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## IN MUNICH, TOKAYEV SEES INCREASE ROLE OF CENTRAL ASIAN REGION IN SECURITY

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Central Asia, gaining a new regional identity, plays an increasingly important role in international affairs, Kazakhstan President Kassym Jomart Tokayev said at 56th Munich conference on 15 February.

Firstly, today we are seeing a rapprochement between the countries of the region. Multilateral political dialogue has increased. Mutual trade and economic ties are developing dynamically. Old regional problems are being addressed. There is a consolidation of forces and the development of common approaches to achieve joint goals, Tokayev said during his speech Geography Matters: A talks on Central Asia.

Speaking about the role of the region, Tokayev expressed the opinion that the place of Central Asia in global geopolitics will only increase. According to him, Central Asia is one of the key regions for the implementation of the Chinese megaproject One Belt – One Road.

He informed the forum participants about the foreign policy priorities of Kazakhstan, the relations of Kazakhstan with Russia, China, the EU, the US, as well as with Afghanistan.

Secondly. External players are also rethinking their strategy in the region in the context of implementing specific and very promising projects. So, Russia continues to effectively interact with the Central Asian states both on a bilateral basis and through integration initiatives, primarily the EAEU, Tokayev said.

According to him, a constructive dialogue is being built in the EU – Central Asia format. The United States is also striving to keep abreast. Just a few days ago, the new United States Strategy for Central Asia 2019-2025 was announced. Overall, joint projects of Central Asian countries with Russia, China, the European Union, and the US are aimed at the comprehensive development and strengthening of security in our region, Tokayev stressed.

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