

TURKIC COUNCIL

10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NAKHCHIVAN AGREEMENT



Seventh Summit of the Turkic Council



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BAKU-2019

Nakhchivan Agreement on the Establishment of the Cooperation Council of the Turkic Speaking States (Turkic Council) was signed on October 3, 2009 by the Presidents of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Republic of Kyrgyzstan and the Republic of Turkey in Nakhchivan city of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The Republic of Azerbaijan will held next Seventh Summit of the Turkic Council on 15 October 2019 in Baku which also coincides with the 10th anniversary of the Nakhchivan Agreement.

On this occasion, to mark the 10th anniversary of the Nakhchivan Agreement, as a joint effort between the Secretariat of the Turkic Council and the Center of Analysis of International Relations this Special Publication titled “TURKIC COUNCIL: 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NAKHCHIVAN AGREEMENT” has been prepared. This publication contains the articles of the Heads of the States of the Member States of the Turkic Council, welcoming address of the Prime Minister of Hungary, articles of the heads of Turkic Cooperation Organizations and the official think-tanks of the Turkic Council Member States.

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THE NEW HORIZONS OF TURKIC WORLD

First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan,
Honorary Chairman of the Turkic Council,
Elbasy Nursultan NAZARBAYEV



One look at the geographical map of the world is enough to understand the significance of the Turkic world. Located on the vast expanses of the central part of Greater Eurasia, our brotherly peoples gave humanity, first of all, distinctive national cultures and worldviews, which for many centuries have made a unique contribution to the common treasury of the spiritual and intangible wealth of the planet. At the same time, the views and values of our peoples are rooted in ancient Turkic ideas about nature, humankind, and the world, which were formed long before the emergence of current global religions. It should also be remembered that from ancient times Turkic peoples played an important role as a living bridge between civilizations, East and West, North and South, and also served as a key element of the Great Silk Road.

Many people know the saying that *those who does not know their past have no future*. That is why processes are currently underway in our states to rethink the historical and spiritual heritage of our ancestors. The rich cultural heritage of the Turkic peoples, our common traditions and culture in the environment of the modern information age, help us to understand our closeness better. I believe that it is our special identity that helped tens of millions of Turks, settled in different countries by the rule of fate, not to get lost in the great vortex of history and to develop in the current conditions of globalization.

It is gratifying that for the first time in many centuries of world history, Turkic civilization is experiencing a renaissance. The active rapprochement of our countries allowed us to create the Cooperation Council of Turkic-Speaking States in 2009, an international organization more commonly known as the Turkic Council. The mission and objective of the Turkic Council flows naturally from its name; the Council itself is an expansion of the multifaceted relations of our countries based on the foundation of the centuries-old commonality of the language and history of our peoples. The concept of consolidating the Turkic world was based on a strategic vision of the role of the Turkic-speaking region and its agency in the broad context of international relations. The integration of the Turks into a single whole is a response to the explicit need of our peoples.

It should be noted that until recently, the “Turkic idea” as such had a predominantly cultural and humanitarian flavor. Now the Turkic countries together are forming a new agenda for the Council. Today, the Turkic Council is completing its establishment at the institutional level. Nowadays, the CCTS is dynamically evolving and unlocking its development potential in a variety of areas. Thanks to the will of the leaders and peoples of the Turkic states, interaction in the Council is also developing in economy, trade, science, transit, transport and tourism – areas that have a great potential.

Increase in our membership is an important indicator of the Council’s success. I sincerely welcome the Republic of Uzbekistan as a new full-fledged member of the Council. Hungary’s recent accession as an observer has certainly strengthened the standing of our organization as an international agency linking East and West.

In general, the phenomenon of the Cooperation Council of Turkic-Speaking States is unique. The organization, which only a few people believed in ten years ago, today has become an attractive platform for dialogue among the Turkic peoples and a significant factor in the broader regional cooperation.

At the same time, we still have a lot to do in order for the Turkic Council to strengthen its position as a meaningful international organization, and for the very concept of the “Turkic world” to become a universally recognized part of international discourse. That is why during the 6th CCTS Summit I raised the issue of reforming the Turkic cooperation organizations to prioritize greater work efficiency, functional flexibility, and adaptation to the needs of our time. The blueprint for this reform will be submitted for consideration by the Turkic Council in Baku.

I am convinced that progressively greater cooperative arrangements among the

Turkic-speaking states will open up new avenues for the advancement of the member states of the Turkic Council and strengthen their positions worldwide. Our countries can contribute significantly to the long-term stability of the vast Eurasian continent, as well as to the development of a sustainable continental security system based on cooperation and mutual respect among the states of Greater Eurasia.

The modern Turkic world faces the choice of a variety of development paths, but the key rapprochement vector is supported by all participants. After all, the success of the CCTS is of strategic importance for enhancing Turkic integration and establishing good neighborly relations in Eurasia. It is my conviction that modern Turkic peoples have a great future.

AZERBAIJAN: A BRIDGE FOR COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TURKIC-SPEAKING COUNTRIES

Ilham ALIYEV

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan



It has been 10 years since the establishment of the Cooperation Council of Turkic-Speaking States. The Turkic Council commenced its work with the signing of the agreement by the Heads of State at a Summit held in Azerbaijan's ancient land of Nakhchivan in October 2009. A common ancestry, and common historical, national, cultural and moral values constitute the solid foundation that unifies us.

TURKPA, TURKSOY, the Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation and the International Turkic Academy – the bodies that cover the wide array of spheres of our mutually beneficial cooperation – continue to contribute to the broadening of cooperation between our countries, the study of our rich cultural heritage, and the worldwide promotion of our material and moral values.

Our peoples have created gems of oral literature such as *Kitabi-Dede Qorqud*, *Koroglu*, *Alpamish* and *Manas*, marvels of architectural and artisan craftsmanship, as well as many other examples of material and cultural heritage that are part of humankind's cultural repository. We therefore attach special significance to bolstering the cultural ties between our peoples and the implementation of initiatives in the humanitarian domain.

From that perspective, Azerbaijan, which sits at the crossroads between East and West, serves as a bridge for inter-civilizational and intercultural dialogue by hosting

such events as the World Religious Leaders Forum, the World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue, and the Baku International Humanitarian Forum.

The rising international and regional prominence and economic prowess of the states that we represent makes our cooperation more appealing and opens new prospects for our region. Obviously, cooperation in the transportation sphere is one of the key directions for our countries, which are situated along the ancient Silk Road. Azerbaijan is an active player in the East-West transportation corridor and continues its efforts as a transit country to the benefit of the brotherly nations located on the eastern shores of the Caspian Sea.

The Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railroad, commissioned in 2017, is our contribution to the restoration of the historical Silk Road. The Lapis Lazuli route inaugurated last year, linked with the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railroad, only boosts our potential. The new Baku International Sea Port, with the capacity of handling of 15 million tons of cargo and one hundred thousand containers per year, is a key component of that transportation network. The initiative of the Secretariat of the Turkic Council on the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding within the “Sister Ports Process” serves the expansion of our relations in the transportation area and the furthering of our capabilities.

Energy cooperation is an important item on our agenda. We have connected the Caspian Sea with the Black Sea and the Mediterranean through a network of oil pipelines. Today, together with our partners, we continue our efforts to complete the realization of the Southern Gas Corridor. The Southern Gas Corridor, as well as our other initiatives in the transportation and energy sectors, will pave the way for more profound regional and international cooperation and serve overall prosperity, stability and growth.

Business activity, increased contacts between business communities, encouragement, and the support of mutual investments promise ample opportunities for deepening our cooperation in the economic sphere. The economic reforms implemented in Azerbaijan have been recognized by international organizations. According to the World Bank’s “Doing Business 2019” report, in one year Azerbaijan moved up 32 positions and ranked 25th, placed among the Top Ten Reformers.

Despite the great opportunities for cooperation in the geography that the Cooperation Council of Turkic-Speaking States spans, there are problems that threaten the region. For nearly 30 years, Armenia’s continued policy of occupation against Azerbaijan, in flagrant violation of the norms and principles of international law, has remained a

grave threat for regional peace and security. As a result, 20 percent of Azerbaijan's territory – our historical land of Nagorno-Karabakh and seven surrounding districts – have been occupied. A policy of ethnic cleansing has been carried out there, and thus over one million of our fellow Azerbaijanis have become refugees or internally displaced persons. The historic and cultural heritage that belonged to the Azerbaijani people has been destroyed and our Islamic monuments and mosques have been razed to the ground.

Four UN Security Council resolutions regarding the conflict have been passed. Those resolutions unequivocally demand the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the occupying forces from the territory of Azerbaijan. Furthermore, the Non-Aligned Movement, OSCE, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, NATO, the European Parliament, the Council of Europe and other organizations have adopted similar, relevant decisions and resolutions. Armenia ignores these resolutions and decisions and avoids the implementation of its international legal obligations. The conflict must be resolved on the basis of Azerbaijan's territorial integrity.

