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Kazakhstan's Bloody January:
Digital Repression on the "New Silk Road"

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Abstract

In January 2022, Kazakhstan's government shut down internet access for several days while enacting a violent crackdown on initially peaceful protests triggered by hikes in fuel prices. This policy brief examines Kazakhstan's internet and media landscape, the (re)actions of civil society and the state, and the factors that set the stage for this extreme act of digital repression, which created a disturbing precedent for the country and the Eurasia region more broadly. The paper concludes by briefly exploring the potential implications for Kazakhstan's governance, economic development, and collective memory nearly a year on from the events.

Introduction

Kazakhstan, whose territory and fossil fuel-dependent economy is the largest of the five post-Soviet Central Asian states, is a country at a crossroads. After its first president, Nursultan Nazarbayev, voluntarily stepped down from the presidency in 2019, some hoped that his successor, Kasym-Zhomart Tokayev, would create space for meaningful democratic reforms. But with "leader of the nation" Nazarbayev remaining ever-present just off-stage,

having retained his post as the chair of the country's National Security Council, civic and human rights activists remained sceptical of the nominal change in state leadership.[1]

Like other authoritarian states, Kazakhstan's government has a variety of digital repression measures in its toolkit to maintain control over the population's access to information and communications. For more than a decade in Kazakhstan, the state has responded to ethnic unrest and violence, protests over unfair and unfree elections, and terrorist attacks by blocking certain websites and even shutting down local access to the internet. But in January 2022, the state went even further by shutting down the internet across the entire country for more than five days as it repressed civil unrest in towns and cities in multiple regions. The crackdown has since come to be known among Kazakhstanis as "Bloody January." During the November 2022 snap presidential elections, which resulted[2] in a landslide win for the incumbent Tokayev amidst allegations[3] of election law violations and "general [political] apathy,"[4] these events and their aftermath loomed large in the country's national consciousness.

This brief explains, to the extent that they are understood, the leadup to the events of Bloody January and the events themselves in rich context, examining the country's media and civil activism landscape amidst economic, technological, and political factors and the particular significance of the countrywide internet shutdown as an instrument of state repression. The brief concludes by reflecting on the potential implications for this pivotal event in Kazakhstan's history.

Bloody January

The new year of 2022 in Kazakhstan began with an incident of violent repression.[5] A country that had always emphasised its political stability saw unrest and violence on a scale unprecedented in its 30 years of independence. What started as a peaceful protest over fuel prices in western Kazakhstan amidst New Year celebrations culminated in large-scale unrest in Almaty, the largest city in the country and its cultural capital. The initial wave of demonstrations began on 2 January, when hundreds of citizens gathered to protest a sudden price hike (from USD 0.14 to USD 0.28 per litre) in liquified petroleum gas (LPG) in Zhanaozen, a town in western Kazakhstan where people's livelihoods depend on their access to gas. The government justified this sudden increase as part of the transition to the

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[1] Nurseit Niyazbekov, "Democracy, the Tokayev Way," *The Diplomat*, March 3, 2020, https://thediplomat.com/2020/03/democracy-the-tokayev-way/.

[2] Reuters, "Kazakh President Tokayev Wins Re-election with 81.3% of Vote," *Reuters*, November 21, 2022, https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/tokayev-wins-kazakh-presidential-election-with-813-vote-2022-11-21/.

[3] Beyimbet Moldagali, "В фонде «Еркіндік қанаты» заявили об удалении наблюдателей в день выборов с 13 участков," *Vlast*, November 21, 2022, https://vlast.kz/novosti/52682-v-fonde-erkindik-kanaty-zaavili-ob-udalenii-nabludatelej-v-den-vyborov-s-13-ucastkov.html.

[4] Almaz Kumenov, "Kazakhstan: Tokayev Wins Election with Ease amid General Apathy," *Eurasianet*, November 21, 2022, https://eurasianet.org/kazakhstan-tokayev-wins-election-with-ease-amid-general-apathy.

[5] Raushan Zhandayeva and Alimana Zhanmukanova, "Kazakhstan's Instability Has Been Building for Years," *Foreign Policy*, January 10, 2022, https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/01/10/kazakhstan-instability-protests-nazarbayev/.

electronic trading system, which meant a shift from domestic production subsidies to market-based pricing mechanisms.

The protests followed different trajectories depending on the region with a wide range of actors involved. While they remained relatively peaceful in the western part of the country, in Almaty, Kazakhstan's cultural and intellectual hub, peaceful protests turned into violent unrest when law enforcement used force against protesters on the night of 4 January. On the 5th, multiple eyewitness reports[6] indicate that peaceful protests there were hijacked by unidentified groups of armed men, who looted businesses, destroyed government and private property, and even set the city hall on fire. With the police and military presence on the ground almost nonexistent, it seemed like no one opposed the looters. It is still not clear who perpetrated these acts and whether they coordinated with each other.

According to the official figures, 227 people were killed[7] in Kazakhstan's "Bloody January," including 19 law enforcement officials, while more than 4,000 people were injured. The economic damage is estimated at $2-3 billion.[8] As of 13 January, Kazakhstan's authorities had arrested about 12,000 citizens, including civic activists, union organisers, and independent journalists. The president dismissed the entire government and reversed the controversial fuel price hike that had first brought people to the streets. Promising a "new Kazakhstan," President Tokayev introduced a reform package, promising the decentralisation of power and democratic transition.

The rapid spread of protests to other parts of the country and the mobilisation of thousands of people, however, indicate that the LPG price increase acted as a trigger for collective mobilisation, rather than a root cause. The causes of the popular unrest are more systemic and are based on fundamental inequalities. Kazakhstanis did not see the wealth generated by its extensive natural resource reserves distributed equally. The official statistics[9] on wealth disparity indicate that the top 10% hold about 60% of national wealth, while the bottom 50% own only about 5%. Yet these numbers still do not capture the true extent of wealth inequality in the country, as they do not account for the offshore assets[10] of the country's elites. Indeed, a report by Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty[11] estimated at least $785 million in European and U.S. real estate purchases made by former president Nazarbayev's family members and their in-laws in six countries over a 20-year span. By the time he left the presidency in 2019, Nazarbayev and his inner circle had largely captured

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[6] Dmitriy Mazorenko and Almas Kaisar, "On the Ground in Kazakhstan's Protests: What Really Happened?" *Open Democracy,* January 27, 2022, https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/odr/what-really-happened-kazakhstan-protests-january/.

[7] "Власти Казахстана заявили, что в ходе беспорядков число погибших увеличилось до 227 человек," *Current Time,* January 18, 2022, https://www.currenttime.tv/a/kazahstan-chislo-pogibshih/31660014.html.

