. 102 laws were adopted, including those on public control, combating human trafficking, science and technology policy, heat energy, and others.

Significant attention was paid to social issues, particularly the protection of children. A law has been adopted that provides for payments to children from the National Fund. Administrative liability has been introduced for involving minors in gambling, and penalties for any form of violence against minors have been increased. A law ensuring the safety of children and preventing and suppressing offences against women and children has entered into force.

It is no secret that many citizens now have multiple loans. This is an extremely urgent problem that, without exaggeration, poses a danger to our society. Therefore, special laws have also been adopted to address this issue.

In general, many systemic steps have been taken to improve the well-being of the people. You have been directly involved in this work, constantly staying in close contact with citizens. All of this, of course, makes an important contribution to the realisation of the concept of a “Listening State.”

I express my gratitude for your fruitful work. However, we cannot be satisfied with what we have achieved – there is still much work ahead.

The people of Kazakhstan today live in a completely new political reality. Over the past five years, large-scale reforms have been implemented, and the political system has undergone a radical transformation. Fundamental changes are taking place in public consciousness: the level of legal culture among citizens is increasing, new models of behaviour are forming in society, and new values are taking root. The renewal of political and public life, as well as the mentality and cultural code of the nation, has begun. In a word, the building of a Just Kazakhstan is underway, and most importantly, all of this aligns fully with the aspirations of the people. Therefore, we will continue to steadfastly follow our strategic course and will not deviate from the planned path. Today, we will thoroughly discuss our plans and define our goals.

In the conditions of aggravating geopolitical confrontation, Kazakhstan firmly adheres to a peaceful, evolutionary path.

We have outlined a new vector of development, giving fresh impetus to economic diversification. Inflation has slowed, decreasing by 2.5 times compared to the highest level of the previous year. The country’s international reserves have exceeded $100 billion. Manufacturing is growing faster than the mining sector, and it is important to maintain this momentum. It is necessary to launch a new investment cycle, effectively utilising the existing foundation.

The Government and akims (governors) should pay special attention to restructuring the economy, introducing new mechanisms to ensure the country’s sustainable progress. The main goal is to increase the income levels of citizens. With proper organisation and effort, this is quite achievable.

Economic growth should be accompanied by a reduction in social inequality and the strengthening of the middle class. Only in this way can we enhance the potential of our state. For this purpose, efficiency should be the key criterion in any endeavour. Every decision and every project should be evaluated based on its benefit to the state.

Let us now turn to the specific areas of work ahead.

**FIRST. It is important to address the imbalances between monetary and fiscal policy.**

It should be noted that lending to the real sector is still not at an adequate level, and the issue of sufficient funding for small and medium-sized businesses remains unresolved. This situation negatively impacts business activity, economic sustainability, and progressive growth in the country. Therefore, the Government and the National Bank must work together to develop an optimal solution to this problem. It is necessary to incentivise banks to invest more funds into the economy.

International experts consider Kazakh banks to be among the most profitable in resource-rich countries. This raises the issue of fair taxation in this sector. Taxes paid by banks should be commensurate with the dividends their shareholders receive. This approach is particularly logical in light of the state aid provided to banks. Additionally, it is important to create a sustainable regulatory environment for the circulation of digital assets and safe innovation in banking.

We need a new banking law that meets the current challenges of stimulating economic activity and further dynamic development of the fintech sector. The current law is nearly 30 years old and was adopted under completely different circumstances.

It must be said directly that a significant oversight of both the previous and current Governments has been the failure to meet the revenue targets of the republican budget. It is unacceptable that this problem has become systemic and has hindered the country’s development. The Government, together with the National Bank, should take effective measures to ensure the efficient use of budget funds and enforce strict control over expenditures.

Living within our means is the only possible recipe for the stability of public finances. Therefore, excessive spending on tasks that are not inherently primary or strategic must be excluded.

It is necessary to establish order in inter-budgetary relations. The decision to allocate tax revenues from small and medium-sized businesses to the regions was correct and timely. It has significantly boosted entrepreneurship and increased the autonomy of akims. However, some regional leaders, having received this additional source of income, have used it recklessly on secondary tasks and projects without practical benefit to the state. To address the budget deficit, the Government should develop rational compensatory mechanisms.

I would like to emphasize the role of the National Fund. The funds of the National Fund should primarily serve the interests of our state and be used to achieve strategic goals, rather than benefit foreign financial institutions. The National Fund is a key instrument for ensuring long-term macroeconomic stability, and therefore, it requires effective management.

It is evident that Government finances alone are not sufficient to ensure dynamic economic growth. It is necessary to create favourable conditions for increasing business activity by attracting private investments into the economy. A stable tax policy that stimulates quality development and responsible business behaviour is essential for this purpose.

A new Tax Code is intended to overhaul the existing system. The Code should aim to establish a fundamentally new tax administration based on trust in taxpayers. It is crucial to simplify the Code, make its provisions understandable to all economically active citizens, and eliminate the possibility of varying interpretations of the norms.

Tax regimes need to be optimised without worsening the existing favourable conditions for entrepreneurs. For example, the introduction of a retail tax has been successful in bringing businesses out of the shadows and reducing fragmentation. However, this regime should be applied to entrepreneurs who primarily work with the general public.