Today, as an international organization with a regional footprint, the Turkic Council is an institution contributing to peace, stability and prosperity in the region and the world, and is open to engagement and dialogue. Yet we must not be complacent about this success. We should be forward-looking, able to identify future prospects for growth and new cooperation avenues. In this regard, Azerbaijan is determined to continue the efforts aimed at deepening the relationship between the Turkic-speaking nations both on the bilateral and multilateral levels.

DEEPENING COOPERATION BETWEEN THE MEMBER STATES OF THE COOPERATION COUNCIL OF TURKIC-SPEAKING STATES

Sooronbay JEENBEKOV,
President of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan



Ten years ago, upon the proposal of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Heads of State of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey signed the quadripartite Nakhchivan Agreement on the establishment of the Cooperation Council of Turkic-Speaking States (referred to as the Turkic Council).

Prior to the establishment of the Council, an almost three-decades long partnership among the Turkic States had been cultivated in the form of periodic Summits of Heads of State. This partnership has further flourished with the establishment of the Turkic Council, which has become an effective platform of interaction over the last ten years. The Turkic Council is a unique regional organization with a wide scope of activities, contributing directly to the socio-economic and cultural development of the Member States through tangible projects and thus deepening integration by increasing commonalities among its members.

With the effective use of the existing potential, all of the necessary prerequisites are in place for the successful implementation of the Member States' common tasks, and the achievement of the Council's goals. The main goals of the Turkic Council are strengthening mutual trust, friendship and brotherly neighborhood; maintenance of peace, strengthening security and trust in the region and the world

in general; searching for common ground on foreign policy issues of common interest (including within the framework of international organizations); and coordination of actions in the fight against international terrorism and separatism, extremism, human trafficking, drug trafficking, etc.

The 6th Summit of the Turkic Council, held on September 3, 2018 in the city of Cholpon-Ata of the Kyrgyz Republic, showed that despite some interruptions, there is a desire for joint cooperation within the organization. The Summit was a unique moment, where the President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban took their rightful part for the very first time. During the Summit, Hungary was granted observer status in the Turkic Council. We appreciate that the Hungarian people do not forget their Turkic history, customs, traditions and family-friendly roots.

I welcome the accession of the Republic of Uzbekistan into the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States. I am sure that this will give a new breath to our organization and will become the source of many updates. The accession of Uzbekistan, as a full member of the Council, and Hungary's obtaining of an observer status, indicates the Member countries' need for cohesion and joint integration. These inclusions confirm the expansion of the Organization's geography, which positively affects the activities of the Turkic Council, and strengthens cooperation with other organizations. The expansion of the Turkic Council can give a positive impetus to the development of cooperation between Member States in the areas laid down in the declaration of the 6th Summit of the Turkic Council.

In a period of protracted conflicts and sanctions confrontation, cooperation in our format can make a significant contribution to strengthening the atmosphere of friendship, trust and good neighborliness between our states. Today, international relations more than ever need an open and constructive dialogue aimed at mutually acceptable solutions, taking into account the interests of the parties, and observing the principles of equality, compatibility and complementarity, responsibility, sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs, etc.

In addition, I would like to hope for a more active transition to the practical implementation of the goals and objectives of the concept of integration of Turkic-speaking states. We need a special concentration on concrete projects that can bring stability to economic and political development as well as the security of the Turkic Council Member States.

Economic Cooperation and Transport Communications

The Turkic Council attaches great importance to economic cooperation. In this vein, meetings of the Turkic Business Council, regular meetings of the Ministers in charge of economy, annual Business Forums that bring together entrepreneurs from Member States, and many other cooperation mechanisms have been instrumental in terms of increasing economic and trade turnover in the region. In order to enhance investment cooperation and expand business relations between private sectors, a collaborative investment portal has been launched to promote the economies of the Member States. Trade growth has been observed between the Turkic Council States, and political, economic and humanitarian ties are becoming stronger. Despite the global economic crisis, stable economic growth has been maintained in the member countries of the Turkic Council.

The Kyrgyz Republic, for its part, creates enabling conditions for investors from the Turkic Council Member States to successfully implement projects, including in the field of expanding transport corridors, building energy facilities, telecommunications, light industry and processing agricultural products. Active cooperation within the framework of the Turkic Council has largely facilitated the favorable investment climate created in recent years in Kyrgyzstan. Therefore, the Kyrgyz Republic attaches high importance to meetings of the leaders of the Member States of the Turkic Council.

Given the importance of the economic sphere, it is necessary to constantly intensify the activities of Ministers of Economy and working groups on economic cooperation and the establishment of the Turkic Investment Fund. Special attention should also be paid to the diversification of economies, expansion of transport corridors, development of entrepreneurship, and improvement of the investment climate.

In the future, it will be necessary to step up efforts in conjunction with the Turkic Council and other international and regional organizations. The point is not to consider the Turkic Council and other regional associations and organizations in terms of rivalry and competition. On the contrary, it is necessary to change the approach and better interact among ourselves to complement and develop such organizations.

Attention should be paid to the development of transport communications and routes, the development is extremely important, since communications should become full-

fledged, connecting links in trade both between Member States, and between the East and West as a whole. In this regard, the China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan railway project is crucial.

Information and Communication Technology

Another important area of cooperation is the intensification of work in the field of information and communication technologies (ICT). In the framework of the Declaration of the 6th Summit of the Turkic Council, the Heads of State emphasized the importance of cooperation in the field of ICT and called for continued efforts to expand cooperation and coordination in e-government, the Trans-Eurasian Information Superhighway (TASIM) field, fiber infrastructure, cyber security and satellite services. Once again, it is worth emphasizing and encouraging the parties to further advance the process of cooperation in this field, which was initiated at the last summit of the Organization, through the revitalization of the formed working groups on cybersecurity, e-government and satellite services.

Biodiversity and Water Resources

Another extremely important issue, which, in our opinion, should be addressed, is the joint work to preserve the biodiversity of mountain systems, which form the main resources of drinking water around the world in order to mobilize additional resources.

Currently, the Kyrgyz Republic is taking the initiative to develop a draft relevant United Nations General Assembly resolution and intends to invite the Turkic Council Member States to join the process and participate in the subsequent joint implementation of this project.

Tourism, Cultural Cooperation, and Youth

Kyrgyzstan actively supports the dynamic development of tourism between Member countries. We are ready to spare no effort for the successful implementation of the “Modern Silk Road” joint tourism package, which covers Turkey, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. The gradual inclusion of Uzbekistan and Hungary will hopefully increase the attractiveness of this project even more.

In modern geopolitical conditions, the upbringing of the youth of Member states in a spirit of respect for the history, culture, language and traditions of related peoples

and interreligious tolerance is of particular importance. Only in this way can one block the radicalization of youth, fanaticism, violence and their adoption of an alien ideology. Kyrgyzstan is actively advocating in favor of the creation of enabling conditions for the development of cooperation among Turkic-speaking States in the fields of national sport and ethnic culture.

It is no coincidence that the theme of the 6th Summit of the Turkic Council in Cholpon-Ata was “National Sport and Cooperation in the Youth Sphere.” In this connection, we can note the unique and unifying project launched at the initiative of Kyrgyzstan, which has proved its viability: the World Nomad Games. Over the past six years, the Games have been successfully held for the third time and are noted in the United Nations General Assembly Resolution on “Promotion of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, understanding and cooperation for peace”. The motto of the Nomad Games is: “Unity of power! Unity of spirit!”

Taking this opportunity, I want to once again express my gratitude to the Heads of State who took part in the official opening of the 3rd World Nomad Games during the 6th Summit. With the support of the Turkic-speaking States, we propose to further develop the World Nomad Games as an important instrument of intercultural dialogue. In 2020, the 4th World Nomad Games will be held for the first time outside the Kyrgyz Republic, namely in Turkey, which is evidence of mutually beneficial cooperation within the organization. Taking into account the capabilities of Turkey, I am sure that a new impetus will be given to the development of this unique project

The younger generation is the future of the country. We consider providing decent living conditions for young people a holy duty of every State. Therefore, it is important to focus our efforts and promote collaborative economic and humanitarian initiatives aiming at involving young people in entrepreneurial activities and innovative projects in order to increase their access to employment, human potential and well-being.

In order to increase youth interest in innovative projects and entrepreneurship, we initiated special projects in economic and humanitarian areas. I personally proposed to organize a special working group of the Turkic Council.

The greatest minds, scientists and writers of our peoples left a lot of wisdom and guidance to the younger generations in their work. We must save, enrich and transmit this heritage for the edification of our youth. In this context, the publication

and study of textbooks and books on Turkic literature, international relations and relations between our countries and peoples, would contribute to an even greater spread of Turkic culture and history in the world, studying the contribution of Turkic peoples to world civilization.

