Extent

12 folders, approximately 616 pages

Summary

This collection consists of records of Sheila Heslin, former director of Russian, Ukrainian and Eurasian Affairs in the National Security Council, relating to Kazakhstan. The collection contains correspondence, cables, background information, briefing materials, talking points, meeting agendas, travel itineraries, and promotional materials primarily focusing on the economic development of Kazakhstan and the Central Asian region, as well as the expansion of international trade relations, foreign investment in Kazakhstan, nonproliferation, and human rights reform.

Scope and Content Note

The materials in FOIA 2025-0781-F are a selective body of documents responsive to the topic of the FOIA. Researchers should consult the archivist about related material. Sheila Heslin is a former director for Russian, Ukrainian and Eurasian Affairs in the National Security Council. Prior to her appointment to the NSC, Heslin graduated from Cornell University, received her master’s degree in public policy from Harvard, and was a member of the State Department’s policy planning staff. She has authored and co-authored many articles focusing on Eastern Europe and former Soviet states. Kazakhstan is a landlocked country and former Soviet constituent republic located in Central Asia. It is the world’s largest landlocked country and is bordered by Russia to the north and northwest, China to the east, Kyrgyzstan to the southeast, Uzbekistan to the south, Turkmenistan to the southwest, and borders the Caspian Sea. Resource-rich, the country accounts for 60% of the Central Asian region’s GDP, primarily through its oil and gas industry and its high production of iron and silver. From 1947 until 1989, hundreds of nuclear tests were conducted in Kazakhstan by the Soviet Union in the northeastern region

near Semipalatinsk, with lasting adverse consequences for the nation’s environment and population health. The Baikonur Cosmodrome, also located within Kazakhstan, served as the Soviet spaceport and was the chief base of operations for the Soviet space program. Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Russia has retained control of the facility; the Baikonur Cosmodrome is still leased and operated by the Russian Federation within Kazakhstan, and all Russian crewed spaceflights are launched from there. Kazakhstan was the last of the Soviet republics to declare independence, doing so on December 16, 1991, ten days before the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Under the leadership of President Nursultan Nazarbayev, Kazakhstan began the transition into a market economy. Economic growth was not matched by political reforms, however, and international human rights groups noted that the nation’s government was staunchly authoritarian under the consolidated power of President Nazarbayev. Some steps towards more democratic processes have been taken since President Nazarbayev stepped down in 2019 and following protests in 2022. However, limitations on the freedom of speech and independent media, suppression of political opposition, corruption and election interference remain problems within the country. This collection contains correspondence, cables, background information, briefing materials, talking points, meeting agendas, travel itineraries, and promotional materials primarily focusing on the economic development of Kazakhstan and the Central Asian region, as well as the expansion of international trade relations, foreign investment in Kazakhstan, nonproliferation, and human rights reform. Most records related to this FOIA case are closed for national security reasons.

Record Type

Textual

System of Arrangement

Records that are responsive to this FOIA request were found in these collection areas—Clinton Presidential Records: White House Staff and Office Files, and Clinton Presidential Records: NSC Cable, Email, and Records Management Systems. Staff and Office files were maintained at the folder level by staff members within their individual offices and document all levels of administration activity. Staff and Office

files are processed at the folder level, that is, individual documents are not selected and removed from a folder for processing. While this method maintains folder integrity, it frequently results in the incidental processing of documents that are not wholly responsive to the subject area.

Access

This collection is open to all researchers. Access to Clinton Presidential Records is governed by the Presidential Records Act (PRA) (44 U.S.C. Chapter 22, as amended) and the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552, as amended) and therefore records may be restricted in whole or in part in accordance with legal exemptions.

Copyright

Documents in this collection that were prepared by officials of the United States government as part of their official duties are in the public domain. Researchers are advised to consult the copyright law of the United States (17 U.S.C. Chapter 1) which governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material.

Provenance

Official records of William Jefferson Clinton’s presidency are housed at the Clinton Presidential Library and administered by the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) under the provisions of the Presidential Records Act (PRA).

Processed by

Staff Archivist, 2025. Previously restricted materials are added as they are released.

Last Modified Date

2026-03-26

Container List

The following is a list of documents and folders processed in response to FOIA 2025-0781-F:
Box 1
Clinton Presidential Records: White House Staff and Office Files
National Security Council
Heslin, Sheila
Central Asia [1] [OA/ID 679]
Central Asia [2] [OA/ID 679]
Kazakhstan [1] [OA/ID 679]
Kazakhstan [2] [OA/ID 679]
Kazakhstan (US-Kazakh Joint Committee, November 1-2, 1994) [1] [OA/ID 679]
Kazakhstan (US-Kazakh Joint Committee, November 1-2, 1994) [2] [OA/ID 679]
Kazakhstan: VP-8 Visit [1] [OA/ID 679]
Kazakhstan: VP-Kazhegeldin Visit [2] [OA/ID 679]
Clinton Presidential Records: NSC Cable, Email, and Records Management System
NSC Records Management System
[Heslin; Kazakhstan or Central]
9502237 [OA/ID 572]
9600773 [OA/ID 1084]
9604026 [OA/ID 1106]
9606738 [OA/ID 1124]