The full realisation of the potential of consumer services and trade can provide a quick and significant impact on economic growth, increased tax revenues, and job creation.

To succeed in fiscal reform, the total digitalisation of administration is necessary. To mitigate corruption risks and ensure transparency, processes in the tax sphere should be rapidly transitioned to electronic formats. It is also advisable to adapt the entire tax policy to changing fiscal conditions, including revising tax rates.

There is a need to establish differentiated rates for individual income tax.

It is advisable to move away from a punitive approach in tax administration. For instance, the threshold for tax arrears before enforcement actions are taken could be increased. If the tax debt exceeds this threshold, restrictions should be imposed only on the debt amount, rather than blocking the entire bank account. For significant tax debts, instalment payments should be allowed without the requirement of collateral. Efforts should be made to completely eliminate planned tax audits, which will require improvements in the risk management system.

An important task is to increase the effectiveness of tax incentives. All incentives should be tied to tax reporting, and only those that genuinely stimulate business should be preserved. For example, incentives can be offered to investors focused on developing production, including a one-time deduction for construction, acquisition, modernisation, and reconstruction of assets. It is crucial to provide additional support to exporters of high value-added products, who should receive more incentives than other businesses.

As part of the consideration of the new Tax Code project, I instruct the Government and Parliament to hold a thorough discussion. Tough but necessary decisions must be made. Rushing in this matter is unacceptable. Therefore, I consider it prudent to postpone the adoption of the new Code until next year to ensure it is prepared at a high-quality level.

The financial situation is further exacerbated by the persistently high share of the shadow economy. To significantly reduce it, a comprehensive set of well-thought-out measures should be adopted. In particular, all work on border customs posts should be completed within a compressed timeframe, and the illegal “outflow” of income from international trade operations to other jurisdictions must be prevented.

**SECOND. It is important to continually work on improving the investment climate and conditions for doing business.**

In conditions of intense international competition for investment, it is essential to make decisions to attract capital in a “here and now” mode. Therefore, the Investment Headquarters under the Government has been granted extensive powers, which has accelerated the implementation of projects in priority areas such as deep metal processing, oil, gas, and coal chemistry, tourism, energy, and engineering.

Work in this direction should be intensified to prevent a decline in the volume of direct investments in the economy. It should be noted that not all akims and ministers are sufficiently involved in the process of attracting investors. The Government must make the necessary adjustments to this work.

Attention should also be given to better preparing public-private partnership projects involving international financial institutions. I instruct the Government to identify a pool of large turnkey projects that can be financed by international financial organisations through the public-private partnership mechanism.

In May of this year, I signed a Decree “On Measures to Liberalize the Economy.” The provisions of this document must be strictly implemented.

The share of direct state participation in the economy remains high, which disrupts market equality and suppresses private initiative.

It must be acknowledged that we have not yet developed an optimal policy for managing state enterprises. It is necessary to legally regulate the goals, functions, types, methods of financing, and other aspects of their activities. Additionally, we must ensure stability and a systematic approach to the financial relations between state holdings and the Government.

In the 2022 State of the Nation Address, I instructed the introduction of regulation from scratch. As part of the first stage of the reform, more than ten thousand redundant and irrelevant requirements that restricted entrepreneurial activity have already been eliminated. The Prosecutor General’s Office has joined the effort to support large investment projects, facilitating conditions for investors through a “green corridor” approach, and certain economic crimes have been decriminalised. However, complaints from entrepreneurs about excessive control and supervisory activities by Government agencies continue to surface. The Government and the Prosecutor General’s Office need to address these negative phenomena that are affecting the investment climate. It is also necessary to clarify the interaction between the state and capital owners as part of the work on asset recovery.

Last year, at a meeting with the business community, I expressed my firm position on this issue. We agreed that a prerequisite for capital amnesty would be investment in Kazakhstan’s economy. The primary goal is that these investments benefit the country. This requirement should be codified.

Entrepreneurs included in the relevant register can be given the opportunity to conclude an agreement without acknowledging the illegality of the transferred assets. This is a significant step in favour of large entrepreneurs; however, these entrepreneurs should reciprocate by cooperating with the Government and the Prosecutor General’s Office in channelling funds to the republican budget. This should be done in good faith, without haggling over every tenge. Additionally, as citizens of our state, these individuals are obliged to invest significant funds in the construction of schools, hospitals, stadiums, museums, and other social and cultural facilities. Those who contribute can be recognised on a “golden list” of benefactors. However, if they refuse or delay the process, the conversation with such entrepreneurs will take a different tone. It is also essential to organise all information about the assets returned to the state and ensure their intended use is transparent.

The Government has set an important task: to increase the share of medium-sized businesses in the economy to 15 percent by 2029. Today, this figure stands at about 7 percent. At the beginning of the year, I instructed the development of specific decisions aimed at supporting medium-sized businesses. It was expected that a comprehensive package of measures would be created. However, these measures have not yet materialised.

