

Kazakhstan: On the Path to Democracy

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Abstract It is well-known that the path toward democracy is the general path taken by many civilizations of the world. Political experience has proven that democracy provides efficacious conditions for the development of a political system. This article describes the Republic of Kazakhstan's pursuit of the democratic process and the country's efforts to build a democracy that is served by political parties and consolidation of open society in order to strengthen the democracy.

Keywords Kazakhstan, Democratization, Parties, Constitution, Political stability

1. Introduction

The formation of a democratic country first starts with its citizens' comprehension and acknowledgment of democratic principles. Political parties have a unique role in describing and explaining the ideas behind democracy to the people and developing a country into a democracy, because parties are a politically active element of democracy that is made up of the people. The parties require freedom in order to realize their political objectives. Therefore, a democratic country is the main condition necessary for democratic parties to operate and exist (Baimurzayev V, 2008).

This issue concerns parties that are chosen through the democratic process. A democratic country with parties that support authoritarianism and totalitarianism is considered dichotomous. Among 225 countries in the world, over 170 have chosen democracy. This testifies to democracy being a global phenomenon. The adherence of political parties to democratic principles and policies plays a crucial role in almost all countries that choose democracy (Nazarbayev N, 1999).

2. Background

The democratic evolution of Kazakhstan is turning into a key factor that will balk the ferity and corruption convenience of the authority. The cooperation rights of political organizations and political parties were expanded. The issue of coordination of Republic of Kazakhstan legislation according to democracy standards and requirements was proceeded. Without liberalization and humanization of legislation it's not possible to actuate democracy processes. Certainly, Kazakhstan parties don't

consider that Western democratic standards should be artificially copied in our country. The issue concerns democratic values like the liberty of speech, the freedom of political meetings, protection of human rights, open society, formation of political associations. They are being developed according to political truth of Kazakhstan (Nazarbayev N, 2007).

The critical importance of this issue for the country can be observed in the inclusion of democracy on the agenda of the programs of the 25 parties that have operated in Kazakhstan' political space during the past 20 years. The word "democracy" is part of the names of 6 out of 10 political parties that officially existed in Kazakhstan between 2007 and 2009, which proves that the main political forces in the country are turning toward democracy. The authoritarian and opposition parties in the country do not doubt that democracy is of critical importance for Kazakhstan's development (Darimbetov B, 2006).

Political parties clearly understand the historical and future importance of formation of democratic country. Therefore most of the political parties refer to democracy requirements or democracy claims in participation and struggle for authority.

Political parties certainly understood that democratic standards cannot be formed at once in a short term in post-authoritarian country like Kazakhstan. Therefore authority parties related democratization perspective in the country with democratic power concepts.

The investigator of the nature of Western democracy and open society Karl Popper doesn't consider a democratic authority as an absolute power of a nation (Erman E, 2008).

Though people can influence the activities of the authority, they cannot cope with an absolute self-management. As per K. Popper: «Using "democracy" and "tyranny" labels the leading principle of democratic policy is to invent, develop and protect political institutions to control the abuse of power of all kinds» (Popper K, 1992).

It means that the principal root of democratic management development concepts is to be sought in political history and

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political thoughts. There is no doubt that the current political parties working for democratic choice have taken the ideological platform from the works of ancient philosophers. As a socio-political phenomenon the democracy was one of the important segments of political culture of ancient Greek policy. In political processes democracy reflects as a many-sided and multi-faceted phenomenon. Therefore democracy building process of one country cannot be repeated in another country in unchanged form. Theoretically and practically complicated work of political parties struggling for democracy is related to this complex phenomenon of society. Sometimes democracy is understood differently by different groups. They perceive it regarding to political and social truth of their countries.

Choosing democracy is only the first stage of a challenging and complex process that will lead to a new form of government of the people. Historically, the process of forming a democratic country is not a consistent process that inexorably leads to great achievements. Democracy is the phenomenon that is ready to give in to its opponent. To prevent this, a country should insure that its democratic principles and practices are permanent after they have been established. The parties that a government creates should become the parties of democratic reform.

3. Discussion

A unique feature of democratic countries throughout the world is that it is not necessary for other countries to imitate the successful principles and standards of democracy, especially by young democratic countries. This situation complicates the process of creating a democratic country. Democracy of each country has its own unique features, which are defined by the social history of the country, the society and its people, and the culture. A social party is a force defining the objective and subjective preconditions and nature of democracy and activating it. Therefore, the development of the Kazakhstani model of democracy, the formation of this model, and its future depend on the activities of the social parties of the country that are aimed at democratizing the life of the society.