[8] "Kazakh President Insists Worst Is Over," *Argus Media,* January 11, 2022, https://www.argusmedia.com/en/news/2290464-kazakh-president-insists-worst-is-over.

[9] "Evolution of Average Income, Kazakhstan, 1969-2021," *World Inequality Database,* https://wid.world/country/kazakhstan/.

[10] Oliver Bullough, "Kazakhstan's Wealth Won't Go Home Again," *Coda Media,* January 12, 2022, https://www.codastory.com/newsletters/kazakhstan-wealth-inequality/.

[11] Mike Eckel and Sarah Alikhan, "Big Houses, Deep Pockets: The Nazarbayev Family's Opulent Offshore Real Estate Empire," *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty,* December 22, 2020, https://www.rferl.org/a/kazakhstan-nazarbayev-family-wealth/31013097.html.

state institutions,[12] building an extensive kleptocratic system that benefited them and their family members. Even though he was no longer president, Nazarbayev continued to lead the Security Council and oversee three other government branches, with the power to overturn their decisions. This de-facto power in the hands of Nazarbayev made the incumbent, Tokayev, seem like a lame duck with little to no political strength.

Within this context of political stagnation, the lack of a proper social safety net, the absence of genuine economic opportunities, and the increasing urban-rural divide prompted increasing public dissatisfaction. The Oxus Society on Central Asian Affairs[13] reports an increasing number of strikes related to income and labour issues in the first half of 2021, including workers going on hunger strikes or blocking roads to demand better working conditions and higher wages. The effects of COVID-19 exacerbated the precarious situation many found themselves in, as multiple protests were connected to social security benefits as well as subsidised housing and mortgage repayment. These systemic factors explain why small protests in the western part of the republic rapidly snowballed into mass mobilisation across the entire country.

Shutdown: What Happened?

In response to the violence, which was especially concentrated in Almaty, the government launched an anti-terrorist operation to fight an alleged foreign terrorist threat. The government has failed to provide evidence of the involvement of foreign terrorists in the protests. In his televised address, President Tokayev claimed that 20,000 terrorists were involved in violent clashes in Almaty alone. He ordered the security forces to "shoot and kill without warning" and threatened the "liquidation" of protesters.

In addition to the regime's more conventional tactics for suppressing collective mobilisation, including physical force against protestors and mass detention, Kazakhstan's government implemented a complete internet shutdown for more than five days. According to Netblocks [14], an organisation that monitors internet disruptions and shutdowns, a significant disruption started on the evening of 5 January, and turned into a complete shutdown the next afternoon. For several days, internet services were only periodically accessible in some parts of the country. Internet connectivity was restored only on 10 January; however, reports of difficulty accessing the internet continued. Citizens also reported a lack of access to cable TV as well as an interruption in mobile phone service.

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[12] Morena Skalamera Groce, "Circling the Barrels: Kazakhstan's Regime Stability in the Wake of the 2014 Oil Bust," *Central Asian Survey* 39, no. 4 (2020): 480-499.

[13] Zhibek Aisarina, Emma Wilbur, Natalie Simpson, Elvira Kalmurzaeva, Jonathan Meyer, Doniyor Mutalov, and Huma Ramazan Ali, "Covid-19, Worker Strikes, and the Failure to Protect Citizens: An Update on the Central Asian Protest Tracker," *The Oxus Society for Central Asian Affairs,* August 3, 2021, https://oxussociety.org/covid-19-worker-strikes-and-the-failure-to-protect-citizens-an-update-on-the-central-asian-protest-tracker/.

[14] "Internet disrupted in Kazakhstan as energy protests escalate," *Netblocks,* January 4, 2022, https://net-blocks.org/reports/internet-disrupted-in-kazakhstan-amid-energy-price-protests-oy9YQgv3.

This is a new tool in the autocratic regime's kit. Margaret Hu, a Professor of Law and International Affairs at Penn State University, argues[15] that the internet shutdown in Kazakhstan is a vivid example of digital authoritarianism, a trend in which technology is "weaponized against civilian populations, including by cutting off the essential service of internet access." Indeed, it seems to be a rising global trend,[16] with 56 internet shutdowns registered in 2016, 80 in 2017, and at least 155 blackouts in 29 countries in 2020. Access Now's Keep It On campaign documented 182 internet shutdowns in 34 countries in 2021, a rise from 159 shutdowns in 29 countries reported in 2020. While governments restricted access to the internet across the globe, India by far remains the largest offender with 106 internet shutdowns recorded in 2021, followed by 15 shutdowns in Myanmar and five in Sudan.

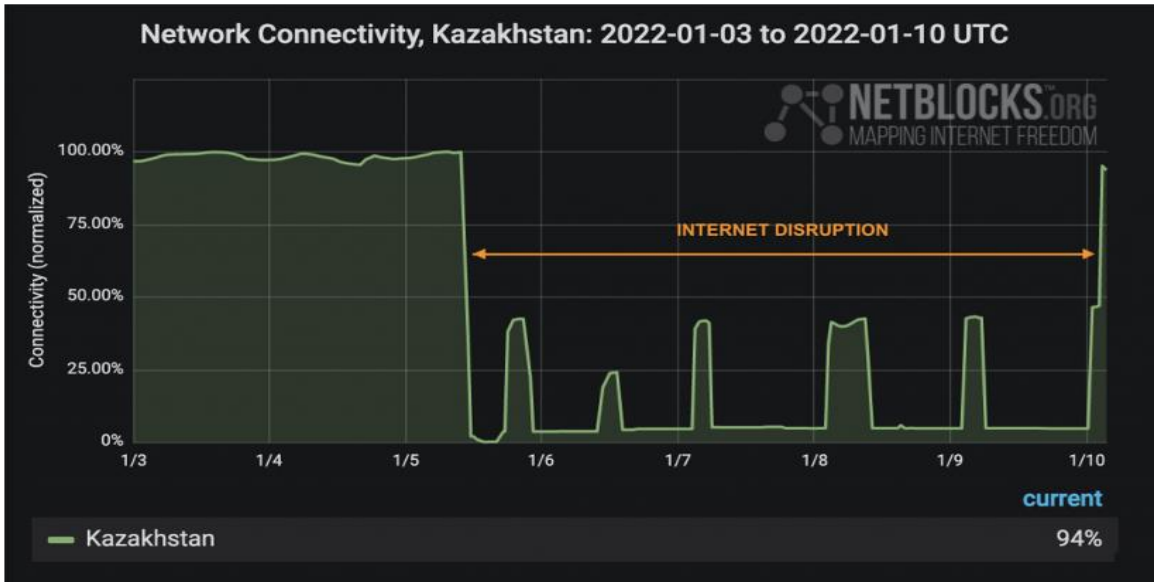

Image source: NetBlocks

Joanna Lillis,[17] an Almaty-based journalist, explains that while the control of information has long been a tactic in the regime's toolkit, before the January events, the internet restrictions had been limited in their scope: "They [the authorities] have sometimes blocked specific social media sites, such as Facebook, for various reasons – for example, if an opposition leader is broadcasting live." Margaret Hu[18] believes that the ability of the

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[15] Margaret Hu, "Kazakhstan's Internet Shutdown Is the Latest Episode in an Ominous Trend: Digital Authoritarianism," *The Conversation,* January 24, 2022. https://theconversation.com/kazakhstans-internet-shutdown-is-the-latest-episode-in-an-ominous-trend-digital-authoritarianism-174651.

