



ON THE PROCESSES OF DELIMITATION AND DEMARCATION OF BORDERS BETWEEN UZBEKISTAN AND KAZAKHSTAN

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15629100>

Abstract

This article analyzes the processes of delimitation and demarcation of the borders of two Central Asian countries, namely the Republic of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. It also considers the completion of joint procedures for the final stage of demarcation works, which were resolved over many years. The establishment of state borders between these two countries is conditioned by adherence to the principles of international law, such as the principle of territorial integrity of borders, non-interference in internal affairs, which in turn contribute to the comprehensive development of bilateral relations between these countries.

Key words: delimitation, demarcation, border territories, security sphere, ethnic mosaic, territorial disputes.

The processes of delimitation of national-territorial borders of Central Asia, in particular Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, have a long history. Initially, the redistribution of the territories of this region was established during the years of the USSR, accompanied by the admission of a number of mistakes, which, after the collapse of the socialist system, led to the intensification of border contradictions, the struggle for land and resources, and to the problems of ethnic enclaves. Consequently, with the acquisition of independence, one of the priority tasks for the countries of Central Asia was to resolve issues of delimitation of interstate borders taking into account national interests.

For many years, the solution to this issue was considered a difficult problem, since the population living in the border areas faced certain difficulties, the resolution of which required complex measures from the leadership of each country.. The process of delimitation and demarcation of the borders of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan includes a sequence of several stages, starting with the signing of agreements, the development and implementation of border work and ending with the final design of the borders of the two countries, which were achieved thanks to many years of joint efforts.

I. E. Khanova in her scientific article, analyzing the paths to the process of legitimizing the borders between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, points to the historical prerequisites and certain difficulties that were preceded by a number





of events: Firstly, these lands represented an ethnic mosaic of the peoples of five republics; secondly, the borders of these territories were subject to change in connection with the emergence and collapse of various states; thirdly, during the Soviet era, the territories were redistributed with the transfer of the territory of Karakalpakstan from the Kazakh ASSR to the Uzbek ASSR [1].

These events explain the long path to reaching agreements between countries on the settlement of disputes on the delimitation and demarcation of borders, through which the countries nevertheless achieved a compromise in the delimitation of territories.

In the scientific article of the collective work of the authors E. T. Bekbosynov, G. A. Mamasharipova and G. M. Zhailauova it is emphasized that the signing in 1998 of the agreement on ratification by the two countries "On Eternal Friendship between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Republic of Kazakhstan" became the starting point in the moderate development of bilateral relations. After signing the agreement, one of the primary tasks on the path of mutual cooperation between these states becomes the coordination of work on the procedures for establishing the interstate border of both countries in accordance with the norms of international law. Evidence of this is the signing of the agreement "Agreement between the Republic of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan on the Kazakh-Uzbek state border (Astana, November 16, 2001)", and the adoption, along with this agreement, of the ratification of four normative legal acts listed below.

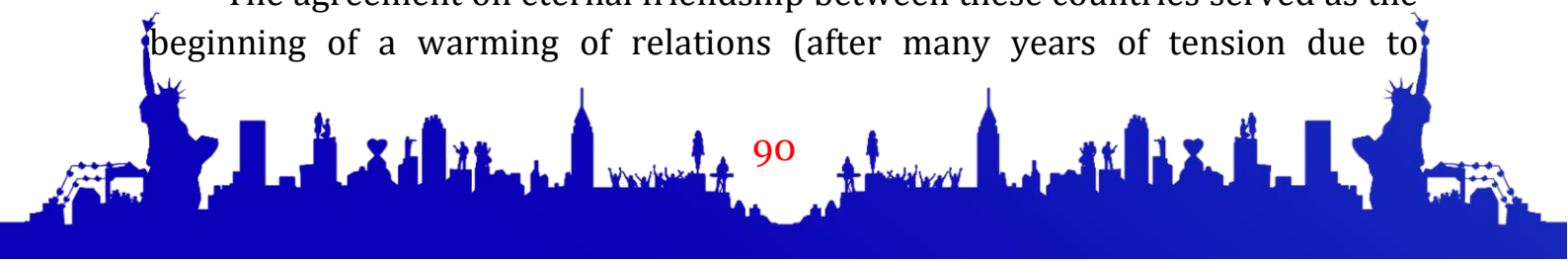
1. Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated July 2, 2003 N 453 "On ratification of the Treaty between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of Uzbekistan on the Kazakh-Uzbek state border."

2. "On the ratification of the Treaty between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of Uzbekistan on certain sections of the Kazakh-Uzbek state border" Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated July 2, 2003 N 452.

3 "On the ratification of the Treaty between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of Uzbekistan on certain sections of the Kazakh-Uzbek state border" Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated July 2, 2003 N 452.».