Each business entity should easily understand and know what types of support are available and how to access them. This will encourage small businesses to aspire to move into the medium-sized category. Currently, we have more than 100 support measures, which are so numerous that even an expert might struggle to navigate them. Therefore, it is necessary to review these measures for efficiency and create a single, clear list of preferences and benefits that businesses can easily understand.

Fintech tools can be leveraged to develop small and medium-sized businesses, and there are relevant proposals on this matter.

Attracting investment in the agro-industrial complex is an extremely important task. Despite the challenges posed by the floods, our farmers completed the sowing campaign on time, for which I am very grateful.

This year, the financing of spring field work has been doubled. However, 70% of the financing for the agro-industrial complex still comes from the state. It is necessary to attract funds from commercial banks to the industry. Efforts have been made to subsidise state financial institutions to issue loans to farmers at reduced rates, and this experience should be extended to banks. This will allow for prompt provision of working capital to farmers, reduce corruption risks, and simplify the loan acquisition process.

A critical task is the gradual transition from direct subsidies in the agro-industrial complex to ensuring affordable lending. All allocated funds must be used efficiently. However, unreliable data—or in other words, falsifications—prevent us from accurately assessing the real situation in agriculture.

A special commission has already identified two million non-existent heads of cattle and more than three million non-existent heads of small livestock. Similar falsifications have been discovered in crop production. These are, in fact, forgeries for which state subsidies were allocated. This criminal practice must be stopped, and those involved must be brought to justice.

Land is a key element of the industry’s investment attractiveness. The Commission on Land Withdrawal has revealed more than two thousand illegal decisions by local executive bodies to grant agricultural land without tenders. There should be no ambiguity here: if the land was obtained in violation of the law and is not being used, it should be returned to the state under a simplified procedure. However, if a land user is working in good faith and has made investments, it is crucial not to disrupt existing production. Additionally, we must consider efforts to develop villages and ensure permanent employment for people in rural areas.

It is no secret that many landowners live thousands of kilometres away from the land that brings them profit, and they are often indifferent to the lives of the villagers who live there. We do not need such absentee landowners. The Government and the Prosecutor General’s Office should address this issue.

The state faces the challenge of promoting productive and legal employment, particularly in rural areas, so that citizens are directly involved in shaping their own futures.

The “Auyl Amanaty” (Heritage of the Village) project, launched last year, has shown generally good results. Currently, within the framework of this project, the introduction of a new tool – “commodity credit” – should be considered. At the same time, it is crucial to create infrastructure for processing and marketing the products produced by villagers.

It is necessary to establish centres in each district to teach citizens how to cultivate different crops. On the initiative of the “Amanat” party, such a project has already been launched in the Merki district of the Zhambyl region. The Government and akims should consider expanding it to other regions.

Overall, the task of the Government and all Government agencies is to facilitate the development of domestic businesses and attract foreign investors. Any obstruction to their legitimate activities should be regarded as a serious offence with corresponding consequences. I have already spoken about this. Entrepreneurs and investors, in turn, must be honest, comply with the law, and not evade taxation.

**THIRD. Systematic efforts should be made to fully unlock the country’s industrial potential**

The Government has compiled a list of 17 major projects, with a priority on developing high conversion rates. It is crucial to maximise the use of domestic raw materials and components and to establish related industries around these major enterprises.

Recently, I visited the Karaganda region and toured the Qarmet metallurgical plant. Thanks to a domestic investor, the situation at the plant has stabilised significantly, and modernization efforts have begun, which should lead to a substantial increase in production. As part of economic diversification, the production of automobile tires and household appliances has been launched in Saran, which has allowed the city to shed its status as a single-industry town. This experience should be replicated in other single-industry towns to revitalize them. In general, it is important to actively develop new growth centres in the regions.

As you are aware, the city of Alatau was established this year by a special decree. This city is intended to become a hub of advanced development, attracting innovation and talent. The Government should create attractive conditions for investment, living, and working in this city.

Positive results have been achieved in the automotive industry. This momentum must be maintained by consistently increasing the level of localisation. The state support provided to the automotive industry should eventually lead to the establishment of a full-fledged automotive cluster.

Further development of the petrochemical industry is also a priority. We have begun implementing large-scale production facilities for polypropylene and polyethylene. Other promising projects are under development, including the production of butadiene, urea, and terephthalic acid.

The modernisation of sections of the “Central Asia – Centre” gas pipeline, spanning over 800 km, has been completed in record time. It is necessary to expand capacities and diversify gas transportation routes. One of the Government’s primary tasks remains to provide gas to the population and the economy.

Last year, operations began at several gas fields, and there are plans to develop new gas deposits with a total production volume of one billion cubic meters per year. However, until these projects are fully operational, gas supplies to the domestic market should be rationally distributed, and a balanced approach should be taken when transitioning thermal power plants and household consumers from coal to gas.

The Government has been instructed to accelerate the construction of gas processing plants in Zhanaozen, Kashagan, and Karachaganak. This is a priority task. For the successful development of the industry, it is crucial to implement effective incentives in the shortest possible time to ensure a return on investment. These incentives should include the provision of adequate tariffs and wholesale prices. Such conditions are essential for attracting new investments in gas field exploration. Without these measures, it will be impossible to supply the economy with sufficient volumes of gas.

