

### Kazakhstan



#### **GDP growth in Kazakhstan in 2007 made 8.7 % - Masimov**

According to the Prime Minister of Kazakhstan Karim Masimov, GDP growth in Kazakhstan in 2007 by preliminary estimations made 8.7 %.

“The economy of our country last year continued to develop at high rates,” K. Masimov said.

He reminded, “more strict conditions of funding in the international markets have complicated possibilities to attract external financing for the Kazakhstan banks.” “Therefore it is expected that the actual GDP growth in 2008 will make 5 - 7 %,” the Prime Minister specified.

“The main goal of the Agency for Supervision of the Financial Market and Financial Organizations and the National Bank in the new year is maintenance of stability of the financial system of the country and management of the system risks arising in connection with the situation in foreign markets,” the Prime Minister added. He informed, “the National Bank will undertake measures for keeping inflation at the level not exceeding 10 %.”

- *Source: Kazakhstan Today*

### Kyrgyzstan



#### **Food corporations to be formed in Kyrgyzstan to provide food security**

The Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Processing Industry of Kyrgyzstan is working over three-years agro-industrial complex development program of the country. Within the framework of this program food corporations and national buffer stock of grain-crops will be formed.

During discussion of this issue the head of the Ministry of Agriculture Arstanbek Nogoyev stressed that the main attention will be focused on productions, sale and processing of agricultural products. - *Source: Kyrgyz National News Agency*

#### **Food prices will rise in Kyrgyzstan in spring**

Prices for food products will rise in Kyrgyzstan in spring, experts of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Processing Industry consider.

They came to such a conclusion taking into account world tendencies and a fact that Kyrgyzstan integrates into the world economy and world tendencies, which influence on the economy.

Specialist of the Ministry - Burul Nazarmatova declares with certainty that there will be no fall in prices. *Source: Kyrgyz National News Agency; Edited by: usapeec.kz*

#### **Kyrgyzstan's GDP growth totaled 8,2% in 2007**

According to the National Statistics Committee of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, GDP growth made 8,2% in 2007. Consumer prices increased 20,1% compared to December 2006.

Total industrial production made 7,3%. Excluding the development of the Kumtor gold deposit, this figure grew 10,3 %. - *Source: Kyrgyz National News Agency*

**Be in the swim!**  
**Visit our web site:**  
**[www.usapeec.kz](http://www.usapeec.kz)**

## Tajikistan



### Tajik GDP up 7.8% in 2007

Tajikistan's GDP increased 7.8% in 2007 to 12.7797 billion somoni, the State Statistics Committee reported.

GDP growth in 2006 was 7%. Industrial output in 2007 rose 9.9% to 5.4314 billion somoni. Consumer goods production increased to 1.4278 billion somoni, 19.4% more than in 2006. Agricultural output was up 6.5% to 4.613 billion somoni. Retail trade increased to 3.4694 billion somoni in constant prices, 5.2% more than in 2006.

The average exchange rate in 2007 was 3.4426 somoni/\$1. - *Source: Interfax Agency*

## Uzbekistan



### U.S. – Uzbekistan relations: another step toward rapprochement?

Admiral William Fallon, head of the US Central Command, has visited Uzbekistan during his Central Asian tour. As Central Asia's most populous nation, Uzbekistan is a vital player in the regional geopolitical and energy development games being waged by the United States, the European Union, Russia and China. Tashkent controls a relatively small amount of natural resources, mostly natural gas. But many of the export routes out of Central Asia cross Uzbek territory.

Relations between Washington and Brussels, on the one hand, and Tashkent on the other have been in a deep freeze since Uzbek security forces opened fire on unarmed civilians in Andijan in 2005. Immediately following the Andijan events, Uzbekistan strengthened relations with Russia, and to a lesser extent, China. Most notably, Tashkent signed a strategic partnership agreement with Russia, and joined the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. In recent months, however, tension has seeped into the Uzbek-Russian relationship, presenting the United States and EU with a potential

diplomatic opening.

The itinerary of Fallon's Central Asian tour also includes Tajikistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan. In Dushanbe, Fallon refrained from saying specifically when he would stop in Tashkent. Defense Department representatives, meanwhile, explained that the admiral's schedule was tightly guarded for security reasons. Fallon also was reticent in discussing his agenda for the Uzbek visit, but he did emphasize that he would not seek the re-establishment of a US military base in Uzbekistan, according to a report distributed by the Asia-Plus news agency on January 22. Amid the fallout in diplomatic relations in 2005, Uzbekistan evicted US forces from a base at Karshi-Khanabad.

Political experts in Uzbekistan and elsewhere in Central Asia believe Fallon's mission extends beyond purely military matters. Some believe the main aim is to lay the groundwork for a US-Uzbek rapprochement.

Developments in recent months suggest that both sides are looking for ways to mend fences. If nothing else, Uzbek President Islam Karimov could use improved relations with the United States and European Union as leverage against Russia in various ongoing negotiations, including discussions covering Uzbek access to the Prikaspiisky Pipeline project. The first public hints of a thaw came in May 2007 when the EU lifted a visa ban on top Uzbek officials.

In the fall, a new US ambassador to Tashkent, Richard Norland, engaged in high-profile diplomacy that many observers interpreted as an effort to put US-Uzbek relations on track for rapprochement.

In December, Karimov responded positively to the US signals. In his Constitution Day address to the nation, the Uzbek leader surprised listeners when he denied the very existence of a problem in US/EU-Uzbek relations.

"There are still those who claim that there are disagreements between Uzbekistan on the one hand and the United State and European states on the other. It is not hard to see that they would like those disagreements to exist in order to benefit from them," Karimov stated. "Uzbekistan, in its foreign policy,

has adhered to mutually beneficial cooperation with and mutual respect for its close and far neighbors, including the United States and Europe. We will never change this policy. Moreover, we can state with certainty that the foundation for equal and mutually beneficial relations that suit our national interests is growing even stronger.”

Earlier in January, Pierre Morel, the European Union’s Special Representative for Central Asia, visited Tashkent. Details of Morel’s discussions with Uzbek leaders, including Karimov, have not been made public. Similar secrecy surrounds the arrival of Adm. Fallon. The visit itself, however, provides evidence that Washington is feeling a sense of urgency to re-engage Karimov. - *Source: Eurasianet*

**[www.usapeec.kz](http://www.usapeec.kz)**