4. Resolution of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated 13.12.2002 N 451-1 and "On ratification of the Treaty between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Republic of Kazakhstan on certain sections of the Uzbek-Kazakh State Border" [2].

The agreement on eternal friendship between these countries served as the beginning of a warming of relations (after many years of tension due to





instability in the region), and gave impetus to effective cooperation between the countries in various areas, especially in the area of security.

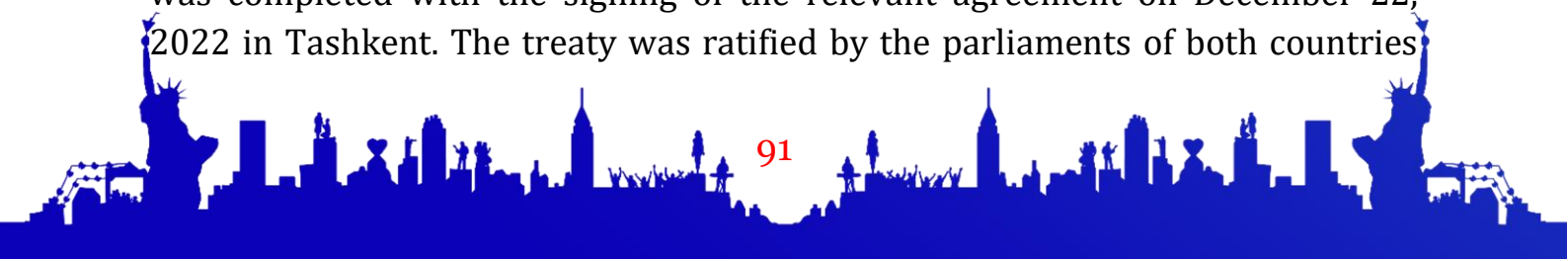
This friendship treaty and the adopted legal acts, having secured legal force, had great weight in the implementation of tasks in border issues. The states committed themselves to joint work to maintain security in the region, resolve issues of dividing natural resources, and settle conflicts, which they intended to resolve after clearly defining the borders of both countries, which led to strengthening trust between the countries.

The procedure for delimitation of the interstate border of the two countries was implemented in two stages. The first stage of joint work, which began in February 2000, demonstrates the implementation of delimitation by 96% along the total length of the border. The remaining territories, namely the settlements, were finally regulated by the beginning of 2003 [3]. Thus, the village of Bagys and five settlements located along the Arnasai dam, where predominantly Kazakhs live, were transferred to Kazakhstan by mutual agreement. In turn, the village of Turkestanets, which previously belonged to Kazakhstan, went to Uzbekistan. Three villages in the Kyzylorda region, where the predominantly Uzbek population lives, also became part of Uzbekistan. [2].

The stage of the delimitation process was completed with the resolution of the main issue, namely the delimitation of settlements in the two countries. This progress has led to the achievement of mutually beneficial goals in both external and internal relations between the two countries, the implementation of agreements without external interference from third countries, by strengthening bilateral diplomatic relations. These agreements contributed to political stabilization in the region, simplified control over territories under their jurisdiction, prevented territorial disputes and minimized tensions among peoples living in border areas.

The beginning of demarcation procedures has been monitored since 2003. Field work on installing border signs in the border area continued from 2004 to 2021. A total of 100 meetings of the joint demarcation commission and 34 meetings of the joint demarcation working group were held. The border was extended by 5 km due to the change in the course of the Keles and Syr Darya rivers.

The demarcation of the state border between the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of Uzbekistan, including the territory of the former Aral Sea, was completed with the signing of the relevant agreement on December 22, 2022 in Tashkent. The treaty was ratified by the parliaments of both countries





and entered into force on July 4, 2023, officially completing the demarcation process of the 2,356.666 km long border, along which 1,301 border markers were installed.

When signing the agreement in December 2022, the President of Uzbekistan Sh. Mirziyoyev noted that "The Demarcation Agreement will serve the cause of peace and security in the region.....Our border has always been and remains the border of friendship and good neighborliness" [4].

In the territory of the Aral Sea, which has become significantly shallower, the border between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan was drawn along the dried-up part of its bottom. According to the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On the State Border of the Republic of Kazakhstan", the border along the Aral Sea runs along the line of border points connecting the exits of the state border to the shores, and does not change when the contours of the shores and the water level in the sea change [5].

If we analyze the processes of delimitation and demarcation of state borders, we see that the demarcation processes turned out to be long and drawn-out. This process, which spanned 19 years and began at a moderate pace, began to be accompanied by intensive negotiations with the election of Shavkat Mirziyoyev as President of Uzbekistan, which ultimately led to the completion of the demarcation work stage, contributed to the strengthening of friendly relations between the Republic of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, and the strengthening of socio-economic, political and diplomatic relations.

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