[16] "The Return of Digital Authoritarianism: Internet Shutdowns in 2021," *Access Now,* April 2022, https://www.accessnow.org/cms/assets/uploads/2022/05/2021-KIO-Report-May-24-2022.pdf.

[17] Aliide Naylor, "What Really Happened During Kazakhstan's Internet Blockout?" *Gizmodo,* January 6, 2022, https://gizmodo.com/what-really-happened-during-kazakhstan-s-internet-black-1848315477.

[18] Margaret Hu, "Kazakhstan's Internet Shutdown Is the Latest Episode in an Ominous Trend: Digital Authoritarianism," *The Conversation,* January 24, 2022, https://theconversation.com/kazakhstans-internet-shutdown-is-the-latest-episode-in-an-ominous-trend-digital-authoritarianism-174651.

government to institute such blanket control over the internet signifies either greater control of the centralised internet service provider (Kazakhtelecom) than in other countries or access to more sophisticated forms of telecommunication control.

Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) are encrypted connections that protect one's privacy and anonymity by establishing a private network through a public internet connection. They hide the user's IP address and make their location invisible. In the context of digital authoritarianism, VPNs are useful not only in accessing certain banned websites but also in protecting one's VPN traffic from access by governments, internet service providers, and hackers. London monitoring service Top10VPN [19] reported that the use of VPNs has increased dramatically in Kazakhstan, with a 3,405 percent surge in demand on 5 January compared to the daily average of the preceding 30 days. According to their estimates, this internet outage cost $429.5 million[20] to Kazakhstan's economy.

Article 14 of Kazakhstan's national law on communication[21] allows the government to suspend access to the communication networks in the event of a state of emergency, which President Tokayev declared during the January events. According to human rights groups, however, these restrictions violated international standards for freedom of expression. Not only does the internet shutdown prevent people from accessing important information and services[22], but it also inhibits their ability to speak freely against government policies, organise and conduct peaceful protests, and document and disseminate information about human rights violations.

How the state managed to shut down the internet is still not completely clear. While the State Technical Service, an official state body responsible for the cybersecurity, did not provide any information on how the internet shutdown occurred, Forbes[23] reported that the authorities at first tried to block messenger apps and different websites using DPI (deep packet inspection) equipment that the providers have installed in their networks to analyse traffic. When that was not enough, they instructed internet service providers to completely block traffic. However, a source from state-owned mobile operator KCell told Forbes that

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[19] Zholdas Orisbayev, "Food and Cash Shortages Spread as Kazakhstan Throttles Internet," *Eurasianet,* January 8, 2022,https://eurasianet.org/food-and-cash-shortages-spread-as-kazakhstan-throttles-internet.

[20] Samuel Woodhams and Simon Migliano, "Internet Shutdowns: Economic Impact 2019-2022," *Top 10 VPN,* April 14, 2022, https://www.top10vpn.com/research/cost-of-internet-shutdowns/.

[21] "Закон Республики Казахстан от 5 июля 2004 года № 567-II. О связи," *Online Zakon,* https://online.zakon.kz/Document/?doc_id=1049207&pos=3;-57#pos=3;-57&sdoc_params=text%3D%25D1%2587%25D1%2580%25D0%25B5%25D0%25B7%25D0%25B2%25D1%258B%25D1%2587%25D0%25B0%25D0%25B9%25D0%25BD%25D1%258B%25D0%25B9%26mode%3Dindoc%26topic_id%3D1049207%26spos%3D1%26tSynonym%3D1%26tShort%3D1%26tSuffix%3D1&sdoc_pos=1.

[22] "Everything You Need to Know about Internet Shutdowns," *Amnesty International,* February 2, 2021, https://www.amnesty.org.au/everything-you-need-to-know-about-internet-shutdowns/.

[23] Vladislav Skobelev and Anastasiya Skrynnikova, "Интернет по расписание и отключению вручную как блокируют связь в Казахстане," *Forbes,* January 12, 2022, https://www.forbes.ru/tekhnologii/452093-internet-po-raspisaniu-i-otklucenia-vrucnuu-kak-blokiruut-svaz-v-kazahstane.

the blockage was carried out by the National Security Committee, Kazakhstan's intelligence agency, which has access to the providers' equipment.[24]

Neighbouring countries in the region engaged in internet disruptions in the year prior to Bloody January, including Russia (1), Tajikistan (1), Turkmenistan (2), and Uzbekistan (1). Keep It On campaign's database[25] suggests that internet shutdowns often happen during politically unstable times, including elections, protests, unrests, and armed conflicts, as governments attempt to assert control over the population.

Experts such as Margaret Hu and the organisation Access Now warn about the costliness of such disturbances on human lives. Not only do internet shutdowns constitute human rights violations on their own, they also exacerbate other human rights abuses during politically unstable times. Internet shutdowns disrupt communication, obstruct humanitarian aid, and impede independent journalism. Finally, shutdowns, as one tool in an authoritarian government's digital toolkit, may also be accompanied by the introduction or intensification of government digital surveillance measures and limitations on access to particular websites in the longer term. For example, internet users in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, experienced a shutdown in January 2016, during which the authorities allegedly worked to install surveillance technology to monitor citizens' online activity.[26] Since Kazakhstan's Bloody January, Uzbekistan has continued to escalate its use of internet shutdowns to quash dissent, most recently to suppress[27] separatist sentiment in Karakalpakstan, an autonomous region in the country, in summer 2022.

What Made the Shutdown So Damaging?

Media and Civil Society

Kazakhstan's government severely restricts internet and media space. Kazakhstan occupies the 122nd place out of 180 countries on the 2022 World Press Freedom Index.[28] Since the end of the 1990s, the government has gradually tightened[29] space for independent traditional media. The state and its close allies control most traditional media, leaving only a handful of genuinely independent media sources. Few independent traditional media

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[24] Ibid.