Now, when the process of generational change is actively going on in the world, new cultural gaps and breaks associated with globalization are forming between generations. In this environment, it is very important that our future generations do not forget about what has always brought us together and united: where are we from and what for? Our national and cultural identity, which will allow us to more effectively solve many of the development problems we are experiencing, should not be forgotten. Today, national identity is recognized as a very important resource which stimulates the development of innovations, creativity and entrepreneurship, as well as state foundations. A weak sense of national identity is a serious threat that results in absorption by other cultures, high levels of corruption, poverty and economic stagnation.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to recall the words of the great Kyrgyz writer Chingiz Aitmatov, whose 90th anniversary in 2018 was widely celebrated in our republic, Turkic countries and around the world. He wrote:

When people are obsessed with common concerns, interests, ideas and even anxieties, they go towards a common goal and equally understand the meaning of life, the value of life, the value of the situation in which they are currently in.

They, somewhere different, nevertheless, overcome misunderstanding and achieve mutual understanding. From this, one and the other are enriched.

Therefore, we must strive for mutual understanding in various aspects!

“TURKIC COUNCIL”: A FUTURE VISION ARISING FROM THE HISTORICAL BROTHERHOOD

Recep TAYYIP ERDOĞAN

President of the Republic of Turkey



Central Asia, our ancestral land, is the geography where Turkish identity was born and took root in history. The South Caucasus is a bridge that connects us to this region. We regard the South Caucasus and Central Asia with a view far beyond geopolitical and strategic considerations. The independence of the Turkic Republics in 1991 was met with profound enthusiasm and excitement in Turkey. The fact that we are the very first country to recognize the independence of the brotherly Republics is a source of pride for us.

In 1992, upon Turkey’s initiative, “Summits of the Heads of States of the Turkic Speaking Countries” were launched. In 2009, at the 9th Summit of the Heads of States of the Turkic Speaking Countries; the “Nakhchivan Agreement” regarding the establishment of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States (Turkic Council) among Turkey, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan was signed. The Nakhchivan Agreement, founding document of the Turkic Council, became a turning point for the Turkic world and a symbol of our united fate.

We see that the Turkic Council has implemented successful cooperation projects not only in the political field but also in the field of economy. The Turkic Council Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry, established in Istanbul on May 17, 2019, will further enhance our business relations and the solidarity of our business world. The

proposal to establish a Joint Investment Fund of the Turkic Council as our next step has the potential to mobilize the inherent capital resources of the Turkic World to pave the way for all out development.

The selection of the title of Supporting Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises as the main theme of the 7th Summit of the Heads of States was a decision well made. I believe that the decisions to be taken at the Summit will be instrumental for effectively using the commercial potential in the Turkic World and increasing the common trade capacity.

Last year, Uzbekistan's participation in the Summit of the Heads of States of the Turkic Council at Presidential level as a guest of honor for the first time, opened a new chapter for the Organization. Thanks to the vision of my dear friend, H.E. Shavkat Mirziyoyev, regarding the Turkic Council, Uzbekistan will take its place among us as a full member at the Baku Summit.

To see Turkmenistan among us as soon as possible will be a natural result of our interwoven brotherhood, like the parts of a body. As for the acceptance of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus as an observer to the Turkish Council, this will play an important role in the development of the Mediterranean perspective of the organization the visibility of which is on the rise. On the other hand, we were very pleased with the participation of Hungary to the Summit in 2018 as an observer member. I believe that the Representation Office in Budapest will be a symbol of cooperation between the Council and Hungary.

Within the scope of the proposal I personally made, it is an appreciative and a well-suited consideration of the Turkic World to grant the title of Honorary Chairman of the Turkic Council to Nursultan Nazarbayev, Aksakal of the Turkic World, who contributed greatly to the establishment of the Turkic Council.

Besides its political and economic dimension, the Turkic Council is an organization where the ideas of many thinkers who contributed to world heritage are represented under one umbrella. The tolerance of Yunus Emre, the honesty of Nizami Ganjavi, the wisdom of Chingiz Aitmatov and the advices of Abay Kunanbay are the basis of the principles of the Turkic Council. With this understanding, the Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation in Baku, and the Turkic Council-related organizations such as TURKSOY in Ankara continue their efforts to protect and transmit our common cultural heritage to future generations.

I find it appropriately useful to remind the words of Yusuf Has Hajib, who shed light on today from centuries ago, in Kutadgu Bilig, "The mind is a good and sworn

friend for you. Knowledge is a very compassionate brother for you. I would like to underline how vital the activities of the International Turkic Academy in Nur-Sultan are for the Turkic world in these days as now that the knowledge and wisdom are understood to be the most important wealth.

Besides these organizations, TURKPA, which brings together the distinguished and competent representatives of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, National Assembly of Azerbaijan, Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan, and the Jogorku Kenesh of the Kyrgyz Republic is a “forum of friendship” before us. Today, complementing and supporting classical diplomatic channels, the role of parliamentary diplomacy is becoming more and more important in the light of the fast and interconnected dynamics of our region where TURKPA is in a position to perform this task best with its separate and independent structure.

The Turkic Council was not established to provide an alternative to any alliance or international organization. This organization was founded with the political will and determination of its founding members as a natural result of the historical and cultural fraternity among the Turkic States. The aim of the Member States is to contribute to security in the Central Asia and the South Caucasus, to facilitate mutual trade, to preserve our cultural heritage and support the efforts in this regard.

The Turkic Council, which continues its activities in its sui generis structure, is open to cooperation with various international organizations. In this context, as Turkey, we are closely following the applications of the Turkic Council for observer status at the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

It is undoubtedly a great success for the countries that longed to embrace each other during the Cold War to work in unity on future-oriented projects within the Turkic Council today. Our Council takes firm steps from historical fraternity to strategic cooperation and bridges the future with our traditions.

I wholeheartedly wish that the road we walk together will be open at all times. I am sending my sincere greetings to all my brothers in the ancestral lands from Turkey through this valuable publication. I thank the Turkic Council for the successful activities they have done so far and for the efforts they have made for the Turkic World. I once again express that Turkey, who hosts the Secretariat in İstanbul, is ready to provide the necessary support to the Turkic Council in its work in the time ahead.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTEGRATION AND COOPERATION

Shavkat MIRZIYOYEV

President of the Republic of Uzbekistan



It gives me a great pleasure to congratulate the participants of the 7th Summit of the Turkic Council, the public of the Turkic world with the significant date - the 10th anniversary of adoption of the Nakhchivan Agreement on the Establishment of the Cooperation Council of Turkic-Speaking States.

The signing of this important document has marked the beginning of a new stage in fruitful partnership of Turkic-speaking countries which is based on inextricable historical ties, commonality of language, culture and spiritual values.

Today, the Turkic Council is a prestigious international platform for enhancing and deepening dialogue and cooperation among member countries, effective promotion their interests on the international arena.

The Republic of Uzbekistan as an integral part of the large Turkic family attaches great importance to the development of relations with Turkic-speaking countries. Back in the early years of its independence Uzbekistan has brought forward the initiative “Turkestan - our common home”, which had been supported by the Turkic-speaking community. Our country took an active part in the first summits of heads of Turkic-speaking state. The historical 4th meeting of leaders took place on 21 October 1996 in Tashkent. It became an important milestone

in the development of cooperation of Turkic-speaking states and to some extent laid the foundation for the creation of the contemporary Turkic Council. By signing the Tashkent Declaration then, the heads of state emphasized the need for regular mutual consultations and agreed to establish the Secretariat for the heads of Turkic-speaking state meetings. This the most important institution is embodied in today's Secretariat of the Cooperation Council, established by the Nakhchivan Agreement on the establishment of the Turkic Council exactly 10 years ago.

This year, Uzbekistan officially addressed the Cooperation Council of Turkic-speaking states with the statement on accession to the Nakhchivan agreement. This request was warmly accepted by Organization's all member states, for which we express them our deep appreciation. In the shortest possible time - literally within one working day we had received a positive response.

On 14 September 2019 the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan on acceding the Nakhchivan agreement was signed. On the same day a law on its ratification was adopted, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent to the Secretariat and the depository of the Council the Instrument on the accession of Uzbekistan to the Nakhchivan Agreement.

I am convinced that the accession of our country to the Turkic Council will facilitate strengthening of the Turkic world integration and open up new opportunities for cooperation, especially now when the Turkic Council is aiming at fostering the economic interaction amongst member countries.

The Republic of Uzbekistan has gained a solid experience of mutually beneficial partnership with Council's all member states in many areas, both bilaterally and within a number of international frameworks.

Positive trends in interstate relations in the subregion of the Turkic Council open up for us new prospects for enhancing cooperation further both within the Turkic Council and in relations with international institutions and mechanisms, such as the United Nations, OSCE, OIC, ECO, "The Heart of Asia - Istanbul Process for Afghanistan".

The Council has wide opportunities as an advisory, coordination mechanism of interstate relations and an instrument for promoting of equal, mutually beneficial international cooperation in Central Asia, the Caucasus, the Middle East and Europe. There are no disputes or disagreements among member states which in my opinion is a vital advantage. All participants adhere to coinciding or close

views and positions on contemporary issues related to the Turkic Council activity, international and regional agenda. It means that today there are no barriers for active interaction in such priority areas as economy, investments, innovations and high technologies, alternative energy and ecology, transport and communications, tourism, science and education, medicine.