**FOURTH. It is necessary to solve priority infrastructure problems.**
First and foremost, this applies to the energy sector and utilities. The current standard conditions for financing the construction of new generation facilities are not acceptable. Therefore, the Government needs to explore ways to ensure affordable long-term lending from financial institutions.

The Government will also need to clearly plan its long-term tariff policy. This is essential for attracting “long money” to the industry. However, unjustified tariff increases for consumers must be avoided.

By the end of the year, a national project for the modernisation of the energy and utility sectors should be approved. The issue of fostering a culture of conserving communal resources remains pressing. Starting next year, it will be necessary to introduce clear consumption norms based on the principle of “the more you consume, the more you pay.” At the same time, consumers should not be left to navigate their relationships with private monopolists alone. Legislation should introduce the concept of socially significant services and regulate them similarly to public services.

Given the growing global energy shortage, we are in dire need of reliable and environmentally friendly energy sources. Therefore, in my opinion, it is essential to focus on the development of nuclear energy. This type of generation can largely meet the rapidly growing needs of our economy. Currently, about 200 nuclear power plants are operating in thirty developed and developing countries.

We must think about the future, considering long-term national interests and the specific needs of our country. This is why I have always emphasized the importance of making well-considered decisions on issues like the construction of a nuclear power plant (NPP) and of widely discussing strategic plans with society.

Every significant decision affecting the life of the country should be made with the support of the people. This is especially true for the NPP referendum. I spoke about organising it last year, meaning this topic has been on the public agenda for a year now. I believe this is a sufficient period for citizens to make an informed decision. Therefore, I support the Government’s proposal. The national referendum on the construction of the nuclear power plant will be held on October 6 this year, and today I will sign the relevant decree.

The upcoming referendum will be another demonstration of a broad nationwide dialogue and a vivid example of the implementation of the “Listening State” concept. In fact, with such steps, we are shaping a new socio-political culture and establishing new standards for making key state decisions.

A strategic priority is the development of the transport and logistics sector. Kazakhstan’s location at the heart of Eurasia is a significant competitive advantage. Therefore, the investments we make in transport infrastructure will undoubtedly pay off.

We must leave future generations high-quality highways and railroads, efficiently operating air hubs, railway stations, and seaports. There is a range of issues we must address in this regard.

The reform of the railroad industry must be accompanied by a revision of the tariff system. This is a necessary step. New tariffs will enable the proper maintenance of the railroad network and expand its capacity. The company “Kazakhstan Temir Zholy” is implementing three major infrastructure projects for the construction of railroads with a total length of over one thousand kilometres. These projects must be completed on time and to a high standard of quality.

An urgent issue is the condition of our highways, a topic I have already addressed. This year, approximately 12,000 kilometres of highways are being repaired and constructed across the country, an unprecedented volume for Kazakhstan. The reconstruction of the Astana-Almaty, Aktobe-Atyrau-Astrakhan, and Taldykorgan-Ust-Kamenogorsk highways will be completed shortly.

The medium repair program, which already covers 2,500 kilometres of interregional and interdistrict roads, is of great importance. These roads are in high demand among citizens. Therefore, I instruct that this program be scaled up to cover at least 10,000 kilometres of roads nationwide. Of course, quality is a top priority. To ensure this, it is necessary to widely implement advanced technologies and materials. Additionally, to strengthen public oversight, a unified digital platform should be launched to display all information on road construction and repair, including inner-city roads.

Kazakhstan must build on its achievements in digitalisation. Artificial intelligence technologies should be actively integrated into the “e-Government” platform. Kazakhstan should aim to become a country where artificial intelligence is widely used and digital technologies are highly developed. This is a priority task for the Government. I strongly encourage the deputies of Parliament to participate in this effort.

Next year, we need to launch the National Centre for Artificial Intelligence in Astana, which will be open to schoolchildren, students, researchers, and entrepreneurs.

We must continue improving the regulatory framework for digital assets and mining, and further develop crypto exchanges. Currently, some entrepreneurs consume large amounts of electricity to the detriment of the economy while not paying taxes in full. This issue needs to be addressed.

By 2025, the project to lay a fibre-optic communication line across the Caspian Sea must be completed. This is extremely important for our country in terms of creating digital infrastructure aligned with international corridors and cross-border data flows. Overall, we need to continue the active development of telecommunications networks and data centres, implement global cybersecurity standards, and enhance the competencies of our specialists.

A critical task is the development of air hubs. Kazakhstan currently processes about 150,000 tons of air cargo annually, and this figure could potentially double within the next four years. We need to create all the necessary conditions to expand the capabilities of our airports for cargo transportation.

The development of domestic air routes, particularly the infrastructure at major tourist sites, should be closely monitored. The runways in the resort areas of Balkhash and Alakol have already been modernised. The potential of the resort areas of Katon-Karagai, Zaisan, and Kendirli needs to be unlocked. In these areas, we should build terminal complexes and airports with quality road infrastructure. The Industrial Development Fund should be utilised to acquire small aircraft.

I would like to emphasize that in implementing tourism projects, it is crucial not to disrupt the ecological balance and to avoid harming nature.

Additionally, we need to focus on improving irrigation systems and the water sector as a whole.