[25] "The Return of Digital Authoritarianism: Internet Shutdowns 2021," *Access Now,* April 2022, *https://www.accessnow.org/cms/assets/uploads/2022/05/2021-KIO-Report-May-24-2022.pdf*

[26] "Uzbekistan: What to Do With a Problem Called Internet," *Eurasianet*, January 8, 2016, https://eurasianet.org/uzbekistan-what-to-do-with-a-problem-called-internet.

[27] "Uzbekistan: End Use of Unlawful Force against Karakalpakstan Protesters," *Amnesty International*, July 4, 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2022/07/uzbekistan-end-use-of-unlawful-force-against-karakalpakstan-protesters/.

[28] "RFS's 2022 World Press Freedom Index: A New Era of Polarization," *Reporters without Borders*, https://rsf.org/en/rsf%E2%80%99s-2022-world-press-freedom-index-new-era-polarisation?year=2022&data_type=general.

[29] Sher Khashimov and Raushan Zhandayeva, "Kazakhstan's Alternative Media Is Thriving—and in Danger," *Foreign Policy*, July 12, 2021, https://foreignpolicy.com/2021/07/12/kazakhstan-alternative-media-thriving-danger/.

outlets still exist, as the regime has created multiple bureaucratic regulations to curb freedom of speech. While this narrowing gap has created a burgeoning field of unconventional journalists,[30] who rely on social media for their reporting, this alternative media is also under threat. For example, to mimic new independent media outlets, the government has created pseudo-oppositional social media channels and paid bloggers and influencers to promote its ideology.[31]

Despite the authoritarian nature of the regime, Kazakhstan has vibrant contentious politics, in which civil society nevertheless plays a big role. CIVICUS,[32] an organisation monitoring civic space, ranks the country as "obstructed." This ranking is usually given to countries where civil society organisations exist but the space is "heavily contested[33] by power holders, who impose a combination of legal and practical constraints on the full enjoyment of fundamental rights."

Indeed, according to Freedom House,[34] NGOs continue to operate in a severely restricted space, where they can incur fines and harsh penalties for noncompliance. The freedom of assembly is strictly restricted as well, despite the changes to the public assembly law in May 2020—instead of obtaining permission for protest, the organisers now need only to provide a notice of intent several days in advance. Experts[35] argue that the law amounts to a rhetorical device rather than a meaningful change, as the state still restricts participation in protests in other ways. For example, the state allows only officially registered groups to organise gatherings and only in spaces that the government approves, which are usually located in areas far away from city centres, making them almost invisible. Nonetheless, according to the Oxus Society protest tracker,[36] more than 1300 protests took place in Kazakhstan from January 2018 to July 2021, making it the leader of collective mobilisation events in Central Asia.

During the January crisis, instead of controlling the narrative, some believe that the government sought to sow confusion[37] and impede the ability of the public to arrive at a clear understanding of what had occurred. The independent media outlets were the first ones to get cut off. Access to independent news websites, like KazTag and Orda.kz, was almost immediately restricted on 4 January. KazTag claims it happened after the outlet declined the Ministry of Information's request to delete an article on the extrajudicial use of

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[30] Ibid.

[31] Viktor Burdin, "Сколько зарабатывают блогеры в Казахстане," *Forbes Kazakhstan*, January 16, 2015, https://forbes.kz/finances/finance/skolko_zarabatyivayut_blogeryi_v_kazahstane/.

[32] "Kazakhstan Press Release," *CIVICUS*, March 10, 2022, https://monitor.civicus.org/KazakhstanWatch-list2022//

[33] "Ratings," *CIVICUS*, https://monitor.civicus.org/Ratings/.

[34] "Freedom in the World 2022: Kazakhstan," *Freedom House*, https://freedomhouse.org/country/kazakh-stan/freedom-world/2022.

[35] Mihra Rittman, "Kazakhstan's "Reformed" Protest Law Hardly an Improvement," *Human Rights Watch*, May 28, 2020, https://www.hrw.org/news/2020/05/28/kazakhstans-reformed-protest-law-hardly-improvement.

[36] "Central Asia Protest Tracker," *The Oxus Society for Central Asian Affairs*, https://oxussociety.org/viz/protest-tracker/.

[37] Katrina Keegan, "Information Chaos in Kazakstan," *The Diplomat*, January 10, 2022, https://thediplo-mat.com/2022/01/information-chaos-in-kazakhstan/.

police force against protesters in Aktau, which the authorities argued used knowingly false information. With zero access to the internet, protesters, eyewitnesses, and civil society leaders were unable to share what was happening in real-time. With multiple narratives emerging amidst the confusion, the government was able to insert its own unverified reports of mass rapes and beheadings [38] allegedly perpetrated by terrorist groups [39] pursuing "the undermining of the constitutional order, the destruction of government institutions and the seizure of power." Meanwhile, state television[40] channels were alleging that foreign-backed forces had attempted to overthrow the state. The administration also attempted to alleviate the discontent over the internet shutdown by sending SMS messages to the public that offered free mobile services on networks it had just blocked. Nazarbayev, the former president of Kazakhstan, did not comment on the situation until 18 January.[41] when he reappeared in a televised address. The purpose of this speech was to deny the rumours that there was conflict amongst the country's elites and that Nazarbayev had left the country. The lack of real-time reporting on the ground makes it difficult to reconstruct the timeline of the January events definitively.

Gulnara Bazhkenova, a chief editor of Orda.kz, reported [42] that their website became unavailable in Kazakhstan after the outlet reported that protest participants were calling for the resignation of the government and the official withdrawal of Nursultan Nazarbayev from the political scene. According to her,[43] they still tried to provide reliable information through their Telegram channel: "When the internet blackout was imposed, we looked for spots where the internet still worked and we would rush there to post our content wherever possible both on the website and Telegram channel…We also shared logins and passwords with our colleagues abroad so they could post material which we passed on to them by all means available." While the access to KazTag was restored on the same day, Orda.kz became available only on 20 January. The government also continued to suppress access to Telegram. The popular encrypted messaging app was a site of programmers' resistance[44] to the shutdown: some managed to set up proxy servers, which allowed a small minority of Kazakhstan's population to circumvent the shutdown.

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[38] "В администрации президента Токаева подтвердили обезглавливание курсанта," *Polit Rossiya*, January 7, 2022, https://politros.com/22636104-V_administratsii_prezidenta_Tokaeva_podtverdili_obezglavlivanie_kursanta.