The achieved level of comprehensive cooperation among the countries of the Turkic Council inspires great optimism. While its real potential is much greater. We have everything we need, and most importantly, the strong political will to achieve even higher milestones, which unconditionally and fully meet the interests of our people.

In this regard, Uzbekistan has identified key priorities and areas of cooperation for the active promotion of which we are ready to make every effort.

This is first, the expansion of mutually beneficial trade, economic and investment ties. Today, this vector should be the driving force of cooperation since it serves as the basis of growth of people well-being. I believe that, first of all, it is necessary to strengthen cooperation between leading industrial enterprises, investment companies, banking and financial institutions and entrepreneurs of our countries, as well as to establish effective interregional cooperation.

We are interested in promoting closer cooperative ties in the fields of transport and transit. Creating integrated transport networks will provide an access to major world and regional markets. It is primarily about the international North-South and East-West transport corridors, automobile, rail and air routes connecting the Central Asian region with China, the countries of Southeast and South Asia, the Middle East and Europe.

To this end, a number of strategically important projects for the development of transport infrastructure have already been implemented in the region. Great opportunities are also emerging with development of the “Andijan-Osh-Irkeshtam-Kashgar” automobile corridor, as well as the beginning of construction of the China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan railway.

Introduction of advanced information and communication technologies and innovations in all spheres is a determining factor in the competitiveness and sustainable development of any country. Therefore, we consider the innovative development of the Turkic Council countries a top priority. In this regard, we propose to establish close partnership between institutions responsible for innovative development, scientific and research centers and venture companies in order to promote programs and projects for development of future technologies.

As you know, the people of the Turkic-speaking countries have a unique and invaluable cultural, historical and spiritual heritage, which belongs to all mankind. In our countries the historical monuments of the Turkic and Islamic civilisation, heritage of great scientists, poets, thinkers and artists have been carefully preserved. This priceless wealth belongs to all mankind, and the world should see it, which can be facilitated by active development of pilgrimage tourism. The travel industry, along with the economic component, plays an important role in rapprochement of countries and peoples.

While determining the prospects of our present and future, we undoubtedly rely on spiritual and moral values, rich history and culture of people, their centuries-old friendship, good neighborhood traditions and mutual understanding. Cultural and humanitarian cooperation forms the very atmosphere of relations among states, unites people. A vivid example of this is the holding of the Year of Uzbekistan in Kazakhstan and the Year of Kazakhstan in Uzbekistan, mutual days of culture and joint friendship concerts between Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan, festivals, exhibitions as well as many other joint events that caused a warm feedback in the hearts of people. I am convinced that this will become a good tradition for all countries of the Turkic Council and, undoubtedly, will serve to strengthening friendship and mutual understanding among our people. We have great potential for interaction in the field of human development. Exchange of experience, implementation of joint educational, scientific and cultural projects, promising programs for education and enlightenment of youth should be one of the priorities of the Turkic Council.

In the context of globalization, unpredictability and growing tension in the world, close and mutually beneficial cooperation play a decisive role in achieving sustainable development and progress, ensuring peace and security. One of the basic aspects of multilateral cooperation among Turkic-speaking states, in my opinion, should be coordination of efforts taken by the law enforcement agencies of the Turkic Council countries in combating terrorism, extremism, organised crime, drug smuggling and human trafficking.

Today, the Cooperation Council of Turkic-speaking states is entering a new, more dynamic and responsible stage of its development, which requires strengthening of progressive and comprehensive cooperation among our brotherly countries and people.

Thanks to the political will, an open and constructive policy of the Turkic-speaking states, regular meetings of the countries' leaders, the atmosphere of increasing mutual

trust is being strengthened in the region. Uzbekistan also actively participates in this process.

The great Turkic representative, the Kyrgyz writer Chinghiz Aitmatov, speaking about the historical role of our country, noted that “the Uzbek people in the fate of the Turkic-speaking countries played a role similar to the role of Byzantium in the fate of the Slavic states”.

And today, at a new, by no means uneasy, stage of historical development, the Republic of Uzbekistan stands ready to make a worthy contribution to the further strengthening and enhancing of relations of friendship and cooperation between Turkic-speaking states.

Once again, from the bottom of my heart, I would like to congratulate the people of the Turkic-speaking states on the tenth anniversary of the Turkic Council and wish them peace, well-being and prosperity.

WELCOME ADDRESS

Viktor ORBÁN,
Prime Minister of Hungary



It fills me with great joy that Hungary can celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Turkic Council as an observer member of the organisation. It may seem strange that a country belonging to Western Christianity, NATO and the European Union is a respected observer member of the Turkic Council. In the modern European world, the respect and vigour with which Hungarians connect to their history is exceptional. We are proud of our origins that go back to Central Asia, the territory of Magna Hungaria, and we are proud to preserve our eastern roots in our language, culture and folklore.

Today, we are not only bound together with the members of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States by kinship, but also by the fact that over the years we found partners in the organisation, with whom we managed to build an excellent cooperation in many areas of the economy. We are pleased to see that the Turkic World, with its exceptional geopolitical opportunities, has become a dynamically developing region of the world economy in recent years.

That is why we were honoured to open the Turkic Council's European office in Budapest a few weeks ago. For us Hungarians, it is our declared goal to make the members of the V4 region and the European Union more familiar with the potential

of the countries of the Turkic world. We would like to build bridges between our regions, not only in the spheres of politics and business, but also in the form of personal relationships, which can be best achieved through the more than 500 university scholarships granted by the Hungarian government to young people coming from Turkic countries.

Let us continue writing the history of the 21st century together!

BUILDING MOMENTUM: THE TURKIC COUNCIL BEGINS A NEW DECADE

Baghdad AMREYEV

Secretary General of the Turkic Council



The Turkic states have played a crucial role throughout history in facilitating commercial activities, as well as political and cultural interaction between the East and the West, in the vast area stretching from Europe to China. Despite various attempts during the Cold War to cut the ties and interactions between Turkic peoples, they once again managed to come together after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Therefore, with the reemergence of several sovereign Turkic states on the political map, the dreams of a Turkic world, held by Ismail Gaspirali, Ali bey Huseynzade, Ziya Gökalp, Mustafa Shokay, Zeki Velidi Togan and Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, are coming true.

The Turkic States have entered a period of comprehensive cooperation, building stronger and sounder relations, and designing a common future together. An important achievement of Turkic cooperation, as well as a stepping stone for future development, was the establishment of the Cooperation Council of Turkic-Speaking States (Turkic Council) upon the initiative of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, H.E. Nursultan Nazarbayev. The organization was established on October 3, 2009 by the Nakhchivan Agreement, signed by Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey. The Agreement embraces the norms and principles of international law, and defines its main objectives as the

further deepening of cooperation among Turkic-speaking States, as well as making joint contributions to peace and stability in the region and in the world. With their signatures, the Member States reconfirmed their commitments to human rights, the rule of law, and the principles of good governance.

Beyond a doubt, the creation of the Turkic Council paved the way for the discussion of matters of concern for the Turkic-speaking States. Given their dynamic and complex environment, building confidence, establishing friendly neighborly relations, and developing common positions on foreign policy issues constitute the Member States' underlying principles; maintaining peace and security, fostering bilateral ties, and promoting common understanding on issues of common concern are vital for the successful integration of the Member States.

The next, seventh Summit of the Turkic Council will be held in Azerbaijan; this will be a special occasion, since it marks the 10th year of the Turkic Council in action. It is exceptional also because the Summit witnesses some historic milestones and tangible successes. For ten years, the Turkic Council has been actively pursuing its activities with the aim of transforming the long-standing cultural ties among the Turkic-speaking States into planned, institutional and sustainable cooperation. In line with this overarching target, the Turkic Council has established cooperation in different areas, and conducted over 60 ministerial and 150 expert-level meetings. Furthermore, more than 30 conferences, forums, and vocational training programs, as well as youth camps and festivals at the international level have been organized and successfully implemented.

A Decade of Success

Under the umbrella of the Turkic Council, cooperation between the Ministries of the Member States and their relevant institutions has increased in a multilateral format. As a result of such efforts, more than 30 agreements have been signed among the Turkic Ministries and institutions so far. This deepened multilateral cooperation has led to concrete projects with tangible results in various fields, ranging from the economy to transport, customs, tourism, youth and sports. Another manifestation of the growing cooperation under the Turkic Council in the course of the last 10 years is that the positions of the Member States in the international arena, and their foreign policy preferences, have gradually become more coherent and coordinated, due to regular CHS and CFM meetings allowing the Presidents and Foreign Ministers to discuss regional and global developments

of common concern and to develop common stances. Our Foreign Ministers have issued several joint statements regarding crucial developments taking place in our region, which is a clear demonstration of this harmonization and coordination.