The unprecedented spring floods, which were a severe test for the entire country, demonstrated the unity of our people. Volunteers and concerned citizens from all regions of Kazakhstan provided assistance to those affected. Large businesses also responded to my call to not stand aside. Thanks to the decisive actions of the state and the solidarity of the people, we were able to successfully overcome this extremely challenging situation.

At the same time, the authorities at both the central and local levels need to learn the relevant lessons. In light of current realities, we must be prepared for any challenges, including learning how to create water reserves by collecting floodwater for agricultural needs. It is necessary to repair and modernise hydrological stations and to implement all possible water-saving measures. This is especially important in agriculture, where water-saving technologies should be more widely applied.

The irrigation, water storage, and utilisation sectors offer significant potential for investment, provided the right approach is taken. Therefore, it is essential to regulate the tariff policy and offer investors effective support tools. The Government is obliged to begin addressing this important task.

**FIFTH. It is essential to consistently enhance the human capital of the country.**

It is of the utmost importance to provide the economy with qualified personnel. First and foremost, we must address the acute shortage of sector-specific specialists, including water experts, construction workers, power engineers, and many others. Additionally, we must train specialists in the professions of the future. Work in this direction has already begun.

The Government is advancing the internationalisation of higher education, having attracted 23 well-known foreign universities to the country. We must provide all possible support for their activities, including gradually expanding the state funding for specialist training. The same applies to domestic universities whose educational programs meet modern standards. The size of the grants allocated must be sufficient to ensure a quality educational process. However, the excessive allocation of state funding to all universities is unacceptable.

We must strengthen the connection between top universities and the real sector of the economy. It is necessary to synchronise innovation policy with the country’s scientific and technological priorities. This will spur sector-specific innovations and unlock the potential of applied science in universities.

We should avoid turning scientist internships abroad into a form of sinecure or “academic tourism.” Qualified personnel should be trained not only in universities but also in technical and vocational education institutions. The Government should consider accepting high-performing college graduates into sectoral public bodies.

The reform of professional education is crucial for ensuring economic growth and enhancing investment attractiveness.

I declare 2025 the Year of Working Professions. During this time, the reform of the technical and vocational education system will be implemented. The Year of Working Professions will also promote the value of hard work and professionalism in our society.

It is essential that people who succeed through honest, hard work are always respected and honoured. This aligns perfectly with our principle: “Responsible Citizen - Honest Labour - Deserved Success.” The values of diligence and professionalism should always be prioritised in our society. It is thanks to specialists in their fields that a new quality of our nation is being formed. Therefore, we will continue to take consistent measures to elevate the status of the working individual.

There is no such thing as a bad job, all labour is honourable. The most important thing is for every citizen to fulfil their duties with integrity and a deep sense of responsibility. Only in this way can our country achieve the heights of progress.

As the saying goes, “Work is the gateway to wealth” (“Jumystyń kózin tapqan baılyqtyń ózin tabady”). Our society must cultivate the understanding that honest and responsible labour will always be valued. Among other things, the awarding of honorary titles to citizens serves this purpose. Such honours have already been introduced for teachers, doctors, and cultural workers. This is a commendable initiative, and this approach should be expanded.

To build a competitive economy and ensure steady progress for the country, it is necessary to consistently raise the prestige of working professions and specialists across various industries. Therefore, the system of state awards will include honorary titles for engineers, geologists, field developers, workers in the transport, agricultural, and water industries, as well as scientists and inventors. Recognising their contributions at the state level will serve as strong motivation for all professionals and will enhance the prestige of the working individual.

Secondary education plays a crucial role in strengthening the country’s human resources potential. Under my instructions, the national project “Comfortable School” is being implemented. By the end of 2025, it is planned to put into operation 217 modern-format schools. This issue is highly relevant and is under the oversight of the Samruk-Kazyna Fund. The Government and akims should be actively involved in this effort, and I trust that MPs will also play a part. The Government should establish a separate management system for these comfortable schools.

At the same time, nearly 1,300 schools across the country are in need of major repairs. The Government, in collaboration with akims, needs to identify sources of funding, including sponsorships, to reconstruct these schools within three years.

The state allocates substantial funds for guaranteed payments, including those used to finance public schools. For example, this year alone, 134 billion tenge has been allocated from the budget to public schools, which educate more than 250,000 children. Parents should be informed about the specific state aid provided to public schools. To achieve this, the amounts allocated per child according to the standard should be made transparent. This will give the public a clear picture of the funds allocated to social programs.

Meanwhile, measures must be taken to strengthen the functionality of schools and to further enhance the skills and social status of our teachers.

Teachers are the intellectual vanguard of the country, laying the foundation for the long-term progress of the nation. We can have the best programs, modern schools, and an advanced management system, but nothing can be achieved without good teachers. Therefore, special attention must be paid to recruiting motivated and capable young people into pedagogical universities. A positive trend in this area has already begun, and now we need to consolidate it.

Preparing children for school is of great importance. Parents share joint responsibility with the state for the pre-school education and upbringing of their children. Therefore, per capita financing for preschool education should be linked to the actual income of each family. This approach will help those in genuine need, increase the transparency of state support, and, overall, contribute to strengthening the country’s human potential.