The Republic of Kazakhstan also connects its political destiny with democratic principles (Constitution RoK, 1999). The economic and social relations that best represent democracy were chosen as a strategic direction for the development of the country. The government is made up entirely of ordinary citizens because the government's dependence on the people is one of the main principles of its authority. The country should serve its people. Kazakhstan has consolidated its democratic choice as a constitutional requirement. The formation of a democratic society is of the highest priority in the RoK constitution because the life of the country is connected to democracy. It is also a constitutional requirement that all crucial political and social issues in Kazakhstan are to be addressed with the help of the people and through democratic methods. The countries that

care about their people can successfully move forward through its evolutionary stages. This change is also included as a constitutional principle in Kazakhstan. Article 3 of our constitution states: "1. The people shall be the only source of state power. 2. The people shall exercise power directly through an all-nation referendum and free elections as well as delegate the execution of their power to state institutions." (Constitution RoK, 1999).

The main objective of democracy is not for the government to relinquish its authority, but rather for it to depend upon and be accountable to the people. However, the constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan clearly shows that democracy is not a limitless freedom. Democracy requires that the freedom of each individual be determined by law (Nysanbayev A, 2007).

Democracy has deep roots throughout history. Starting around 5–6 BCE, ancient countries began to draw and formulate the concept of democracy, i.e., government of the people. This phenomenon was born from the striving to develop self-government. The philosophical theories of democratic government began with the works of the ancient Greek philosophers Plato and Aristotle (Balakin, 1997; Zhebeleva S, 2002).

Confucius's thought had a major influence on Eastern political concepts and the formation of the authority of a government. Confucius considered democracy to be a system of governance that was founded on principles related to the development of nature and the individual. Therefore, we must search for the main roots of the development of the concepts of democratic government throughout social history and political thought. Without doubt, the social parties operating within the context of the democratic choices being made today are founded upon the thought of such ancient philosophers (Confucius, 1999).

Certain political groups in Kazakhstan have attempted to assess and curb the formation of a democratic society on the basis of their particular interests and worldviews. These debatable and conflicting ideas will exist even as political parties are formed.

The idea of "Kazakhstan way" of the President of Republic of Kazakhstan N.A. Nazarbayev is very important. The selection «Kazakhstan way» is not an easy process.

The peculiarities of Kazakhstani way aimed at building democratic institutions:

1. Almost all political authorities and political parties of the country understand the importance of social friendship, political stability and preservation of social peace for poli-ethnic and poli-religious Kazakhstan nation.
2. Realization of modernization policy through reforms that totally cover the main sectors of society in Kazakhstan.
3. «Kazakhstani way» chooses building democratic institutions of the country according to Kazakhstani peculiarities. Kazakhstan started building an open society (Nazarbayev N, 2007).

The country's political parties clearly understand that the

political views of the Republic of Kazakhstan's citizens should be directed toward democratic standards in order to form a democratic country. Democracy is a system of government that encompasses the interests of different groups and social forces within a single framework. As a social phenomenon, democracy can be founded on both tolerance and political competition. Different and even opposing views can peacefully coexist under democratic conditions. When there is a struggle between differing views and ideas, such ideological diversity can exist freely only within democratic conditions. The political parties, which can be the main source of political battles in a society, can be turned into an integral part of the democratic process. Democracy is not chaos and ochlocracy. Rather, it is based upon law and the triumphs in a country, with the main spheres of life being adjusted according to the law. It is necessary for a country to establish legal principles in order to become democratic.

4. Conclusions

The Republic of Kazakhstan will not stop at its current stage of development in its process of political modernization. The country aims at deepening the democratic thinking of its population. The main supporters of democracy are the political parties. The political parties of our country have struggled to improve the electoral system, insure fair election processes, and adopt legislation that supports the development and functioning of political parties (Naribayev M, 2007). According to experts: Robert Alan Dahl, Andrew Heywood "the main objective of political change is the creation of an efficient system of government of country and society. Together with the support of the rights and freedom of the citizens, this system consolidates political stability" (Heywood, 2005).

After including the need to form a democracy in its agenda, the Republic of Kazakhstan began to search for a specific Kazakhstani model of democracy. The country has taken concrete steps toward developing an open society, which has

intensified these activities. The privileges of an open society that have been developed in Western Europe and North America are serving as examples for Kazakhstan (Nazarbayev N, 2008).

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