Since the Cholpon-Ata Summit in 2018, the Turkic Council has seen its most intense and productive year to date in terms of the widening and deepening of cooperation. In a single year, we have convened 15 ministerial meetings in various areas, which amounts to 1/3 of all of the ministerial meetings held since the Council's establishment.

Enlargement and Expansion

This year, the Turkic Council realized its first enlargement process since its foundation. This historic occasion, and the pinnacle success of this year, is Uzbekistan's membership in the Turkic Council. I cannot express how important it is to see Uzbekistan as a full member among us. We have been waiting for this for many years now. I believe that this remarkable development will add significant momentum to the activities of the Turkic Council and inspire ever-increasing cooperation among the Turkic-speaking countries and peoples. Uzbekistan has always been one of the central factors of the Turkic world, as well as the economic and cultural cradle of Turco-Islamic history, with its glorious cities located along the Great Silk Way. Uzbekistan has also been a source of huge contributions to world civilization with its rich national and historical heritage. Today, Uzbekistan opens a new chapter of development and opportunity, not only for its kindred countries, but for the entire region.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my deepest regards to H.E. Shavkat Mirziyoyev, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, for his astute leadership and vision. I am confident that relations between Uzbekistan and the other Turkic-speaking countries, which are based upon centuries-old cultural roots, will gain further dimensions and bright prospects under the uniting flag of the Turkic Council.

We take pride in announcing that the Turkic Council's cooperation with Hungary, which has enjoyed observer status since the 2018 Cholpan-Ata Summit, has been strengthened in the course of one year due to the dedication and commitment of both sides. Hungarian Ministers and officers have attended our various ministerial meetings, the General Assembly of the Turkic University Union, as well as the Young Diplomats Training Programs. We organized an ad hoc ICT

Ministerial meeting in Budapest in September 2019 and decided to organize the upcoming meeting of Ministers of Transport in Budapest in 2020. More importantly, we opened the European Office of the Turkic Council in Budapest on September 19, 2019 together with our Foreign Ministers. The Office is yet another manifestation of Hungary's dedication and commitment to enhance its relations with the Turkic Council and the Turkic-speaking countries.

Considerable progress has been made in the Council's relations with Turkmenistan. In June 2019, a first-ever official visit by the Secretary General of the Turkic Council took place; in August, the Turkic Council participated in the Caspian Economic Forum organized by the Turkmenistan government with the participation of Caspian countries. During recent official contacts, a common understanding achieved regarding the possible application of this brotherly nation for an observer status at the Turkic Council in the near future.

Prosperity through Cooperation

In the economic sphere, the Turkic States account for a population of around 150 million, covering an area of over 4.5 million square kilometers, with a total GDP exceeding 2.1 trillion USD, ranking 13th in the world as a whole. This untapped common potential is an important tool in leveraging the Turkic-speaking States' comparative advantage to the benefit of their peoples.

It is worth emphasizing that focusing on practical and systematic solutions will lead the Member States to economic prosperity. The gradual creation of conditions for the free movement of goods and services, capital and labor, the further simplification and harmonization of customs and transit procedures, the creation of advantageous transport corridors, integration into the global transportation network, and the realization of the transit potential of the Member States should become the pillars of our economic cooperation in the coming years. The Turkic-speaking States have an opportunity to become the main passage route for transnational projects, and to become a trade hub between China and the European Union, Central Asia and the Black Sea.

Deepening economic cooperation among the Member States has been the *raison d'être* of the Turkic Council since its establishment. That's why we dedicate this year's Summit to the theme of "Supporting the Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) of the Member States." Concurrently, we are also organizing a Business Forum at the Summit.

Since the Astana Summit of 2015, the cooperation of Turkic countries has risen to a new level. Trade turnover among the Member States of the Turkic Council has increased by 22%, reaching almost 17 billion USD among all of the Turkic-speaking countries. Uzbekistan's trade turnover with the Turkic Council member states has increased by 40% since 2016. These are indeed successes in a world experiencing geopolitical and geo-economic turbulence. We know that we can do much more. Together, we have a greater capacity to contribute to regional stability.

Underpinning this general picture, important work was done this year to intensify the economic dimension of cooperation under the Turkic Council's auspices. We established the Joint Turkic Chamber of Commerce and Industry (TCCI) of the Turkic Council. The Hungarian Chamber of Commerce will also take part in the process, and we expect the participation of the Turkmen Chamber of Commerce as well. I believe that the TCCI will make significant contributions to economic and trade relations among our countries. We have already organized large-scale Business Forum this year in Tashkent, and will host second in Baku during the 7th Summit.

Another significant initiative of this year in the economic sphere is the establishment of the Turkic Investment Fund. Its initial capital is expected to amount to 700 million USD in its first year. The Islamic Development Bank (IDB), as an International financial organization, is interested in allocating funds to the Turkic Investment Fund. Hungarian Eximbank in recent years has opened a credit line worth a total of 1.5 billion USD for the promotion of investment, trade and project cooperation with the six Turkic-speaking countries. Hungary, as an Observer Member, may consider channeling some part of this amount to the Joint Fund. I believe that the Fund will add further momentum to the economic and trade cooperation among our countries by supporting small and medium-sized enterprises.

Future Directions

Over the last 10 years, the Turkic Council has established itself as a full-fledged international organization and an effective mechanism for furthering cooperation among its members in various fields. It has proven successful as an effective instrument to uphold the common interests of the Member States. It now enjoys well-established relations with various credible international organizations, first and foremost with the UN and its bodies. Hence, I humbly consider that in the first 10 years, the establishment stage of the Turkic Council has been completed. Now, it is

time to step up to the next stage.

The level of cooperation achieved so far under the umbrella of the Turkic Council, the quantitative and qualitative expansion of the Organization, as well as its newly-created economic and financial institutions, will allow the Turkic Council to reach a higher level of integration in the near future. Needless to say, the transition to this new stage aiming at greater integration will require the implementation of advanced projects in infrastructure, investment, legislation, and the economy.

For instance, the further strengthening of economic cooperation will require the availability of efficient financial instruments to enhance trade, economic and investment cooperation, and to support small and medium-sized enterprises. It is thus essential to complete the establishment process of the Turkic Investment Fund. In the future, it may also be possible to consider creating a Turkic Bank.

We should consider enhancing the role of the Trans-Caspian Transport Corridor (Middle Corridor) in East-West trade movement by creating new initiatives, such as the establishment of a joint Caspian transport company. We must decrease logistical costs while accelerating the speed of transport and customs operations along the Trans-Caspian Corridor. We also need better coordination and cooperation among the Caspian ports, as well as the logistics centers and companies of the Turkic Council member states.

In order to boost the tourism potential of the member states, we need to work for the creation of a “Silk Road Visa,” a single tourist visa ensuring the free movement of tourists among the Member States of the Turkic Council.

We need to strengthen our efforts for the realization of the TASIM project (Trans-Eurasian Information Super Highway), which will help to build broadband connectivity and promote the development of ICT infrastructure and e-commerce among the Member States.

The educational and cultural sphere is the main pillar for furthering cooperation among the fraternal countries. Progress achieved in this sphere will drive further cooperation in the political and economic areas. The Turkic Academy is creating an intellectual platform to bring forward the most pressing issues and explore solutions by engaging academia and the National Academies of Science of the Turkic world. The Academy should continue to produce high-quality research that can impact the decision-making processes in the Turkic states and beyond. Additionally, the Turkic Council will continue to utilize other affiliated bodies, such as TURKSOY and the Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation, in support of cultural and linguistic

endeavors. In this context, activities under the framework of TURKSOY should be emphasized, as 14 Turkic-speaking states and communities are gathered under its auspices.

I believe that the Turkic Council's inclusive, comprehensive and pragmatic approach to cooperation will further empower synergy among the Turkic communities. The common cultural and linguistic ties shared by the peoples of the region could contribute positively to mutual trust and understanding. Promoting our common history, language, culture and traditions should be inclusive and have regional appeal. There exist, for example, many figures that constitute a common historical literature in the region, such as Hoca Ahmet Yesevi, Molla Nasreddin or Efendi, Korkut Ata or Dede Gorqud, Koroglu, Manas, Mevlana Celaleddin Rumi, Fuzuli Ali Shir Nevai, Mahtumkuli, and so on. Considering our common historical, cultural and linguistic ties, the robust transnational linkages from people to people could be an important factor in furthering cooperation among the Turkic-speaking nations.

We must boost our efforts for enhanced cooperation within the Turkic University Union, and increase the number of students and academicians participating in the Orkhun exchange program. We should complete the preparations of books on Common Turkic History, Literature and Geography, and ensure their inclusion in the curricula of the Member States as soon as possible. We may even encourage our Member States to develop a common alphabet and terminology for better linguistic convergence among our societies.

We need to work more strenuously for the establishment of a common TV channel for the Turkic world, and to strengthen existing cooperation between the news agencies of the Turkic Council member countries. Encouraging public and private media to produce movies, series and documentaries about prominent figures and events that took place in the common history of the Turkic world will increase social awareness of our commonalities and shared past.

