



**Speech delivered by Ambassador Aurélia Bouchez,  
Head of the European Union Delegation to Kazakhstan  
at the V Astana Economic Forum  
Panel session: "Modern World and the Civil Service Reform"**

**"The EU strategic support for Civil service reform  
to enhance capacity of Kazakhstan"**

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**Introduction**

- The importance of public sector management and civil service reforms is increasing in EU development cooperation. The latest EU development strategy published last October placed them among top priorities.
- In Kazakhstan, we have recently launched a major project with objective to support the civil service reform in KZ.

**Place of civil service reform in EU development cooperation**

- EU is the world's leading donor, and also the biggest technical cooperation donor in Kazakhstan with more than 10 M Euros of yearly grant payments.
- The EU's experience shows that the efficiency and sustainability of this cooperation is enhanced when **the governance issues are addressed**.
- Therefore, governance issues represent a key priority for EU development policy, along with inclusive and sustainable growth for human development.
- And a good governance environment requires a good civil service.

- Of course there are also other components for governance, which are also addressed through various EU cooperation programmes, such as: (i) support to democratization; (ii) promotion and protection of human rights; (iii) reinforcement of the rule of law and the administration of justice; (iv) enhancement of the role of civil society; and (vi) decentralization and local government reform.
- But whatever the results obtained on these various fronts, they will need an effective civil service, to carry them through in an effective and sustainable manner.

### **Lessons learnt from EU technical cooperation on civil service reform**

Let me share some remarks drawn from years of EU cooperation.

- Civil service reform must include from the start key cross-cutting provisions such as better transparency, ethical standards and fight against corruption, gender equality.
- We must not forget that there is a political dimension in civil service reform, since this is an instrument through which government policy is implemented. It reflects the official policies and the government ability to take into account the requirements of the citizens and the state of development of the society.
- **This is why the EU technical cooperation program must be tailored to meet local conditions.** The best way for the EU is a close relationship with key local counterparts, as we enjoy here in KZ with the Agency for Civil Service Affairs and the Academy of Public Administration.
- Another remark drawn out of experience is the importance of a step by step approach, of **sequencing of the reform efforts**, in order to meet the absorption capacity of the structures and to allow civil servants to adapt and develop new skills, especially at senior policy management level. It can only be achieved over time. Therefore, the **EU is adopting long term perspective**. In KZ, our support in this field is planned until 2018.
- The **promotion of a culture of consultation within the public service** is necessary. The **EU is working at different levels of government – at central and at regional level**. The EU is also promoting communication between public bodies and civil society.

- **Civil service reform is recognized as an essential element of capacity development.**  
Sustainable economic development requires professional and efficient civil service.

### **Modern trends in EU technical cooperation on civil service reforms**

- Initially, the focus of civil service reforms promoted in EU development cooperation was on reducing the costs of public sector. Later on, the focus was mainly on capacity of civil service measured through monitoring and benchmarking tools.
- **Nowadays**, the main focus is on the concrete results. The **ultimate goal is to improve service delivery**. There is an increased focus on results. It means notably improving the quality and motivation of civil service, recruitment procedures and promotion systems, and ethical behaviour.

### **EU funded projects related to civil service reform in KZ**

- In KZ, EU has funded smaller size projects in the area of public sector modernization and civil service reform already as one of the priority of the TACIS program in Central Asia since late 1990s.
- On the demand from GoK, EU decided to provide more structured and comprehensive support. The need to create an efficient public administration capable of facilitating the development of a modern social and economic state is one of the pillars of the country's long-term vision "Kazakhstan 2030". → EU incorporated this priority into its revised EU-CA Regional Cooperation Strategy. **Since 2011, the support to reforms in Public Administration became one of the 3 main sectors for cooperation of EU with KZ.**
- Currently, EU has implemented two major projects related to civil service reform in KZ. They make part of a complex 5 year long program entitled "Public Sector Reform and Modernization" to which EU allocated 10 M EUR of grant money. The program is also co-funded by the GoK. The program includes two major projects: the project "Regulations for Competitiveness" is implemented jointly with the OECD and aims at improving effectiveness of central state administration. And the project "Civil Service Reform" which is very relevant to today's discussion, since it supports the implementation of a new "Concept on a New Civil Service Model" and focuses on two key issues, management and training of civil servants. The team leader of this project,

Mr. George Myrogiannis, will outline the objectives and methodology of the project in his presentation.

- May I underline that the civil service reform as undertaken in KZ has good prospects in becoming a reference for the broader region of Central Asia. We see it as an opportunity to increase dynamism of civil service reform processes in the region and to further promote international best practices.

### **Conclusion**

- As a conclusion, I would like to say that the concept of civil service is evolving and so are the approaches to technical cooperation in this field. But what remains the same is that the civil service reforms need to be seen as a long term step-by-step process.
- The role of the EU is to contribute to the strengthening of the capacity of the domestic governance system to deliver. Improving public administration and civil service is a very important step in improving people's lives and welfare.
- The role of the EU as a donor is also to seek joint approaches with other donors, notably the UNDP, and the roundtables like this one promote cooperation.

**THE END**