

**TURKISH-AZERBAIJANI
COOPERATION IN MULTILATERAL POLITICAL
AND ECONOMIC RELATIONS AT THE TURN
OF THE XX–XXI CENTURIES**

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This article is written on a relevant topic and is timely. For many decades, between Turkey and Azerbaijan there are many common points of contact in the political, economic, ideological and cultural fields. A lot of attention is given to economic issues in the article.

Keywords: *politics; economics; ideology; trans-regional projects; TRACECA; railway lines; oil and gas production sectors.*

Turkey is the main regional ally of Azerbaijan. Back in 1991, Turkey was the first to recognize the independence of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and on January 14, 1992, strong diplomatic relations were established between them. In August 1992, the first bilateral agreement on cooperation in the field of military training was signed. The relations between these two eastern countries, which are closely interrelated from the religious, ethnic, linguistic and cultural points of view, in the 21st century are further expanded and noticeably deepened both on the political arena and on the economic level.

At the present historical stage, Turkey and Azerbaijan have a lot in common in the field of strategic partnership. So, in Azerbaijan and on the vast territory of the South Caucasus in recent years there have been such fateful geopolitical and economic events, the consequences of which have a positive effect on the implementation of trans-regional projects. However, first of all, it is necessary to point out the unified and unchanged position of the two states in resolving the Azerbaijani-Armenian confrontation. This is undoubtedly the main political line that both states have been steadfastly adhering to for almost thirty years.

Turkey, in the matter of the ongoing occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh and the seven regions around it, is rendering all possible assistance to Azerbaijan. In this sense, she, as a member of the Minsk Group, supports efforts aimed at ending the occupation, which is contrary to international law. Today, Azerbaijan regards Turkey in this acute and painful issue for the republic as almost the only ally, fully supporting Baku's position, ready for three decades and to this day to defend it at all levels, including numerous international forums and organization.

Today, interparliamentary relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan are at a high level, cultural, scientific, technical and humanitarian relations, student exchange, joint cultural events carried out within the framework of the TURKSOI are developing. Also in a positive aspect, political relations are developing at meetings of the heads of Turkic-speaking states, within the framework of the OIC, BSEC, ECO. Turkey supports the entry of Azerbaijan into the WTO. An Azerbaijani-Turkish intergovernmental economic commission operates in Turkey, established back in 1992 on the basis of the "Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation". On November 7, 2007, the Declaration on Strategic Partnership and the Agreement on Mutual Economic Privileges were signed in Baku.

True, it should be noted that Turkey and Azerbaijan, for many economic indicators, have long and firmly established themselves as completely independent and independent of each other in the literal sense of the state. For example, S. Chernyaevsky spoke out reasonably and figuratively on this subject. In one of the monographs, he wrote: "The leadership of Baku is well aware that Turkey is not at all advisable to consider as some kind of potential leading donor that can really provide Azerbaijan with tangible investments in its economy" [2, p. 174].

The development of mutual economic relations largely depends on the state of transport links. Currently existing air and road communications are economically disadvantageous, therefore, other possible options are being considered. In this sense, the development of the Kars-Tbilisi railway line project is of great importance. The implementation of this project will increase the volume of goods directly passing through the TRACECA corridor, which can then be transported also to Turkey. China

is also showing great interest in this project. In 2000, the Turkish-Chinese protocol was signed on the financing of this project by China. In May 2005, the Baku Declaration on the project for the Kars-Akhalkalaki-Tbilisi-Baku railway line was signed. The significance of this four-way line is currently difficult to overestimate; the road contributes to the further development and expansion of the transport “energy corridor” connecting the East with the West. “The implementation of this project in Georgia Baku-Tbilisi-Kars will revive the historical route of the Great Silk Road. On the eve of the launch of the railway, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey agreed jointly on tariffs. The cost of freight delivery amounted to \$ 37.9 per ton of products, \$ 2279 per wagon and \$ 529 per container” [1, p. 440].

The desire of Azerbaijan, which has a favorable geostrategic position, for an efficient and more competitive railway network, makes it a member of large international transport corridors such as TRACECA, North-South. Opening of the new international Baku-Tbilisi-Kars traffic, the official ceremony of which took place in October 2017 with the participation of the Presidents of Azerbaijan I. Aliyev, Turkey R.T. Erdogan, as well as the heads of government of Georgia, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, other officials, has important economic, commercial, political and geostrategic importance.

So, from the materials of the article we can conclude that further political and economic cooperation between Turkey and Azerbaijan is mutually beneficial. Both countries, taking into account the national mentality and individual geopolitical conditions in the future, as we see, are making every possible effort to become regional leaders.

References

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