**SIXTH. It is necessary to implement comprehensive measures to strengthen the health of the nation and reboot the system of social support for citizens.**
The introduction of compulsory social health insurance has brought a significant influx of additional resources into healthcare and benefited private medicine. This year, nearly 3.3 trillion tenge of budget funds have been allocated to the healthcare system. However, the return on these investments is still questionable. The imbalances between the obligations of all participants in the health insurance system have led to widespread falsifications. Patients are often asked to pay for services that should be guaranteed by the Government or are forced to wait months for them. This practice is unacceptable.

A single package of basic state medical care must be created, balanced in terms of budget capacity and obligations. Any services beyond this should be covered through the insurance system. Such major changes cannot be successfully implemented without digitalisation.

Instead of the several dozen disparate programs and databases currently in operation, it is crucial to establish a unified state medical information system. This system must ensure end-to-end control and objectivity of data for all healthcare organisations receiving Government orders, regardless of their ownership. The Government should address this urgent task immediately and report on the progress to me and the deputy corps.

To develop domestic healthcare, it is essential to actively attract resources through public-private partnerships. Unfortunately, the best foreign practices in public-private partnerships have not yet been fully integrated into our legislation, leading to project inefficiencies and an excessive burden on the budget. Approaches and adequate tariffs need to be reconsidered in exchange for investments. The Government should establish separate regulations and rules on public-private partnerships specifically for the health and education sectors.

The shortage of qualified medical personnel remains an urgent problem. To address this, it is crucial to significantly improve the quality of medical education, including the introduction of differentiated grants and their distribution based on the quality of the educational process.

As you know, I place special emphasis on the development of mass sports. Without this, it is impossible to achieve the goal of fostering healthy youth and improving the overall health of the nation. Recently, in a meeting with Olympic participants, I outlined key tasks and priorities in the field of sports. I believe there is a need to update legislation in this area.

The relevant amendments will provide a powerful impetus to the development of mass and children’s sports, laying the foundation for the emergence of a new generation of champions. I encourage the deputies to give special attention to this important bill.

The state is consistently increasing social spending, with a focus on supporting vulnerable citizens. Today, more than half of the state budget is allocated to the social sector. To support families with children, the period of childcare benefits has been extended from one to one and a half years.

Since the beginning of this year, special payments have been introduced for people working in harmful conditions. The large-scale “National Fund for Children” project has been launched, distributing over 300 billion tenge from the National Fund’s income to the accounts of 7 million children. However, it should be recognised that current support measures are often provided without considering the real incomes of citizens. As a result, they are sometimes received by wealthy families who do not need such assistance. It is necessary to refine the tools for supporting the population, taking this aspect into account. I instruct the Government to introduce a “social wallet” mechanism at the beginning of next year.

State support should be focused on citizens who truly need it. In other words, social assistance must be provided based on the principles of fairness, transparency, and efficiency.

**SEVENTH. One of the main tasks is to improve the environmental situation and cultivate respect for the environment.**

It is necessary that the citizens of our country are protected from the influence of negative environmental factors. Businesses must approach the issue of nature protection with great responsibility. The Government and the “Atameken” Chamber should take concrete measures in this regard. It is necessary to continue the widespread adoption of the most advanced technologies in this area, as well as to establish a modern system for emissions monitoring. The preservation of Kazakhstan’s unique flora and fauna will remain a priority. The state will take all necessary measures to protect forests and steppes from fires.

Despite Kazakhstan’s vast natural diversity, forests occupy only 5% of the country’s territory. Forest regeneration is crucial for maintaining ecological balance and ensuring the country’s sustainable socio-economic progress. Since the beginning of my presidency, I have paid special attention to this issue.

The country has made good progress in greening efforts, and this pace must not be reduced. The Semey Ormany (Semey Forest) forest reserve houses the only forest seed complex in Central Asia, dedicated to cultivating planting material that meets advanced international standards. It is necessary to replicate this project in other forest regions of the republic.

The idea of increasing forest areas should become truly popular. Serious information and awareness-raising efforts on this topic need to be organised among citizens.

As you know, the country has been holding a nationwide environmental campaign, “Taza Qazaqstan,” (“Clean Kazakhstan”) since spring. This initiative has brought citizens together in a meaningful way. Over several months, about 3 million people participated in the campaign, cleaning up hundreds of thousands of yards and collecting more than one million tons of garbage. Thanks to such initiatives, a new culture and social ethic are taking root in the country. We can say that this is true patriotism and care for the Motherland. Through such efforts, a new quality of our nation is being formed.

This is not just a temporary action; this important project should continue year-round. Frankly speaking, some irresponsible citizens still pollute nature and the streets. These individuals must be held legally accountable for their actions.

In other words, we need to make caring for the cleanliness of the environment a daily norm for everyone. Our nation has many good qualities. For instance, we are known abroad as a hospitable and friendly people. The desire for cleanliness and order should also become an integral feature of our national character.

Akims are directly responsible for the quality of the “Taza Qazaqstan” campaign in the regions. They should explain to people its great importance and properly organise the work. Heads of regions should not only address economic issues but also pay constant attention to the social, cultural, and spiritual aspects of life. It is essential for each leader to work directly with citizens and build a trusting dialogue. When people support a leader’s initiatives, they contribute to positive actions for the country. This is a true indicator of the authority of the akims.