We should place more emphasis on our youth. Raising young generations with awareness of our shared history, common identity, language and culture is a game-changer for the future.

Moreover, we have about 20 million citizens of the Member States living abroad. This is a considerable number. Enhancing cooperation and coordination among our Diasporas has great political, economic, cultural and humanitarian significance.

We need to work harder and more efficiently to reach our targets in the next decade of the Turkic Council. We need to remain sharply attuned to the systemic developments

in our region and the world, so that we may ably set out our road map for deeper integration among the Member States.

In a nutshell, to accomplish successful cooperation amongst the member States, the Turkic Council will provide fertile ground for deepening the existing cooperation and, where appropriate, initiate the commencement of cooperation in new fields. In the end, we must be able to see a Turkic world which is thriving economically through increased regional trade based on streamlined customs procedures, a visa-free region allowing our people to travel and interact with one another, and a new generation, more conscious of their roots and the common culture that binds them together. The dream of Gaspıralı İsmail, “Unity in language, mindset and action” among Turkic peoples should become true. The Turkic Council’s task is not free from challenges, yet the stakes are high and the goal worthy as we work together for the realization of a long-lasting ideal.

THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NAKHCHIVAN AGREEMENT

Altynbek MAMAIUSPOV

Secretary general of TURKPA



The Turkic world is at the forefront of an ongoing process of transformation in the Eurasian region induced by its historically central role in international politics, economy, trade and culture. Turkic-speaking countries have always been at the crossroads between West and East, North and South, with their geographical location occupying an enormous expanse of the main transport corridors. Naturally, the emergence of newly independent Turkic-speaking states on the world political map, following the geopolitical changes that took place at the end of the 20th century, earned a significant place for the Turkic world in the global political arena. In spite of various historical challenges, the Turkic nations have always tried to maintain ties with each other, inspired by their common ethnic and cultural origin.

Beginning in the final decade of the last century, the Summits of the Presidents of Turkic-speaking states have played an important role not only in terms of the preservation and popularization of the common Turkic identity, but also as a pivot point for developing cooperation in the areas of trade, investments, energy, transport etc. Turkic cooperation institutions were established as a result of the Summits, when the Heads of Turkic-speaking states started to hold joint consultations on various issues of mutual interest. In the course of time, the institutionalization of this cooperation became imperative, since the relationships between the Turkic-

speaking states had grown more multifaceted. In parallel, the development of cooperation between the Turkic-speaking states, with its distinguished track record of the last two decades within the bilateral framework, has been taking place against the background of their remarkable political and socio-economic achievements.

This year, the Turkic world is celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Nakhchivan Agreement signed on October 3, 2009 by the presidents of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey, by which the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States, or Turkic Council, was established. With the establishment of the Turkic Council, the Turkic-speaking states entered a new stage of cooperation based on concrete institutional mechanisms. Over the past ten years, the Turkic Council has proven efficient in its comprehensive and inclusive approach to cooperation between its member states. Within a relatively short period, the organization has gained recognition as a key actor of regional cooperation based on shared values and principles that include voluntariness, consensus, solidarity and transparency.

Consequently, the Turkic Council gave impetus to a further expansion of relations in a large number of areas, followed by the establishment of two newly affiliated organizations – the Turkic Academy and the Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation. Thus, the platform of Turkic cooperation featured an institutional complementarity by pursuing multilevel interaction among the member countries. Meanwhile, the process of this institutionalization as a whole has systematically introduced the concept of the “Turkic World” to the international political discourse.

The establishment of the Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic-speaking countries, TURKPA, in 2008 was another milestone in the institutionalization of Turkic cooperation, as it brought together, for the first ever time, the popularly elected representatives of the Turkic states. The idea of establishing an inter-parliamentary institution of the Turkic world was set forth by the first President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, which demonstrated his political foresight. Thus, on November 21st of the same year, the heads of the parliaments of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey signed the Istanbul Agreement, which provided the basis for enhanced cooperation in political, economic and humanitarian fields at the inter-parliamentary level.

Last year, we celebrated the 10th anniversary of TURKPA. This remarkable date can be assessed as a turning point in the development of the Assembly. During the first decade of TURKPA, the parliamentarians of the member countries conducted

an exchange of information, experiences and good practices in numerous fields of cooperation. Within those ten years, the member countries touched upon a wide range of topics, including trade, investments, migration, the environment, cyber-security, and cooperation in the fields of education, science and technology.

Now the time has come to precisely define the priority areas of cooperation under the TURKPA aegis and set forth initiatives to reinforce relationships in this direction, elaborate efficient tools for mutually beneficial cooperation, and explore ways of implementing joint activities in different fields. The eighth Plenary Session of TURKPA, which took place November 21-22, 2018 in Izmir under the Chairmanship of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, was marked by significant decisions that pave the way for a qualitatively new stage of inter-parliamentary cooperation within the TURKPA framework. In this Plenary Session, the parliamentarians of the member countries expressed their intention to further develop cooperation based on a long-term vision and new conceptual approach. As a result, TURKPA adopted a Strategy Paper for the period from 2019 to 2021, setting out the main aspects related to the further institutional development of the organization and handling four pillars of its activities: legal, economic, cultural-humanitarian and environmental cooperation.

Now more than ever, the Turkic-speaking countries are capable of addressing the most acute issues of common interest through taking joint and coordinated actions. In addition to sharing a common identity in terms of language, culture and values, the Turkic-speaking states have such commonalities as increasing economic capacities and a dynamic population structure that provide a solid ground for enhanced, result-oriented cooperation. The abundance of natural resources and the countries' favorable geographical location, along with their rich cultural and historical heritage, create excellent opportunities for concrete and practical economic interaction among the Turkic-speaking states.

The irreplaceable role of the Turkic world in the revitalization of the Great Silk Road can hardly be exaggerated, as our countries territorially constitute an enormous part of this ancient transport route. Throughout history, the traditional Silk Road constituted the backbone not only for trade but also for cultural and human interaction in and beyond the region. Today, the traditional Silk Road has undergone a crucial transformation with modernized infrastructure projects and new multi-modal integrated transport facilities. Undoubtedly, the One Belt One Road initiative launched by China has and will have a significant impact on that process,

inasmuch as our member states are taking an important part in this initiative. This is a historical period for revitalizing the Great Silk Road's attractiveness and popularity in economic and political terms; the initiative opens a window of tremendous opportunities for the Turkic countries to strengthen their integration process.

At the same time, cooperation between the Turkic-speaking countries has yet to reach its full potential in many areas, in part due to each country's increasing role at the regional and global level. All of the Turkic cooperation organizations are urged to realize this potential to adequately address the current political and socio-economic challenges. In fact, the Turkic Council and TURKPA, as core institutions in promoting comprehensive political and socio-economic cooperation between the Turkic states, are coming to the fore in reinforcing efforts towards Turkic integration. Within that context, we should emphasize the common political will expressed by the Heads of State during the sixth Summit of the Turkic Council held in Cholpon-Ata in 2018. In a decision adopted at the Summit, the Heads of State underlined the importance of, and need for, the further development of Turkic integration to be carried out by the institutions and bodies of Turkic cooperation on the basis of a new architecture.

As we all know, a common regulatory frameworks is a prerequisite for successful integration processes; relevantly, the aforementioned TURKPA Strategy reiterates TURKPA's prevailing mission to pursue a process of harmonizing and approximating the national legislation of the member countries. Therefore, the elaboration of model legislation and the accumulation of expert potential in this direction will be matters of the utmost importance for the Assembly in the years ahead. Notably, the common legislative space which TURKPA represents provides basic parliamentary input to key vectors of Turkic cooperation, such as the free movement of people, the delivery of social and economic services, unimpeded trade and investment flows, and expanding joint cultural, educational and scientific projects. The direct involvement of the Heads of parliaments in TURKPA's activities entails a prompt decision-making process.

It should be emphasized that inter-parliamentary dialogue increases mutual understanding and promotes flexibility and confidence on a variety of issues. As far as the latest developments in Eurasia are concerned, the instrumentality and growth of the parliamentarians' role in regional cooperation is exemplified by the annual meetings of Speakers of Eurasian Countries' Parliaments that has already become a unique and inclusive platform for trust-based dialogue and partnership with more

than forty participating countries and international organizations. It is no coincidence that a campaign for the establishment of a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly is gaining popularity internationally and, in the meantime, one can observe that different regional groupings are seeking to initiate a parliamentary format for multilateral cooperation.

