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**Factsheet on President Tokayev’s participation in the session of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan**

**Overview**

On 29 April, the President of Kazakhstan, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, took part in the **XXXI session of the** **Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan**, titled “The unity of the people is the basis of a renewed Kazakhstan”.

The President made several important announcements, which are outlined below.

**President Tokayev’s announcements at the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan session**

**On the referendum in Kazakhstan**

* President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev proposed holding a referendum in Kazakhstan on the draft **amendments to the Constitution**.
* The working group has prepared amendments to 33 articles of the Constitution, a third of the entire Constitution. The bill on introducing these changes has been submitted to the Constitutional Council, which will soon deliver its verdict.
* Tokayev believes that the referendum will allow every citizen to take a direct part in deciding the fate of the country and will strengthen the course for comprehensive **democratisation** and **building a New Kazakhstan**.

**On the New Kazakhstan**

* President Tokayev stresses that the amendments to the Constitution mean a new phase in the development of Kazakhstan’s statehood.
* He noted that the reform of the party and electoral systems opens up new opportunities for the participation of all citizens in the electoral processes. The **emergence of new political parties is expected**, covering almost the entire electoral landscape.
* According to the President, in order to build a New Kazakhstan, it will be necessary to completely reformat the system of individual and social values.

**On the National Kurultay**

* The first meeting of the new dialogue platform - "Ulttyk Kuryltay" (National Congress) will take place in one month. The Kurultay is designed to consolidate society and to discuss topical issues of the country's development.
* The Kurultay will include deputies, members of the assembly, experts and human rights activists, representatives of all regions, as well as the Civil Alliance, public councils, non-governmental organisations, business associations and the business sector.

**On the state language**

* President Tokayev emphasized that the state language of Kazakhstan is the Kazakh language, but the Russian language also occupies its due place, including in the fundamental law of Kazakhstan.
* The Head of State said measures need to be taken to **strengthen the status of the Kazakh language**, but not to the detriment of any other language and, moreover, **not to discriminate against any other languages** ​​and citizens who speak other languages.

**On the Assembly of the People**

* The Head of State noted that the undoubted merit of the Assembly of the People is that over the years of its existence it has **contributed to the strengthening of civil unity**. He added that he is confident that in the new realities, the Assembly will continue to serve as a solid institutional policy of peace and harmony.
* President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev said that it is necessary to strengthen the role of the Assembly **in the implementation of political reforms**.
* Senators from the Assembly will represent the totality of interests of the ethnic groups of Kazakhstan on the basis of national integration and ethnic and cultural diversity.
* The Assembly should develop **effective and transparent procedures** for the selection of candidates for the Senate.
* All these issues should be reflected in the updated law on the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan.
* It is also necessary to create a **training centre for ethno-mediation**, to organise permanent training courses, where the majority of civil servants of the district level should be trained.
* The Head of State emphasised that it is of fundamental importance that representatives of all ethnic groups living in Kazakhstan **share common civic values** ​​**and associate themselves with the country**. He added that “this is our great achievement over the years of independence, and we are obliged to comprehensively strengthen it”.

**On Kazakhstan’s unity**

* President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev spoke about provocateurs who are trying to undermine the unity in the country, as well as the **right of Kazakhstan to pursue an independent policy**, emphasizing that “provocateurs will not be able to undermine our unity, the right of our state to pursue an independent policy”.
* He stressed that "our statehood, our country, our homeland must be the highest value. We must all work for this goal”.
* The President urged not to succumb to provocations from within and from outside.
* He added that political and social pluralism must not be allowed to take radical forms.