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Kazakhstan Boosts Trade with New China-CAS Corridors

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Kazakhstan pledges investment in new trade corridors linking China to Central Asian States, aiming to enhance regional connectivity and economic growth.

Kazakhstan is set to finance the construction of new trade corridors connecting China to Central Asian States (CASs), announced Ambassador Yerzhan Kistafin during a meeting in Islamabad on August 9, 2025. This strategic move aims to streamline trade routes and bolster economic ties across the region, replacing challenging land routes with efficient pathways.

The initiative, as outlined by Kistafin in discussions with Pakistan's Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan, focuses on improving connectivity through China to CASs, including Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. According to the Associated Press of Pakistan (APP), Kistafin emphasized Kazakhstan's commitment to funding these corridors to boost bilateral and regional trade. He highlighted the potential for a trade route from Karachi to Chaman to Kandahar, alongside the existing Kashgar-to-Turkmenistan corridor, to enhance commerce.

Kistafin also revealed plans for a two-day official visit by Kazakhstan's President to Pakistan in November 2025, signaling deeper bilateral cooperation. Joint working groups in commerce and transport will be established prior to the visit to ensure progress. Khan expressed Pakistan's support, noting the country's commitment to developing trade corridors through China, Afghanistan, and Iran. He referenced recent international conferences in Belarus and Iran, underscoring the role of regional collaboration in advancing cross-border trade.

The proposed corridors align with Kazakhstan's broader economic strategy to modernize transport infrastructure and strengthen its role as a logistics hub. The Zhetysu container terminal in Almaty, inaugurated in June 2025, exemplifies this effort, serving as a key hub for Chinese cargo. Kazakhstan's trade with China, reaching \$43.8 billion in 2024, underscores its position as a leading partner in Central Asia, as reported by the Beijing Post. These corridors are expected to reduce transit times and costs, offering a competitive alternative to traditional routes.

The investment reflects Kazakhstan's ambition to drive economic growth through enhanced connectivity. By fostering efficient trade routes, the nation aims to strengthen its economic influence and support regional stability, positioning itself as a pivotal player in Eurasian trade networks.