In the background of ongoing, ambiguous, global political and economic trends, Turkic integration can contribute to the sustainable development of the entire Eurasian region. Exemplary evidence of the broader regional context and identity of Turkic cooperation can be found in the participation of Hungary, as an observer, in the activities of TURKPA and the Turkic Council since 2014 and 2018 respectively. A process of consistent rapprochement is occurring between our institutions and non-member Turkic states through the participation of parliamentary delegations from Uzbekistan in the last two plenary sessions of TURKPA, and Uzbekistani President Shavkat Mirziyoyev's attendance at the last 6th Summit of the Turkic Council. The culminating point of this process was the most recent ratification of the Nakchivan Agreement by Uzbekistan and its accession to the Turkic Council.

As these developments indicate, our institutions are currently entering a new stage in their evolution, in which they seek to consolidate their efforts toward the conceptualization and formation of a strategic vision in order to achieve greater efficiency in their cooperative measures. Therefore, the improvement of coordination and interaction among all Turkic cooperation organizations remains one of the main tasks for the upcoming period. Another significant mission involves increasing the visibility of the Turkic cooperation platform itself in domestic, regional and wider international contexts. Domestically, the development of communication with all segments of the societies of the member countries, including think tanks, mass media, the non-governmental sector and local self-government bodies, will considerably raise awareness about each organization, its vision, its tasks and objectives. Concurrently, increasing visibility at the international level will require enhanced cooperation with the leading international organizations and countries of the region. It is a well-known fact that the process of globalization, as a driving world trend, eventuates in more interconnectivity between all actors of multilateral arrangements; this, in its turn, necessitates building synergy and maintaining operational coherence among various international organizations. This aspect of globalization is acknowledged in the TURKPA Strategy, which states that the Assembly firmly stands for seeking enhanced engagement and fostering synergies with and among inter-parliamentary

institutions in the region and beyond, alongside the systemization of its international cooperation on a multi-track basis, and active exploration of opportunities to reach out to and constructively cooperate with leading international organizations.

In this regard, we attach particular importance to the active engagement of our parliamentarians in addressing the issues placed on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The first step in this direction is TURKPA's initiative to create a platform of women parliamentarians under TURKPA auspices. TURKPA held an International Conference dedicated to the role of women in achieving sustainable development goals organized jointly with Milli Mejlis of Azerbaijan on June 14-15, 2019 in Baku. The ongoing initiative will offer opportunities not only for parliamentarians but for representatives of civil and academic communities to tackle the issue of gender equality in the Turkic world.

Turkic cooperation shows every assurance of continued long-term viability both at the regional and global levels. In just a short period, our countries have made great achievements in developing close relationships within their organizational framework. Simultaneously, our countries are ready to offer a new outlook on cooperation mechanisms and make a substantial contribution to lasting international peace, security and development.

On behalf of the Parliamentary Assembly, it gives me particular pleasure to congratulate the Turkic World on the occasion of the 10th Anniversary of the Nakhchivan Agreement. Our cooperation throughout the past decade inspires us to move forward with actions that will bring new rewarding achievements.

The 10th anniversary of the Nakhchivan Agreement is a time of historical momentum for Turkic-speaking countries as we begin to turn over a new page in our relationships. Recent regional and world developments enjoin us to unite and take concerted actions for the sake of prosperity, common welfare, and the safety of our peoples. Turkic cooperation is a source of strength and solidarity, harmony and good will. In the upcoming years, the Turkic-speaking countries will take a next step towards achieving this vision.

THE IMPORTANCE OF TURKSOY ON THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NAKHCHIVAN AGREEMENT

Prof. Dr. Dusen KASSEINOV

Secretary General of the International
Organization of Turkic Culture TURKSOY



The basis of the integration among Turkic speaking countries started forming upon initiatives taken in the beginning of the 1990'ies to foster their mutual ties regarding direct bilateral communication, transportation, culture and education as well as trade and economy. Within this framework, Turkey particularly concentrated on a foreign policy helping towards the independence of Turkic republics in terms of economy and trade, the strengthening of their sovereignty and the recovery of their historical identity.

Cultural and artistic events bringing countries together in the process of Summits of Heads of States of Turkic Speaking States in 1992 in order to get ready for the new century together, foster joint cooperation, getting closer together and contribute to mutual rapprochement in line with Ismail Gaspyraly's motto "Unity in Language, Ideas and Actions" had speeded up mutual cooperation and laid the foundations of the establishment of the Turkic Council. TURKSOY which was established on July 12th, 1993 with a view to "strengthening ties of brotherhood among Turkic peoples and transmitting their common culture to future generations while promoting it worldwide" is one of the first important steps taken in the process of the formation of the Turkic Council.

**First step of the multilateral integration among turkic republics:
the establishment of TURKSOY**

TURKSOY was established in order to contribute to the rapprochement of Turkic peoples living in Eurasia as well as to the strengthening of their common cultural ties. Following political, economic and intersocietal contacts which started in 1992, the first presidential summit held in Ankara on October 31st, 1992 had paved the way towards a joint political will of Turkic republics regarding their mutual cooperation in all fields as well as their integration.

“TURKSOY is a big organization established in order to foster the integration of the Turkic World based on common cultural values; hence, building solid bridges linking its past to its future, its Eastern part to its Western part. As such, it is an organization which aspires to explore and preserve the culture, art and literature produced by a great nation which since the Kokturks, has been flourishing with various branches of Turkic peoples spread on various territories of the Turkic World and referred to with various names. Since its establishment in 1993 with its 6 founding member states and 8 member states with an observer status, TURKSOY has carried out countless events, academic meetings and congresses to pay tribute to the legacy of illustrious personalities of the Turkic World who left a great heritage behind them, consolidating this great nation’s soul with spiritual values and strengthening its mind with science and knowledge. With these events, TURKSOY has not only brought together artists of the Turkic World and introduced them to various peoples thereof but also published and broadcasted these events via printed and visual communication media”.

TURKSOY is the auspices of the cultural integration of Turkic peoples and functions as the UNESCO of the Turkic World, strengthening cultural ties and brotherhood among Turkic peoples and carrying out activities to introduce Turkic culture to the World. In line with a cooperation protocol signed by TURKSOY and UNESCO in 1996, TURKSOY is one of the most active supporters of initiatives such as the “sustaining of cultural diversity”, “the preservation of intangible cultural heritage” and the “rapprochement of cultures”.

To carry out its activities, TURKSOY works in coordination with its kindred organizations such as the Turkic Council, the Turkic Academy and the Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation and cooperates with international organizations

and institutions which share the same principles and goals such as the United Nations (UN), UNESCO, the Council of Europe, ISESCO, IRCICA, and the International Foundation of CIS Countries for Humanitarian Cooperation. It would be appropriate to note that most of events and activities carried out worldwide regarding our common culture are being realized thanks to the efforts and with the contribution of TURKSOY.

The key role of TURKSOY in cultural diplomacy on the 10th anniversary of the nakhchivan agreement

With its activities efficiently striving to strengthen cultural ties among its member countries and its efforts and determination to promote Turkic culture, TURKSOY is an organization of cultural cooperation which contributes to the process of the rapprochement of cultures. Thanks to its large-scale projects which gained particular impetus as of 2008, TURKSOY has made its cultural contribution to the entire Turkic World as well as to human civilization as a whole while further pursuing its activities to bring Turkic peoples together based on their very own cultural values. With these considerable efforts, TURKSOY has not only made an attempt to promote Turkic peoples' common cultural heritage but also introduced values of Turkic identity to representatives of all countries in the United Nations and succeeded in obtaining their standing ovations for our Turkic artists.

Within the 10 years-period following the Nakhchivan Agreement, TURKSOY has carried out manifold artistic events aiming at the worldwide promotion of Turkic culture in countries of Europe, the Balkans, the USA and islamic countries, thus, reaching beyond the borders of its member countries. The Koroglu Opera performed with the contribution of numerous artists from the Turkic World, Nevruz celebrations held in UNESCO Headquarters and the United Nations General Assembly Hall, the Yunus Emre Oratorio performed in the USA as well as large-scale projects such as the International Youth Chamber Orchestra, the International Youth Chamber Choir and the Orchestra of Traditional Instruments of TURKSOY established upon initiative of TURKSOY have helped introduce Turkic culture to the world and contributed to the rapprochement and further strengthening of ties among artists of the Turkic World.

While as of 2010, traditional events and activities of TURKSOY such as Nevruz

celebrations which reflect the sophisticated system of Turkic peoples' national values and traditions as well as gatherings of painters and photographers of the Turkic World, opera days, academic meetings and publications gained impetus, TURKSOY also began carrying out large-scale artistic projects introducing Turkic culture, art and artists to amateurs of art such as the "International Koroglu Opera" performed with the contribution of 250 artists from 6 member countries of TURKSOY. Under the leadership of a new art director, this masterpiece by Uzeyir Hajibeyli, the legendary composer of Azerbaijan, was performed in four cities including Bishkek, Ankara and Baku, the capitals of the Member Countries of the Turkic Council, and in the city of Almaty in Kazakhstan in October 2009. A year later, in 2010, it was then performed at the closing event of the First International Opera Festival organized within the framework of events held in the European Capital of Culture in Istanbul. This Project which contributed to the revival of Koroglu, the common hero of the Turkic World and promoted Uzeyir Hajibeyli in the Turkic World was realized with the valuable contribution of 250 artists including musicians, choir singers, stage and costume designers, choreographers, as well as renowned soloists from TURKSOY member countries who all achieved a historical success with this event.

