

## \$2 per Hectare: How much Russia Rents from Kazakhstan

### News:

On the territory of Kazakhstan, there are currently three test polygons with a total area of over 8.6 million hectares, which are leased to Russia. About 900 Russian servicemen are constantly presented there, Tengrinews.kz reports. In early May, Mazhilis parliament deputy Serik Egizbaev proposed that these lands should be given over to agricultural needs. ***“Since 1995, Russia has leased more than 8.5 million hectares from Kazakhstan for military training grounds for a nominal fee of 1,050 tenge (\$2.35) per hectare, which, by the way, has not changed since 2005. (...) A paradoxical situation has developed in our country, Kazakhstan, is on the 9th place in the world in terms of occupied area, cannot fully meet the needs of agricultural producers in farmland. In almost every region, the issue of providing for citizens who want to start farming is limited by the lack of land resources”***, - he argued.

### Comment:

We are talking about the test site Sary-Shagan, spread over the territory of Karaganda, Zhambyl, Aktobe, Kyzylorda regions and Ulytau region (area - 6 million 985 thousand 316 hectares); 929th State Flight Test Center on the territory of West Kazakhstan and Atyrau regions (area - 1 million 322 thousand 398 hectares); and the fourth state central interspecies polygon in the West Kazakhstan region (area - 292 thousand 825 hectares). The total area of landfills leased by Russia is 8 million 600 thousand 539 hectares (for comparison: this is more than the territory of Austria or the United Arab Emirates, equals two territories of the Netherlands and three of Belgium).

The lease price is \$2.33 per hectare (about 1,046 tenge at the current exchange rate). It turns out that the lease of the entire area brings the state an income of 20 million 39 thousand 255 dollars. The date of the possible end of international treaties and agreements on the lease of landfills in the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Kazakhstan was named July 27, 2030. At the same time, the department clarified that the validity of contracts and agreements is extended every 10 years.

The polygons are used for the development and testing of promising models of weapons and military equipment (anti-aircraft products, anti-missile and aviation equipment). However, no one is worried about the harm to the environment and the population. Recall that the first test of nuclear weapons in the Soviet Union was carried out at the Semipalatinsk nuclear test polygon on August 29, 1949; over 40 years after that operation, more than 450 nuclear tests were conducted on its territory. The test polygon was officially closed in 1991, but the sale of Kazakh lands to the colonial powers and the transformation of the country into a nuclear dump continued: a low-enriched uranium bank was built on the basis of the Ulba metallurgical plant in Ust-Kamenogorsk with EU and US money. Even earlier, a facility for the storage of waste from nuclear power plants from Japan and the United States was erected there. In 2013, nuclear waste was brought there from the infamous Fukushima nuclear power plant, which had a disaster comparable in scale to Chernobyl.

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