

PARLIAMENTARY BRIEF

Twice weekly report on the Jogorku Kenesh

June 27, 2014

ACTIVITIES OF THE MEMBERS OF THE PARLIAMENT

June 16

The Jogorku Kenesh (JK) delegation headed by Vice Speaker Bodosh Mamyrova visited the United States Congress.

From June 16 - 20, 2014, a JK delegation visited the United States Congress. The delegation included the following Members of the Parliament (MPs): Vice Speaker Bodosh Mamyrova (Ar-Namys parliamentary faction); Deputy Chair of the JK Committee on International Relations Joomart Saparbaev (Ata-Meken faction); Member of the JK Committee on International Affairs Bakhadyr Suleymanov (member of Yntymak deputies' group); Member of the JK Committee on Education, Science, Culture and Sports Karamat Orozova (Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan faction); and Member of the JK Committee on International Relations Maksat Sabirov (Respublika faction). Under the framework of the US House of Representatives Democracy Partnership Program on strengthening parliamentary committees in a legislative body, the Kyrgyz MPs studied the US Congress and congressional committees activities in depth, became acquainted with bills drafting procedures, interactional dynamics between US Congressional committees and the US executive branch bodies, studied the US Parliament's oversight functions, and its relations with mass media and the public. Legislators from Georgia, Liberia, Peru and East Timor also participated in this Program.

The JK delegation also visited the Kyrgyz Embassy to the United States of America and Canada with the Kyrgyz MPs holding a working meeting there with Deputy US Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs Mr Leslie Wieger. The parties discussed parliamentary development in Kyrgyzstan and further development of Kyrgyz-US cooperation in strengthening the Kyrgyz Parliament. Under the framework of democracy development initiatives, the Kyrgyz MPs suggested a range of cooperative proposals on exchanging experience on parliamentary development between the two countries.

June 23

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) signed an agreement that gives Kyrgyzstan Partner for Democracy status.

In Strasbourg, at the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), an agreement on granting the Kyrgyz Republic Partner for Democracy Status was signed in front of the PACE Members. PACE President Anne Brasseur delivered a speech on the occasion. She congratulated Kyrgyzstan with obtaining this status and emphasized that Kyrgyzstan has chosen a unique development path in the region. Ms Brasseur invited everyone to support Kyrgyzstan

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and wished the best of luck with developing parliamentary democracy in the country. In his speech, JK Speaker Asylbek Jeenbekov stressed that Kyrgyzstan sees this status as a sign of PACE's recognition and high appraisal of the Kyrgyz achievements in developing parliamentary democracy. "In spite of difficulties, Kyrgyzstan was the first country in the region to start building parliamentary democracy. It takes a path of sustainable development and irreversible democratic processes. As time has demonstrated, a parliamentary form of governance gives the state an opportunity for comprehensive development and corruption reduction without letting power concentrate in one person's hands. Under the framework of the approved status, specific steps and practical outcomes of consolidating democratic values in our society are important for us", JK Speaker Jeenbekov said. After having reminded about upcoming parliamentary elections in 2015, Speaker Jeenbekov said that these elections will become a litmus test to measure maturity of democratic institutions in Kyrgyzstan. "Having democratic, open and competitive elections is exceptionally important. In this regards, we improve legislation and introduce contemporary technologies to the electoral process. In particular, we introduce the unified vote register system with a biometric database. We hope to receive PACE's assistance in this area, as well as hope that the PACE will actively be involved in monitoring these elections", Speaker Jeenbekov further noted. The meeting was also attended by Kyrgyz MPs Asiya Sasykbaeva and Nurgazy Aidarov.