[39] "Kazakhstan Unrest Was Coup Attempt, Says President," *BBC News*, January 10, 2022, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-59900738.

[40] "President Tokayev addresses people of Kazakhstan," *Qazaq TV*, January 7, 2022, https://qazaqtv.com/en/news/society/16269-president-tokayev-addresses-people-of-kazakhstan.

[41] "Kazakhstan: Nazarbayev Resurfaces to Deny Intra-Elite Clash Claims," *Eurasianet*, January 18, 2022, https://eurasianet.org/kazakhstan-nazarbayev-resurfaces-to-deny-intra-elite-clash-claims.

[42] "Kazakhstan Authorities Block News Sites, Detain Journalists during Nationwide Protests," *Committee to Protect Journalists*, January 6, 2022, https://cpj.org/2022/01/kazakhstan-authorities-block-news-sites-detain-journalists-during-nationwide-protests/.

[43] Naubet Bisenov, "Kazakhstan's Independent Media and Civil Society Shiver after Protests," *Index on Censorship*, January 17, 2022, https://www.indexoncensorship.org/2022/01/kazakhstans-independent-media-and-civil-society-shiver-after-protests/.

[44] Katia Patin, "Kazakhstan Shut down Its Internet. These Programmers Opened a Backdoor," *Coda Media*, January 27, 2021, https://www.codastory.com/authoritarian-tech/kazakhstan-shut-down-its-internet-these-programmers-opened-a-backdoor/.

The internet shutdown also prevented foreign journalists from reporting on the situation, and the Western media had to rely mostly on Russian news outlets. Vlast, another independent media outlet in Kazakhstan, was inaccessible from abroad. Similar to Orda.kz, the staff continued to post updates about its posts on Twitter, which it accessed through a patchy network of servers. This overwhelming reliance[45] on Russian media resulted in further confusion, as the "unconfirmed reports have suggested everything from the protests being co-opted by the members of Kazakhstan's organised crime groups to the country's elite evacuating the country in private planes."

Multiple independent journalists have been detained for their reporting on the January events. For example, Makhambet Abzhan,[46] a journalist who covered the protest on his Telegram channel Abzhan News came under criminal investigation on charges of "knowingly spreading false information" (under article 274 of the criminal code) after he was interviewed on the independent Russian TV Channel Dozhd.

Arsen Aubakirov,[47] a coordinator of the Expert Group for Digital Rights in Kazakhstan, explained that while initially activists and protestors circumvented the blockage through VPNs, there was no way to get around total internet blackouts. As a result, a lot of real time evidence has been lost. With the return of the Internet, members of civil society, including journalists, digital rights organisations, and legal experts started to collect and verify evidence.[48] Village.kz, a digital media outlet, started to collect information about missing people that it gathered via its readers. Social media platforms were used to document police brutality. For example, the government detained Daulet Dostyarov, an activist of the unregistered Democratic Party, when peacefully protesting in Almaty on 4 January. After spending nine days in detention, he was released on 13 January. On 14 January, Zhanbolat Mamai, another famous Kazakh activist, published on Facebook the pictures of Dostyarov that depicted bruises and injuries all over his body.

Martin, a Telegram bot, became another digital tool to reconstruct evidence. Created by a group of local activists and human rights NGOs, it aims to collect information on intimidation techniques and illegal detention. First, the bot prompts users to fill out a form with their personal information. Once verified, this information is then published on a Facebook group and other social media platforms to look for human rights assistance through collective complaints to the European Parliament and the United Nations. The bot states that the only way to protect one's rights is through publicity, since the personal information of the detained and intimidated is already available to law enforcement agencies.

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[45] Colleen Wood and Sher Khashimov, "When Kazakhstan Turned off the Internet," *Zócalo Public Square*, January 20, 2022, https://www.zocalopublicsquare.org/2022/01/20/kazakhstan-turned-off-internet/ideas/essay/.

[46] "Следствие по делу Махамбета Абжана продолжается," *AdilSoz*, January 31, 2022, http://www.adil-soz.kz/news/show/id/3516.

[47] Katrina Keegan, "Information Chaos in Kazakstan," *The Diplomat*, January 10, 2022, https://thediplo-mat.com/2022/01/information-chaos-in-kazakhstan/.

[48] Nabet Bisenov and Peter Guest, "Kazakhstan's Protests Vanished from View in an Internet Blackout. Now the Race Is on to Gather Digital Evidence," *Rest of World*, January 26, 2022, https://restofworld.org/2022/kazakh-stans-protests-vanished-from-view-in-an-internet-blackout-now-the-race-is-on-to-gather-digital-evidence/.

Technology Policy

Despite its demonstrated hostility to independent media and internet freedom, however, Kazakhstan has made innovation and digital technologies a key part of its development plan. The government launched a programme called Digital Kazakhstan[49] that aims to "create the conditions for the transition of the economy to a fundamentally new trajectory—the digital economy of the future" between 2018 and 2022. One of the pillars of the policy is ensuring that all Kazakhstanis have access to the internet, referred to as the "digital silk way" (road).[50] Nazarbayev also reorganised the country's aerospace defense ministry into the Ministry of Digital Development, Innovations and Aerospace Industry in 2019 as part of a larger move towards promoting innovation in the private sector and a push to offer "e-government" services.

According to World Bank data, 85.9% of Kazakhstan's population were internet users in 2020, but Kazakhstan's government's approach[51] to regulating the internet seems quite ambiguous and often contradictory. In its 2030 development strategy, it enshrines a commitment to creating a modern information infrastructure and encourages the proliferation of internet use, including electronic governance. However, it also follows a complex multilevel information security policy that surveils communication and internet traffic in the country. Kazakhtelecom, formerly a state monopoly, dominates Kazakhstan's internet landscape, while both foreign investment and private ownership of telecommunication companies are limited. Kazakhtelcom and its subsidiaries comprised[52] 66% of the country's telecom market in 2018, leaving only one major operator, Beeline, not affiliated with Kazakhstan's government. The encrypted messaging app Telegram is the most downloaded communication app for Android users and the second-most downloaded among iPhone users in Kazakhstan, according to SimilarWeb data. Other platforms popular in Kazakhstan include those owned by Meta (especially Instagram) and YouTube. The internet shutdown cut off access to all these services.