**EIGHTH. The efficiency of public administration should be radically improved.**
A little more than five years have passed since I introduced the concept of a “listening state.” During this period, we have successfully changed the culture of interaction between society and the authorities. A sufficient number of effective mechanisms for expressing opinions and various dialogue platforms have emerged. Direct communication between civil servants and citizens has become the norm. It can be said that this concept has fostered a new model of behaviour for civil servants—proactive, open, and therefore more responsible and effective. However, to ensure the further development of dialogue between the state and society, we must all be conscientious, objective, act strictly within the law, and take responsibility for our words and actions.

We have observed how public initiatives are sometimes hijacked by irresponsible, overly enthusiastic populists who lack in-depth knowledge of the issues being discussed in society. This has nothing to do with true democracy.

It is extremely important that a unified ecosystem for handling appeals has begun to take shape, allowing us to more accurately assess the needs and expectations of citizens. To improve their work, public bodies should focus more on analysing these appeals.

One of the demands of citizens that the state has fulfilled in recent years was the introduction of direct elections for akims (governors).

Thus, since 2021, approximately 2,500 village akims have been elected, representing 90% of the total number of heads of rural settlements. In other villages, elections will be held upon the expiry of the terms of office of their akims. The average age of the newly elected akims is 46 years, and 60% of them have not previously worked in the civil service. Among them are entrepreneurs and members of various political parties. In short, the corps of akims elected by the people has undergone significant renewal.

Last autumn, for the first time, we began holding elections for akims of districts and cities of regional significance. In all oblasts, 45 akims were elected according to the new rules. After a comprehensive study of the election results and analysis of the work of the elected akims, a fundamental decision was made to fully transition to the new system starting next year. In the future, akims of districts and cities of regional significance will be elected only through direct elections, which will be held as the terms of the current akims expire. This is another important step in the transformation of our political system. Political reforms are not a one-time campaign; if required for the development of the state, reforms will be carried out continuously.

The issue of improving the competencies of civil servants remains a priority. All appointments should be based on the professional and moral qualities of the candidates, as well as their performance in previous positions. The principles of meritocracy must be upheld. There have been positive developments in this area, as all state bodies have been integrated into a unified personnel information system.

The Agency for Civil Service Affairs and the Government must ensure the provision of automated services for managing human resources in organisations funded by the state budget.

**NINTH. The ideology of law and order must be firmly established in society.**
The widespread integration of digital technologies into daily life has been accompanied by an increase in various types of fraud, which we are already witnessing. In today’s reality, knowledge of basic economics and finance, along with elementary digital skills, has become especially important. In this regard, I would like to highlight the “Karyzsyz Qogam” (Debt-Free Society) project initiated by the Amanat party to improve the financial literacy of citizens. Last year, the project reached 65,000 people and will be significantly expanded this year.

The Government, together with financial regulators, should introduce educational programs on the basics of financial literacy and digital hygiene in schools and universities. This will strengthen the resilience of Kazakhstan’s citizens against all kinds of fraudulent schemes. All authorised agencies must take decisive action against fraud and related offences that affect law-abiding citizens.

A new Law on the Prevention of Offences is currently being drafted. Its implementation will require the concerted efforts of both the state apparatus and society. Only then can we change the situation, ensure the rule of law, and guarantee the safety of citizens.

In all societies, including ours, there are fundamental demands for justice and security. The full satisfaction of these basic needs is a reliable indicator of a state’s effectiveness.

Through the consistent implementation of large-scale reforms, we have significantly expanded freedom of expression and created opportunities for citizens to participate in the public decision-making process.

Deep social and economic transformations, along with comprehensive measures in the area of human rights protection, are primarily aimed at building a just society, which serves as the foundation for the all-around progress of our country. That is why we will continue reforms and systematic work in this direction.

At the same time, ensuring the safety of citizens remains our strategic priority—a fundamental value for every individual and society as a whole.

In recent years, we have made significant progress in creating a safe environment. There is no rampant crime or lawlessness in our streets and public places. While many countries, including some developed nations, are experiencing a veritable epidemic of crime and disorder, we cannot afford to rest on our laurels.

One of my primary tasks is to make Kazakhstan a place of comfortable and safe living. Law enforcement and relevant Government agencies have been tasked with ensuring the comprehensive safety of our citizens.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs must take decisive action against all offences, from petty hooliganism and vandalism to illegal immigration and serious criminal activities. There is no place for criminals in a state governed by the rule of law; therefore, banditry must be eradicated. The same applies to the destructive activities of extremists, including religious radicals. Law enforcement agencies need to demonstrate professionalism, determination, and integrity.

Road accidents are a matter of serious concern for the entire society. Since the beginning of the year, more than 1,300 people have died in road accidents, and over 16,000 have been injured. In fact, people die on the roads every day, sometimes entire families.

Road safety can be improved by enhancing road infrastructure and implementing intelligent systems. This applies not only to local roads but also to national highways. The relevant department must ensure proper control over the technical condition of vehicles.