THE JOGORKU KENESH PLENARY SESSIONS

June 25

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A bill on Turkic Academy was submitted to a vote. At the JK plenary session, the MPs discussed a bill "On Ratifying the Agreement between the Governments of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, and the Republic of Turkey on Establishing the Turkic Academic, signed on August 23, 2012 in Bishkek". Deputy Minister of Education and Science Nazarkul Ishekeev reported on the bill. The draft Agreement on the Turkic Academy was developed to strengthen mutual trust and good neighbourly relations between Turkic-speaking countries. The Agreement aims to develop integration processes in education, science, and technology, as well as broadening opportunities for youth to have access to good quality contemporary education. It will also facilitate research networking for lecturers and academics, and support efficient cooperation of Turkic-speaking countries in the areas of politics, trade, economy, sciences, technology and culture. The President of the Turkic Academic shall be appointed to a four-year term on the basis of rotation and s/he should be a citizen of a participating state. The first President of the Academy will be a Kazakh citizen; subsequent Presidents will be appointed from other countries in the alphabetical order (in English) – Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkey. The bill was submitted for voting.

The JK Plenary discussed amendments to the law “On Oil and Gas”. The MPs discussed the bill “On Amendments to the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic “On Oil and Gas” at the plenary session. The bill was designed to optimize and improve the legal and normative basis of the energy sector and regulate the work of the fuel and energy complex. Due to the absence of a direct legal provision that would authorize the Kyrgyz Government to set the rules and regulations on supply and use of natural gas, the Kyrgyz Government adopted Decree No. 290, dated May 27, 2013, on temporary regulations of supplying and using natural gas, and temporary regulations on recording the use of natural gas; these regulations expired on April 1, 2014. At that, Section Two of the Government’s Decree states that, in order to optimize and improve the legal and normative basis of the energy sector and regulate the fuel and energy complex, the Ministry of Energy and Industry of the Kyrgyz Republic was requested to draft and submit corresponding bills to the Government. As requested, the Ministry of Energy and Industry presented an amendment to the law of the Kyrgyz Republic “On Oil and Gas” that authorizes the Government to define the rules and regulations on supply and use of natural gas. The Parliament discussed the bill and submitted it for voting

June 26

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The Parliament discussed the bill “On Biometric Registration of the Kyrgyz Citizens”. At the JK plenary session, the MPs discussed the bill “On Biometric Registration of the Kyrgyz Citizens”. Chair of the JK Committee on Human Rights, Constitutional Legislation, and State Structure MP Natalia Nikitenko reported on the bill. The bill aims creating a database of the Kyrgyz citizens based upon biometric data in order to make a precise list of voters and establish a legal basis for inter-departmental interaction during collection, storage, use, processing, actualization, and protection of the citizens’ biometric data. The bill was submitted for voting.

The Parliament discussed the bill on upgrading the administrative penalties for unsanctioned road blocking. At the JK plenary session, the MPs discussed the bill “On Additions and Amendments to Certain Legal Acts of the Kyrgyz Republic”. The amendments concern the Code on Administrative Responsibility, the Criminal Code, and the law “On Enforcement Proceeding and Status of Court Marshals in the Kyrgyz Republic”. The bill’s sponsors are MPs Omurbek Tekebaev, Feliks Kulov, Chynybay Tursunbekov, Mairambek Rasulov, and Eristina Kochkarova. MP Mairambek Rasulov reported on the bill. The bill stiffens administrative responsibility for unsanctioned blocking of a strategic road, as well as for significant damage caused by such blocking. At that, in case if there is threat of violence against life and well-being of a law enforcement official and impossibility to write a protocol on the spot on an administrative violation, the protocol on an administrative violation can be written in the absence of the perpetrator. During the discussion on the bill, MPs Mairamkul Tilenchieva and Kojobek Rysaliev noted that prolonged blocking of strategic roads affects Kyrgyz citizens, entrepreneurs and the state in general.

MPs Bodosh Mamyrova and Ismail Isakov noted that one should not ban protest actions in case if citizens cannot find justice, and when road blocking is the only way to get heard by the authorities. In his remarks, JK Speaker Asylbek Jeenbekov expressed his opinion on the bill: "Order should be in the state. Blocking strategic roads is unacceptable. There are other places to hold protest actions apart from roads". Upon the discussion, the bill was submitted for voting.

This Parliamentary Brief was prepared by the USAID/DFID Kyrgyzstan Parliamentary Strengthening Program jointly with the Jogorku Kenesh Press Service and is distributed by a list-serve e-mail to the legislative, donor and implementer communities, civil society representations and mass media sources.

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