

# EXPO 2017 – Future Energy

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**RAPIL ZHOSHYBAYEV** graduated from the Kyrgyz State University and holds a doctorate degree from Saint-Petersburg University of Economics and Finance. He has held several positions in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan and in 1998 became First Secretary at the Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the Baltic States. He has served as Deputy Foreign Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan and Executive Secretary of the Foreign Ministry. In 2013 he was appointed First Deputy Foreign Minister and Commissioner of the International Exhibition EXPO-2017.

The success of the 2012 Olympic Games in London left a great legacy for the capital and for the whole country. This accomplishment was testament to how much hard work went into organising these Games. As Kazakhstan prepares to host EXPO 2017 in Astana, we are determined to learn from London’s experience and ensure that our event achieves the same degree of success.

It will be a special moment for Kazakhstan and the region, as it is the first time that an event of such magnitude is being held in Central Asia. We are also under no illusion of the level of responsibility that lies on our shoulders. 160 member countries of the Bureau of International Expositions approved of Astana’s bid and its theme ‘Future Energy’ and we are determined to illustrate that it was the right decision.

During the bidding process, we set out our vision for EXPO 2017 – an event that will showcase latest innovations and developments in clean and alternative energy from across the world to help countries switch to green economies. The vote to choose Astana as the host was almost unanimous, which makes us even more determined to make it a huge success.

We see EXPO 2017 – as the UK did with London 2012 – as a national project. Billions of dollars are being invested to prepare the site and infrastructure to ensure that the legacy of this event will live on long after the exhibition is over. Our President Nursultan Nazabayev has called for EXPO-2017 to be the driver of our “third industrial revolution” by focusing on renewable power, hi-tech industries and the creation of a highly-skilled workforce.

This focus is mirrored in the way we are constructing the exhibition site. Smart power supply networks are being put in place to enable buildings to harness renewable power sources. This unique and highly advanced building project will spur the development of our economy and facilitate the use of these new technologies and innovations into everyday life of our country. After the exhibition is over, the site will become a new centre for innovation, spurring our own research and development in sustainable energy.

We are currently working hard to create the right environment for EXPO participants by building high-quality accommodation and working spaces. We are taking all the necessary steps to streamline visa

procedures and put in place guarantees on customs and local taxation.

Last year Kazakhstan passed a law allowing UK citizens to visit our country for up to 15 days without a visa. We are looking into extending the duration of the stay and expanding the number of countries included in the visa-free agreement. We are also about to introduce electronic and group visas that will further facilitate border and migration control.

We expect over 100 countries and international organisations to participate in EXPO 2017. During 2015 I will be visiting many of these countries to sign participation agreements. In the next 12 months we will complete any outstanding arrangements required for participation and ensure that Kazakhstan is ready to welcome millions of visitors.

Seventy new hotels will be built. Furthermore, two new bus stations and a railway station are already under construction, while we are also making progress in organising the construction of a new terminal at our international airport. In addition, exhibition pavilions and new housing will be constructed over the next two years.

Astana will become unrecognisable by 2017. Once the exhibition is over, the EXPO site will become a new centre for the capital. London did a great job of planning ahead for what the Olympics site would be used for after 2012. We are determined to do the same. The ultra-modern buildings, many of which will be powered by green energy, will be turned into cultural centres as well as for industrial and residential use. Part of the site has already been chosen as an additional campus for the Nazabayev University, which will be used by students and scientists to develop new technologies.

We are confident that EXPO 2017 will turn out to be an unforgettable event, and we invite you to participate in this once in a lifetime moment for Kazakhstan and Central Asia. **F**

## EXPO 2017

- Driver of ‘third industrial revolution’
- Focus on renewable energy and high-tech industries
- Creation of a highly-skilled workforce