In November 2021, Kazakhstan's Ministry of Information and Social Development released a statement[53] about an agreement it allegedly signed with Facebook to engage in "close cooperation on issues of countering harmful content, with an emphasis on protecting the rights of children on the Internet." In order to do this, the Ministry claimed, Facebook gave the government of Kazakhstan "direct, exclusive access" to Facebook's Content Reporting System. This would allegedly allow the government to quickly flag content that violates Facebook's global content policy and/or the national laws of Kazakhstan. Meta's spokesperson, Ben Conaghy, quickly denied that it interacts with Kazakhstan's government

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[49] "About the Program," *Digital Kazakhstan*, https://digitalkz.kz/en/about-the-program/.

[50] "Trends of the Program," *Digital Kazakhstan*, https://digitalkz.kz/en/trends-of-the-program/.

[51] "Kazakhstan," *OpenNet Initiative*, December 9, 2010, https://opennet.net/research/profiles/kazakhstan.

[52] "Kazakhtelecom – Leading Telecom Operator in Kazakhstan," *Kazakhtelecom*, April 2019, https://tele-com.kz/media/upload/49/2019/04/01/fa36c31e3d127b4f0ee62a1ce2ea8915.pdf.

[53] Ministry of Information and Social Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan, "Совместное заявление Министерства информации и общественного развития Республики Казахстан и Facebook," November 1, 2021, https://www.gov.kz/memleket/entities/qogam/press/news/details/277873?lang=ru.

differently than it does with any other government, although Kazakhstan does have access[54] to "a dedicated online channel for governments around the world to report content that they believe violates local law." This public dispute was playing out at the same time that Kazakhstan's legislature was considering a bill stipulating new requirements for internet platforms. Kazakhstani society largely opposed the legislation, which was proposed in the form of amendments to existing children's rights legislation. In effect, the country's authorities sought[55] to use the cause of child protection to justify granting authorities the power to block any material on the internet, from specific posts and articles to entire sites and platforms.

Economy

Cryptocurrency had become an important part of Kazakhstan's tech landscape just before the unrest began. By the beginning of 2022, Kazakhstan had ascended to second in the world for bitcoin mining, in large part due to the mass exodus from China after that country introduced[56] a cryptocurrency ban in September 2021. In addition to mining "farms" that create cryptocurrency within the bounds of Kazakhstani law,[57] more than 100 illegal operations have been shut down so far in 2022, and many of these turned out to be operated by individuals with connections[58] to Kazakhstan's elites, including the Nazarbayev family. In addition to rising fuel prices, the strain that bitcoin mining places on the power grid through the vast amounts of electricity required[59] is one of the factors contributing to the energy crisis[60] that triggered the protests. During the internet shutdown, approximately "15-20% of the world's Bitcoin mining capacity was knocked[61] completely offline, and its price fell to a low not seen since September 2021," when China's ban went into effect.

This outage impacted ordinary people, not only in terms of their access to information but also by halting their daily economic and social activities. The country is integrated into the

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[54] Reuters, "Meta Denies Kazakh Claim of Exclusive Access to Facebook's Content Reporting System," *Reuters*, November 2, 2021, https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/facebook-lets-kazakh-govt-directly-flag-harmful-content-joint-statement-says-2021-11-01/.

[55] Yuna Korostelyova, Vyacheslav Abramov, and Zhanary Karimova, "Последняя территория свободы," *Vlast*, September 23, 2021, https://vlast.kz/obsshestvo/46784-poslednaa-territoria-svobody.html.

[56] Naubet Bisenov and Meaghan Tobin, ""It's a Mess": How Crypto Mining Went from Boom to Bust in Kazakhstan," *Rest of World*, March 13, 2022, https://restofworld.org/2022/crypto-miners-fleeing-kazakhstan/.

[57] Eliza Gkritsi, "Kazakhstan's Crypto Miners Face New Regulations After Contributing to Power Shortages," *CoinDesk*, November 12, 2021, https://www.coindesk.com/policy/2021/11/12/kazakhstans-crypto-miners-face-new-regulations-after-contributing-to-power-shortages/.

[58] Almaz Kumenov, "Kazakhstan: Cryptocurrency Racketeering Gang Arrested," *Eurasianet*, August 3, 2022, https://eurasianet.org/kazakhstan-cryptocurrency-racketeering-gang-arrested.

[59] Jon Huang, Claire O'Neill, and Hiroko Tabuchi, "Bitcoin Uses More Electricity Than Many Countries. How Is That Possible?" *The New York Times*, September 3, 2021, https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/09/03/climate/bitcoin-carbon-footprint-electricity.html.

[60] Gkritsi, "Kazakstan's Crypto Miners Face New Regulations," *CoinDesk*.

[61] Ruth Strachan, "Is It Game over for Kazakhstan's Bitcoin Miners?" *Investment Monitor*, January 25, 2022, https://www.investmentmonitor.ai/tech/kazakhstan-bitcoin-mining-crypto-currenc.

global digital space: 86 percent[62] of the population uses the internet, and about 63 percent[63] of the population uses social media. Commenting on the situation, an economist told how the outage has emphasised Kazakhstan's economy's structural dependence on the internet[64]: "Cashless payments went down, food supply chains were disrupted, long lines formed in supermarkets. It has sent our society back to the early 2000s." As many people rely on debit cards for shopping, these were rendered useless, since the terminals depend on internet connections. Long lines formed at ATM machines in Almaty, Aktau, and Nur-Sultan.

Regional Actors

On 5 January, as multiple buildings burned in Almaty and violent confrontations took place between protestors and security forces, President Tokayev declared a national emergency and submitted[65] a formal request for the intervention of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), a mutual defence alliance led by Russia. The CSTO, whose other member states include Armenia, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, quickly announced its decision to send "collective peacekeeping forces" to Kazakhstan. This marked the first time in history that the CSTO deployed its peacekeepers since the organisation's members signed the agreement establishing peacekeeping operations in 2007. With the prime minister of Armenia, Nikol Pashinyan, chairing the meeting, the alliance elected to deploy peacekeeping troops to "normalise" the situation. Ironically, it was only slightly more than a year prior that Pashinyan requested that the CSTO step in to defend his own country's territorial integrity during its September-November 2020 war with Azerbaijan over the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh. However, as in the cases of the Donbas, Kyrgyz-Tajik border clashes, and the authoritarian crackdown in Belarus, the CSTO elected not to intervene, as Nagorno-Karabakh is not recognised as part of Armenia's sovereign territory by any of its members (including Armenia).

The alliance subsequently held[66] an extraordinary session on 10 January to discuss the unfolding unrest in Kazakhstan, during which several heads of state touched on internet and media issues in their remarks. Kazakhstan's president Tokayev made a speech in which he confirmed that a CSTO peacekeeping force comprising 2030 personnel and 250 units of equipment had arrived and begun operating in the country, with Russia contributing the largest share. In his speech, he also accused the "terrorists" of targeting communications centres, while remaining silent on his own decision to cut off his citizens from the internet

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[62] "Individuals using the Internet (% of population) – Kazakhstan," *World Bank,* https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IT.NET.USER.ZS?locations=KZ.

