**The Bologna Process:**

**The Opportunities Created for Universities in Kazakhstan**

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**OPENING ADDRESS**

***The Bologna Action Lines:***

***Harmonization, Mobility, European Qualifications Framework,***

***and European Credit Transfer System***

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In 1999 the Bologna Declaration was signed by 29 Ministers of Education from European countries in Bologna, Italy. They agreed on a broad set of 10 “action lines” to harmonize Higher Education in the EU, which have subsequently been further developed at subsequent Ministerial meetings. The “action lines” are as follows.

1. Adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees, so as to facilitate student mobility.
2. Adoption of a European Higher Education system based on three educational cycles — 3-4 year Bachelors degrees, 1-2 year Masters degrees and Doctoral degree (currently not included in the Bologna Process of harmonisation) — in accordance with the Dublin Descriptors, so as to facilitate the mutual recognition of degrees and periods of study, achieved by establishing a compatible framework of qualifications for the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), which facilitates credit transfers and the provision and recognition of dual and joint degrees.
3. Establishment of a system of credits — European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) — to determine the graduation requirements — Bachelors (180-240 ECTS), and Masters and post graduate diplomas (60-120 ECTS), so as to facilitate credit transfers and the provision of dual and joint degrees).
4. Focus on lifelong learning by establishing flexible learning paths for obtaining Higher Education and procedures for recognizing prior learning, so as to contribute to the up-grading of workplace skills.
5. Doctoral studies and the synergy between the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area, so as to harmonize doctoral research with European public research funding priorities and to facilitate social and economic innovation and creativity.
6. Inclusion of higher education institutions and students, so as to facilitate the up-grading of university practices and standards.
7. Promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance at the institutional, national and European levels, so as to improve the quality of European Higher Education and to facilitate credit transfers and dual and joint degrees.
8. Promotion of student mobility, so as to facilitate their movement across the EU.
9. Promotion of a European dimension in higher education, so improve the global rankings of European universities.
10. Promotion of the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area, so as to attract more international students.