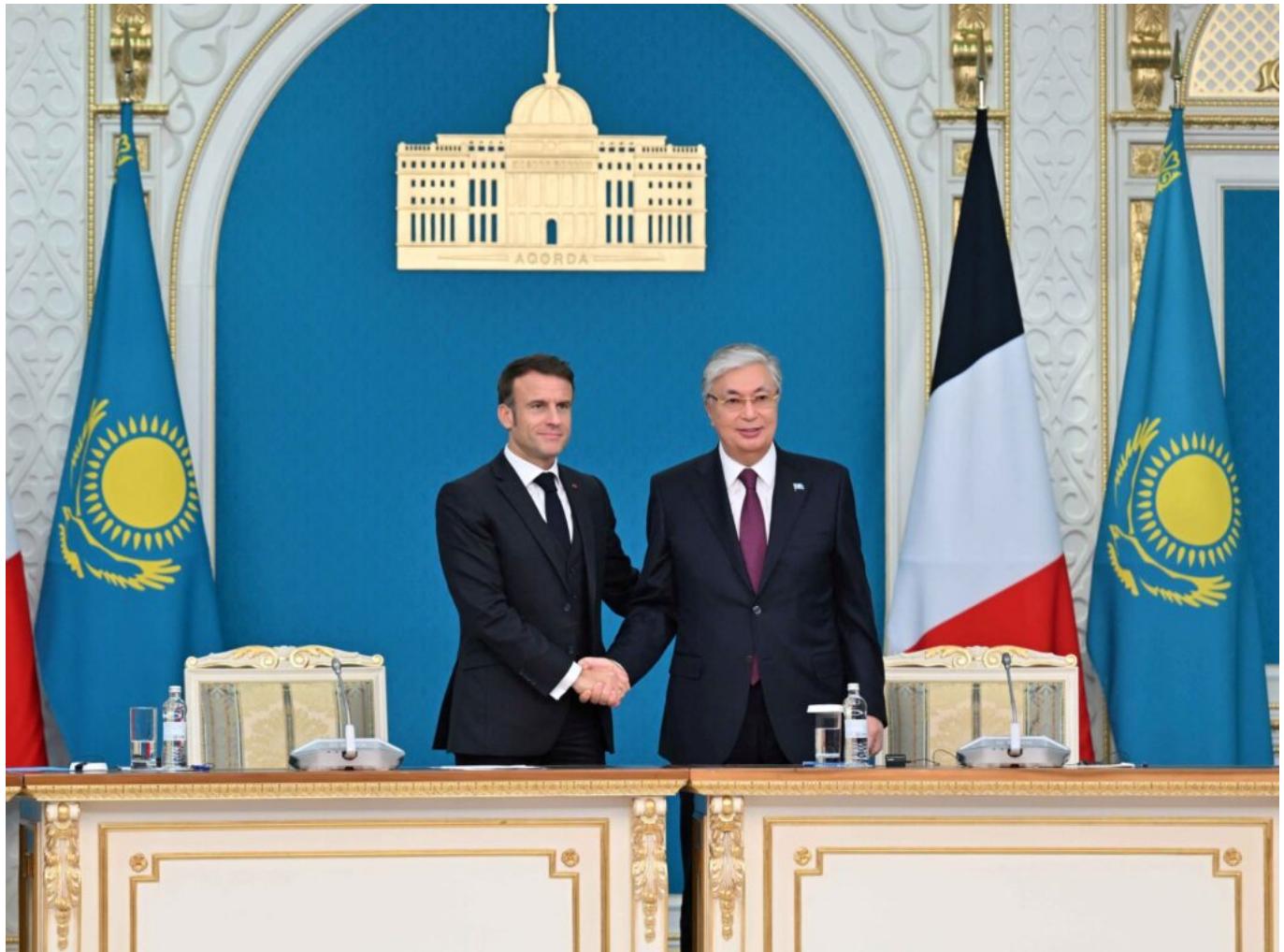


# Strategic Tour of French President to Strengthen Ties with Central Asia

written by Ezba Walayat | November 8, 2023



French President Emmanuel Macron visited Kazakhstan on November 1, 2023, as part of a two-day tour of Central Asia. The visit is seen as a strategic move by Macron to strengthen France's ties in the region, which has become increasingly important due to Ukraine crisis. During his visit to Kazakhstan, Macron met with President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev and signed a number of agreements to accelerate cooperation covering economic sectors, including critical minerals important for clean energy technologies, pharmaceuticals, and aerospace. Tokayev referred to France as a significant and reliable partner in the European Union and pledged to work toward bolstering the partnership. Whereas, Macron said, "The strength of our partnership demonstrates the good strategic direction that has been taken and the need to complement and accelerate it."

France ranks as the fifth-largest foreign investor in Kazakhstan, with a long history of economic cooperation that includes the Kashagan oilfield project, a joint venture with TotalEnergies, and a uranium mine operated by Orano, whose head was accompanying Macron on his visit. Macron's visit to Central Asia is a sign of the growing interest of Western powers in the region. Central Asia is rich in natural resources, including oil, gas, and minerals, and it is also strategically located between Russia and China. As China's influence in the region grows, Western powers are eager to strengthen their ties with Central Asian

countries. The visit is also a sign of France's desire to play a more active role in global affairs. The country has traditionally been seen as a power focused on Europe and Africa, but Macron has made it clear that he wants France to be a global leader, his visit to Central Asia is a step in that direction.



Following a visit to Kazakhstan, French President Macron arrived in Uzbekistan, the first visit by a French president since 1994. As the two nations discussed agricultural and uranium projects, President Emmanuel Macron announced that France and Uzbekistan would establish what he called a strategic cooperation. "We have agreed with the President, Shavkar Mirziyoyev, to build a strategic partnership," stated Macron. To conclude, the ties between France and the Central Asian countries has reached a major point with President Macron's visit. Along with chances for countries to exploit potential in a variety of fields and sectors, the inked agreements and investment pledges establish the foundation for increased collaboration.