[63] Simon Kemp, "Digital 2021: Kazakhstan," *Datareportal*, February 11, 2021, https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2021-kazakhstan.

[64] Zholdas Orisbayev, "Food and Cash Shortages Spread as Kazakhstan Throttles Internet," *Eurasianet*, January 8, 2022, https://eurasianet.org/food-and-cash-shortages-spread-as-kazakhstan-throttles-internet.

[65] Shaun Walker and Naubet Bisenov, "Kazakhstan Protests: Moscow-Led Alliance Sends 'Peacekeeping Forces,'" *The Guardian*, January 5, 2022, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jan/05/kazakhstan-protests-president-threatens-ruthless-crackdown.

[66] Collective Security Treaty Organization, "On January 10, an Extraordinary Session of the CSTO Collective Security Council Was Held via Videoconferencing," January 10, 2022, https://en.odkb-csto.org/session/2022/10-yanvarya-2022-goda-v-formate-videokonferentsii-sostoyalos-vneocherednaya-sessiya-soveta-kollektiv/#loaded.

during the unrest. In his own speech, Vladimir Putin accused these enemies of using "cyberspace and social networks to recruit extremists and terrorists, to creatme 'sleeper cells' of militants."[67]Tajikistan's President Rahmon also alluded to online Islamic extremism and used this to justify proposed measures aimed at "protecting [the] information space" across the member states of the CSTO. The CSTO member states have been discussing cybersecurity as a central policy area of concern for at least the past five years. Internet freedom advocates should be concerned about the prospect of other CSTO member states adopting strategies similar to those used by Kazakhstan's government to crack down on dissent under the guise of countering violent extremism. The CSTO peacekeeping troops completed their withdrawal on 20 January, 2020, but Kazakhstan's society is still grappling with the implications of these traumatic events.

Implications and Conclusion

Kazakhstan's increasing use of the internet to suppress dissent and unrest over recent years constitutes a disturbing trajectory of growing "digital authoritarianism"[68] in the country. At this stage, there are clear implications for at least three levels of society: political, economic, and social.

Political

With this crackdown, the state surpassed the levels it was previously willing to go to repress dissent and unrest. Now, Kazakhstan's nascent democratic movement is under threat. As activists and media use social media to disseminate information and organise, the authorities' increasing digital control, including a complete internet shutdown, introduces new barriers to collective mobilisation and democratic freedoms. But many view President Tokayev's response to legitimate demands for democratization as window dressing.

On 16 March, President Tokayev delivered his annual State of the Nation address,[69] in which he assessed the January unrest as a threat to the state. He stated that "professional mercenaries, armed bandits and traitors among government officials" were conspiring to seize power. He emphasised the need for an objective assessment of the events and introduced the Interdepartmental Investigative Task Force and its ongoing investigation. The investigation has been criticised by Human Rights Watch,[70] which argues that the government must create an independent hybrid body that would include both national and international experts. Until then, the state can continue to deploy its narrative emphasising

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[67] Ibid.

[68] Margaret Hu, "Kazakhstan's Internet Shutdown Is the Latest Episode in an Ominous Trend: Digital Authoritarianism," *The Conversation*, January 24, 2022, https://theconversation.com/kazakhstans-internet-shutdown-is-the-latest-episode-in-an-ominous-trend-digital-authoritarianism-174651.

[69] Kasym-Zhomart Tokayev, "Послание Главы государства Касым-Жомарта Токаева народу Казахстана," *Official Site of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan*, March 16, 2022, https://akorda.kz/ru/poslanie-glavy-gosudarstva-kasym-zhomarta-tokaeva-narodu-kazahstana-1623953.

[70] Human Rights Watch, "'New Kazakhstan' Needs Independent Inquiry on January Events," *Human Rights Watch*, March 18, 2022, https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/03/18/new-kazakhstan-needs-independent-inquiry-january-events.

national security to further restrict political and civil liberties in the country, while ignoring state-perpetrated violence. Acknowledging that excessive political and economic centralisation led to public unrest, Tokayev also introduced a new reform package to create a "new Kazakhstan," which, among other changes, would require the incumbent president to give up positions in political parties, introduce a mixed parliamentary electoral system, and decrease the number of signatures needed for party registration from 20,000 to 5,000. This would entail multiple amendments to Kazakhstan's constitution as well as the passage of at least 20 new laws by the end of the year.

The public has accepted the news with scepticism, as many see these procedural reforms as mere window dressing[71] without more systematic measures to protect civic and political liberties, including elimination of "structural barriers to democratization, transparency, and executive accountability." Indeed, Zhanbolat Mamai, the leader of the unregistered Democratic Party of Kazakhstan, remains behind bars after his unsuccessful appeal against his pre-trial detention on charges [72] of insulting an authority and distributing false information was rejected at the end of March. Both Human Rights Watch[73] and Amnesty International[74] deem this detention politically motivated and call for his immediate release and for charges to be dropped. The government still practices a selective approach to the freedom of assembly, allowing some protests to take place while suppressing others. For example, at the end of April, activists[75] in Almaty who gathered to demand the release of political prisoners were arrested for 15 days for violating the law on peaceful assembly, even though the activists did not receive official notice from the state forbidding the gathering. The state's increasing control over digital space might exacerbate this dynamic even more by introducing additional barriers for the public to express their discontent and mobilise.

On 5 June, just a month after the constitutional amendments were announced, Kazakhstan held a nation-wide referendum. This "new Kazakhstan" referendum[76] proposed 56 changes that affect more than 30 articles, about one-third of total constitutional articles. The reforms were introduced as a gradual shift from a super-presidential to "a presidential system with a strong parliament".[77] Voters simply had to accept or reject the entire package. The Central

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[71] Ibid.

[72] "Kazakh Opposition Politician Mamai Marks 34th Birthday in Detention Center," *RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty*, June 15, 2022, https://www.rferl.org/a/kazakh-opposition-leader-birthday-detention-center/31899285.html.

[73] Svetlana Vorobyeva, "Kazakhstan Authorities Should Drop Charges, Release Opposition Activist," *Human Rights Watch*, March 25, 2022, https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/03/25/kazakhstan-authorities-should-drop-charges-release-opposition-activist?fbclid=IwAR3jPUMXgcB_iib8dQuJ8Rur5_6DAkv1ko-FIgsNyRezS3wreJDQFBJ02tuI.