It is no secret that the level of driver training has declined, with many obtaining their licenses without proper schooling. I expect more decisive actions from the Government, akims, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs. This problem must also be a focus of attention for the deputies.

The observance of law and order in the army, where young men serve their country, is of paramount importance. To ensure that soldiers can properly fulfil their duties, the Armed Forces and other power structures must prioritize strict discipline.

Parents have entrusted their sons to the state, so the leadership of the army and law enforcement agencies bear a special responsibility for their health and safety.

Another critical task is the fight against drugs, which is essential for preserving the nation’s gene pool.

We have already taken the necessary legislative measures. However, no concrete results are yet visible. We cannot say that state structures, including law enforcement agencies, are working effectively. The drug problem is worsening.

We must build a society based on law and order, knowledge, and pragmatism. The key to a nation’s success lies in the culture, solidarity, and creativity of its citizens, especially its youth. To become a truly civilized country, we need to eliminate destructive behaviours.

I discussed this at the National Kurultai (National Congress), where I presented five social diseases that threaten the future of our country. Since then, certain measures have been taken. Laws have been enacted to counter vandalism and gambling addiction, and the so-called vapes have been banned. These steps are already showing results. In the fight against social vices, we must unite the efforts of the entire society.

Openness and tolerance have always been distinctive traits of our national character. These qualities largely underpin the unity and harmony—key values of our people.

In Kazakhstan, there is and can be no discrimination based on language, religion, ethnicity, or social status. Isolated cases and provocations do occur, but they arise from the irresponsibility and ignorance of some citizens. Such incidents are, and will continue to be, addressed by law enforcement according to the law.

At the same time, it is no secret that certain biased individuals, including those acting from abroad, attempt to manipulate public opinion and make unfounded attacks against our country. All these well-funded attempts to sow discord in Kazakhstan are doomed to failure because we have never had, do not have, and will never have any “phobias” on either a social or political level. We will continue to build a harmonious, just, and stable society.

We are a progressive nation and, therefore, must look further and broader, rise above various provocations, and show real examples of wisdom, rely on the power of law.

As I have said before, we cannot constantly look back, seeking out culprits, whether they be the system or individual political figures. We need to know and study our history, but not dwell on reasons for gloom and resentment. From past events, no matter how tragic, we should draw useful lessons. We must look forward with optimism, focusing on the progress and development of our country.

Therefore, I reiterate: our society must be governed by law and order. This is a fundamental condition for ensuring both public and individual security. Only in this way can we create a Just, Clean, and Safe Kazakhstan. To achieve this strategic goal, it is necessary to create favourable external conditions for the peaceful and sustainable development of the country. This is the task of diplomacy, which, in the current complex geopolitical realities, must be highly professional.

Kazakhstan firmly adheres to a peaceful and balanced foreign policy. Main tasks of our diplomacy remain the strengthening of the state’s sovereignty and independence, protecting rights of citizens abroad, promoting national interests, and attracting investment to the economy.

Kazakhstan convincingly demonstrates its commitment to broad multilateral cooperation in strict accordance with the UN Charter. Our country plays an active role in addressing international security and stability issues. We support the efforts of the UN and other international organisations in combating terrorism, extremism, illegal migration, climate change, and other threats. We support UN peacekeeping activities, disarmament initiatives, and advocate for the resolution of armed conflicts through diplomatic means.

Under Kazakhstan’s chairmanship, important international events have been held in Astana, including summits of the heads of state of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia, the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, and the Organisation of Turkic States. We are grateful to our allies and partners for their support.

 **Dear compatriots,**

You can see the fundamental shifts happening in the world today. Amid economic, political, climatic, and many other global and regional challenges, we must simultaneously address a vast number of both current and strategic tasks. Naturally, resources are insufficient to tackle everything, and immediate results cannot be guaranteed. Many problems in the country have accumulated over the years. We discuss everything openly, and despite the difficulties, we are systematically addressing all issues. A lot of work lies ahead.

Ensuring sustainable socio-economic progress, fully unlocking the creative potential of our citizens, and genuinely improving the well-being of the people are the main tasks of the state.

Patriotism should be the guiding principle for Government members, akims, deputies, and society as a whole. Every initiative should stem from constructive aspirations. Through every action, we should contribute to the country’s development. By carefully using resources, working diligently, paying taxes, purchasing domestic goods, and investing in various projects, we strengthen our state’s potential, benefiting both our homeland and our families.

We must address the tasks before us pragmatically and consistently, avoiding pessimism and apathy. This approach impacts not only the people’s well-being but also the historical fate of the country in this challenging era.

We have a clear vision for the long-term development of our state. To achieve these high goals, we must maintain cohesion, show mutual support, and demonstrate respect.

Through unity, our people have always successfully overcome various challenges, and this will continue to be the case. Let us work together to make our homeland a just and developed state where everyone can find their calling and realise their dreams.

We share a common high mission: to build a Just Kazakhstan, a state of equal opportunities for all, for future generations. As the Head of State, I will make every effort toward this goal, and I am confident that you will also tirelessly work toward this shared objective.

May our sacred homeland – Kazakhstan – prosper!

May our people be prosperous!