

# ATHENA

## FOREIGN POLICY SPEECH

**MSc Course**

**"The EU and the Post-Soviet Space"**

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**DAY**

**AS**

**UNNAMED**

Kazakh Human  
Rights Activist



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- Jean Monnet Chair -



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## **Context**

The EU has received a Nobel peace prize in 2012 for successfully promoting peace and democracy in the European continent. 10 years later, the EU is set to receive another Nobel peace prize, because of its efforts to act as a peace keeper around the globe. This speech criticizes the acceptance of such a prize, as actions of the EU have also caused an increase in tensions in countries outside of the union exacerbating subsequent domestic problems. My point of view is that of a Kazakh human rights activist, who observes these tensions due to the rise of Russians after the war on Ukraine as the EU closed its borders for Russian nationals, and criticizes the union for its lack in accountability.

## **Speech**

This message is for the European Union, which is fond of itself as the world's supreme peacekeeper and which, in theory, regards such democratic ideals as freedom, equality before the law, and human rights as fundamental. However, when it comes down to it, those of us outside of the EU have a hard time seeing these ideas put into practice.

Some people think of us as "just another one of the -stans," others consider us as solely Russia's neighbor, and others may not have the slightest clue who the hell we are. Many have overlooked our own language, culture, and identity for years, yet we are a nation with our own history and traditions just like any other.

The decision to adopt the Latin script in 2025 seemed to mark a turning point; it was at that time that we believed we had taken the first step toward complete derussification. Up until Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine, which first seemed to warrant the European Union's decision to seal its borders with the country.

Because the EU has effectively banned Russian individuals from entering the EU, Kazakhstan has become a major transit or destination country for these people. They are descendants of people whose colonial legacy is still very much evident in all facets of our lives. Our identity has been stripped away for years, and we continue to suffer from the rotten fruits that have preoccupied our society by their russification efforts in the past.

We are now expected to just cope with the challenges that come with an unsolicited inflow of people, a little easy, isn't it? Don't feel like dealing with it? Just close your borders and pass the buck to the next country.

Make it the problem of a country that does not possess the same power dynamics as you, knowing that most of the neighboring countries are either dependent on Russia or have allied with Moscow making the closure of our borders and preventing this influx next to impossible.

It's hard to take you seriously when you walk around with awards and want us to appreciate you for "promoting peace" and "providing security" in the same countries you have destabilized, plundered and caused suffering for years during your age of colonialism.

Isn't it true that you have stood there watching while the Syrian civil war unraveled and developed into the disaster it is today? How did you go about fixing this problem? Providing the government of a volatile state with leverage, and further upsetting the region's internal politics by paying a country to "shut the doors and toss away the keys". But at least you are free from those responsibilities now, right?

You have given Ukraine the means to fight back, but the battle continues to rage on. The country is still being terrorized by that lunatic, despite the fact that you have the ability to stop him.

We refuse to let Central Asia and the Caucasus become yet another shield to protect you from a danger you created. As the number of Russian immigrants continues to rise, it seems increasingly unlikely that us Kazakhs will ever be able to create a united Kazakhstan.

Congratulations to your representatives for those awards tonight. But the next time you investigate the disputes you ostensibly resolve throughout the world, try to zero in on the common demeanor that underlie them. If you keep your eyes peeled for external threats, you might just miss the one nestled deep within.