[74] Amnesty International, "Kazakhstan: Release Opposition Party Leader: Zhanbolat Mamay," *Amnesty International*, April 1, 2022, https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur57/5391/2022/en/.

[75] Yuna Korostelyova, "Активистов, задержанных на митинге за свободу политзаключенных, арестовали на 15 суток," *Vlast*, April 24, 2022, https://vlast.kz/novosti/49681-aktivistov-zaderzannyh-na-mitinge-za-svobodu-politzaklucennyh-arestovali-na-15-sutok.html.

[76] Catherine Putz, "Kazakhstan Leaves 'Elbasy' Behind, Approves Constitutional Referendum," *The Diplomat,* June 6, 2022, https://thediplomat.com/2022/06/kazakhstan-leaves-elbasy-behind-approves-constitutional-referendum/.

[77] Colleen Wood, "What's in Kazakhstan's Constitutional Referendum?" *The Diplomat*, May 9, 2022, https://thediplomat.com/2022/05/whats-in-kazakhstans-constitutional-referendum/.

Election Commission[78] reported a turnout of 68.06% and registered 77.18% in favour of the amendments. While President Tokayev promises a new chapter for Kazakhstan's politics, experts have pointed [79] out that "many of the amendments are simply reinstating mechanisms of check on presidential power that previously existed, rather than materially changing the relationship between state and society". Others[80] reported that most voters were not educated about what the reform package included but rather saw it as a way to usher into the post-Nazarbayev era. The November 2022 snap presidential elections that institute a single-term limit but lengthen the presidential term to seven years show that old habits die hard even in "new Kazakhstan"[81].

Economic

Kazakhstan's stated goal of "transitioning to a digital economy" is fundamentally incompatible with shutting down the internet. In recent years, the country's attempts to brand itself as a hospitable and attractive environment for tech and innovation—in addition to fossil fuel companies—seem to have borne some fruit, aided by the fact that two of its neighbours, Russia and China, have become decidedly less so. As discussed above, the government has made significant efforts to promote the notion of a "digital Kazakhstan" taking its place on China's "new Silk Road"[82] and implement various policies in support of this goal, from tax breaks to improving internet infrastructure and connectivity in rural areas. However, implementing a nationwide internet shutdown is fundamentally incompatible with these goals.

Kazakhstan has now set a precedent that might give digital nomads, crypto miners, and IT exiles pause when considering Kazakhstan as a destination. The shutdown resulted in massive losses for tech companies, including the foreign crypto mining operations that had recently decamped to Kazakhstan. Perceptions of Kazakhstan as unstable and potentially inhospitable to the crypto industry have damaged the country's reputation as an attractive location for mining—perhaps permanently.

As a result of sanctions and the increasingly repressive environment in Russia, many Russian IT companies have arrived in Kazakhstan since the beginning of Russia's war on

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[78] Tamara Vaal, "Kazakh Leader Pledges Reform after Referendum Win," *Reuters,* June 6, 2022, https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/kazakhstan-votes-amend-constitution-referendum-results-2022-06-06/.

[79] Colleen Wood, "What's in Kazakhstan's Constitutional Referendum?" *The Diplomat*, May 9, 2022, https://the-diplomat.com/2022/05/whats-in-kazakhstans-constitutional-referendum/.

[80] Almaz Kumenov, "Kazakhstan Voters OK Constitutional Changes, but Meaning is Illusory to Many", *Eurasianet,* June 6, 2022, https://eurasianet.org/kazakhstan-voters-ok-constitutional-changes-but-meaning-illusory-to-many.

[81] Catherine Putz, "Nurseit Niyazbekov on Kazakhstan's Tumultuous 2022", *The Diplomat,* October 18, 2022, https://thediplomat.com/2022/10/nurseit-niyazbekov-on-kazakhstans-tumultuous-2022/.

[82] See Flynt Leverett and Wu Bingbing, "The New Silk Road and China's Evolving Grand Strategy," The China Journal no. 77 (2016): 110-132; and Robert Greene and Paul Triolo, "Will China Control the Global Internet Via its Digital Silk Road?" *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, May 8, 2020, https://carnegieendowment.org/2020/05/08/will-china-control-global-internet-via-its-digital-silk-road-pub-81857.

Ukraine; however, offering Kazakhtelcom customers a 50% discount[83] after a complete shutdown, causing massive losses, is not a sustainable strategy to mitigate the damage that this and any future shutdowns may do to Kazakhstan's digital reputation. If Kazakhstan is serious about transitioning to a digital economy, it cannot afford to spook these foreign nationals, who would likely pack up shop and leave for another emerging economy if Kazakhstan continues down this restrictive path. Sometime soon, the government will be forced to choose between these competing visions of Kazakhstan's future.

Social

Incomplete information about the January events makes it difficult to address the collective trauma they caused. Although not the primary focus of this brief, it is important to recognise that, on a human level, the people of Kazakhstan have lived through a horrible ordeal. The residents of Almaty and cities and towns throughout the country experienced violence at the hands of the state, blackouts, rioting, and isolation from the outside world. Kazakhstanis living abroad were unable to reach their loved ones back home. But their government has done little to help them process the events of "Bloody January" or even to establish definitively what occurred. Youth artists and activists will likely be the ones to try to fill in the gaps[84] in the collective memory. Already, the people of Almaty have developed creative ways of memorializing those who died during the protests, such as representing the victims in Almaty with the city's iconic apples.[85] Such acts push back against the state's repressive erasure[86] of the January events. In the absence of state-sanctioned sites of memory,[87] Kazakhstanis will likely continue to create their own through acts of meaning-making, both online and off.

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[83] Almaz Kumenov, "How Did Kazakhstan Shut down the Internet?" *Eurasianet*, January 14, 2022, https://eurasianet.org/how-did-kazakhstan-shut-down-the-internet.

[84] Sher Khashimov and Colleen Wood, "Kazakhstan's Bloody January," *Newlines Magazine*, February 7, 2022, https://newlinesmag.com/reportage/kazakhstans-bloody-january/.

[85] Aidai Irgebayeva, "Одним кадром: Яблоки – как символ погибших во время январских волнений в Алматы," *Kloop*, February 12, 2022, https://kloop.kg/blog/2022/02/13/odnim-kadrom-yabloki-kak-simvol-pogibshih-vo-vremya-yanvarskih-volnenij-v-almaty/.

[86] See Paul Connerton, "Seven Types of Forgetting," *Memory Studies* 1, no. 1 (2008): 59-71.

[87] Jay Winter, "Sites of Memory" in *Memory: Histories, Theories, Debates*, ed. Susannah Radstone and Bill Schwarz, 312.

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