Following this project, TURKSOY launched the exchange of artists and repertoires among its member countries with the establishment of a new instance called, "The Board of Opera and Ballet Directors of TURKSOY Member Countries". This acclaimed initiative paved the way towards the establishment of similar joint initiatives in the fields of theater and cinema with meetings of Cinema Directors, Theater Directors and Sectoral Representatives of TURKSOY Member Countries.

Since 2008, mutual cooperation protocols were signed between TURKSOY and UNESCO, the Council of Europe, ISESCO, the International Foundation of the CIS for Humanitarian Cooperation, the International Council of Traditional Music (ICTM) and the International Society for Music Education (ISME), leading to joint projects being realized in cooperation with these organizations which carry out activities based on similar principles and aiming at similar goals. While in cooperation with the International Foundation of the CIS for Humanitarian Cooperation, TURKSOY published the "Encyclopedic Dictionary of Eurasian Turcologists", it has opened a photography exhibition featuring "Photos of the Turkic World" in the Headquarters of ISESCO in Rabat and held a seminar entitled "The Use of New Technologies in the Classification of Archives" in Kazakhstan.

The evolution of nevruz and its role as an instrument of cultural diplomacy

Nevruz is a spring celebration traditionally held by many peoples of the Northern Hemisphere in a large part of Eurasia. Upon initiative of TURKSOY member countries, this tradition is now celebrated worldwide. Besides the Ramadan Feast and the Aid-al-Adha, Nevruz is the only common feast celebrated by Turkic peoples. As a matter of fact, it is celebrated not only by Turkic tribes and their kindred communities but also by communities living close to Turkic peoples in geographical terms. These celebrations which play an integrative role in Turkic social life are strengthening ties of mutual love and respect among people as well as their will to live together in solidarity with each other. Above all, they are the expression of traditions, customs and beliefs which are meaningful cultural values. In 2009, the Nevruz tradition was included in the List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of UNESCO upon submission of a joint file by Turkey, Iran, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan and India. Upon initiative of Azerbaijan, March 21st was then declared International Day of Nevruz by the United Nations General Assembly on February 23rd, 2010.

Cultural capitals of the turkic world and commemorative years

Adopting a wide-scale approach to the notion of culture and following up activities carried out worldwide to foster cultural interaction within this framework, TURKSOY launched the declaration of commemorative years dedicated to illustrious personalities of the Turkic World in 2010 and the annual declaration of one city of the Turkic World as its Cultural Capital in 2012. While the declaration of commemorative years is based on UNESCO's practice, the declaration of cultural capitals is based on the example of the European Capital of Culture.

TURKSOY also invests considerable efforts in the commemoration of illustrious personalities of the Turkic World and the transmission of their legacy to future generations. In addition to this, TURKSOY also held many academic meetings and artistic events to promote scholars, intellectuals and artists who enriched Turkic culture and art with their works and commemorate them throughout the year.

Of course, it goes without saying that all these important achievements could only be reached thanks to the Cooperation Summit of the Heads of States of Turkic Speaking Countries which dates back to the 1990ies. Far-reaching changes which occurred worldwide including in the Turkic World as of 1990 have brought about

cooperation opportunities among Turkic republics and Turkey in all fields. During this period, many initiatives were taken among states, the most successful one thereof being the one which led to the establishment of TURKSOY.

Art ensembles of TURKSOY

There are three different art ensembles which have been established upon initiative of TURKSOY. The first of these ensembles is the Youth Chamber Orchestra of TURKSOY which was established by the International Organization of Turkic Culture in 2010 with a view to introducing the culture, music and, composers of Turkic speaking peoples to the world through the universal language of classical music.

The second ensemble established by TURKSOY to foster exchanges of repertoires, conductors and musicians among choirs of the Turkic World is its Youth Chamber Choir composed of talented young musicians selected from prestigious conservatories of Turkic republics.

The third ensemble established by TURKSOY is its Orchestra of Traditional Instruments which introduces ethnic and traditional music of Turkic peoples to the world. This Orchestra of TURKSOY which was established in 2016 features traditional instruments of the Turkic World such as the dombra, baglama, synai, sherter, kyl-kobyz, tar, kamancha, komuz, kyl-kyiak, quray, nay, qaval, mouth harp, morin huur, garmon, rubab, topshur, chatgan, doyra, jetigen and qanun.

Artistic gatherings and academic activities

The Painters' Gatherings of TURKSOY which have been carried out every year since 1997 have brought together 230 artists from 17 different countries until today, resulting in a unique art collection of TURKSOY. Within the framework of its artistic gatherings, TURKSOY brings together members of different professions such as photographers, painters, sculptors, opera singers and poets along with architects, members of the press media and cinema directors, artists etc. Until today, these gatherings have brought together nearly 1500 artists and allowed members of one and the same profession from different countries of the Turkic World to exchange their views and experiences while taking part in joint activities.

Besides its artistic events, TURKSOY also contributes to academic activities. Indeed, apart from its various publications, TURKSOY contributed to many academic events and activities which have been carried out by nearly 2000 scholars under the auspices of TURKSOY to unveil, preserve and transmit the common heritage of Turkic peoples since its establishment. In line with its commitment to the exploration and transmission of the national history, mother tongue, literature, culture, art, traditions and customs of Turkic speaking peoples to future generations and pursuant to its activities aiming at the strengthening and encouragement of academic research activities exploring the common history of peoples of the Turkic World as a whole while working towards the creation of favourable conditions regarding the use of a common language and alphabet, TURKSOY has published various works, carried out artistic events, international festivals, commemorative events and celebrations and held exhibitions, conferences, symposia and panels in order to strengthen our cultural ties of brotherhood and introduce our common culture to the world. With successful projects it carried out, TURKSOY has become a joint artistic and cultural platform bringing together Turkic peoples.

Conclusion

There are many theoretical arguments put forward when it comes to cultural diplomacy and its importance in the preservation of international peace and stability. This paper aimed at the description of TURKSOY and its activities as an example of a successful instrument of cultural diplomacy. It is of course impossible to argue that cultural cooperation alone can be a sufficient instrument to solve all problems among states. However, it can be said that there is fewer lack of communication among countries which attach greater importance to cultural policies and have further developed cultural ties. Hence, there is a positive correlation between the level of cultural development and social progress of a given country on the one hand and its peaceful international relations on the other hand.

On their way towards claiming their national identity and gaining recognition from the international community following their independence, Turkic republics adopted an approach privileging cultural development. In this process, Turkic republics experienced great achievements and major success stories in the field of culture. These multilateral cooperation platforms which are still under construction are steps taken towards the realization of prophecies and wishes as to the fact that the 21st

century will be a Turkic century. While political and economic relations among Turkic republics are taking shape within the framework of universal principles such as equality, mutual interest and non-interference in domestic affairs, the shared common culture constitutes the basis of cooperation in all fields.

With their history dating back to thousands of years, Turkic peoples are the heirs of a rich cultural heritage. This heritage which has grown richer and wider, influencing various nations and regions throughout ages, is of unequalled value when it comes to its contribution to world civilization. TURKSOY which carries out activities to promote and foster the beauty, originality and diversity of the rich Turkic culture is assuming an important role in the rise of Turkic civilization and its cooperation with other cultures. With multifaceted cultural and artistic projects it will continue to carry out, TURKSOY will further contribute to the process of cultural integration of Turkic Republics, as well as to the increase in economic and political ties among TURKSOY member countries will bring about the strengthening of cultural cooperation.

TEN YEARS OF THE TURKIC ACADEMY: ACTIVITIES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND LESSONS

Prof. Dr. Darkhan KYDYRALI

President of the International Turkic Academy.



The history of the International Turkic Academy started at the summit of the Heads of the Turkic-speaking states in the Azerbaijani city of Nakhchivan 10 years ago in 2009, when the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Elbasy Nursultan Nazarbayev proposed to create a specialized scientific research structure, a think-tank for the study of the Turkic world, along with the initiative to establish the Turkic Council itself.

The establishment of the Academy was a forward-looking strategic initiative based on a deep understanding of the role of science. As well as the necessary cooperation in the field of culture, economics and other areas, the rapprochement of the academic communities of participating countries, aiming to create a common intellectual milieu of the Turkic world, are also of primary importance for the real rapprochement of Turkic states.

In modern terms, the initiative embodies what Ismail Gaspirali (1851-1914) called the “unity in thoughts.” From the very beginning, this mission made the Turkic Academy different from the “Institute of Turkology.” The grand opening of the Turkic Academy took place on May 25, 2010, in Astana (now Nur-Sultan), the capital of Kazakhstan. The opening ceremony was jointly held by the First President

of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, and then President of Turkey, Abdullah Gul. After this historic step, the process of obtaining international status took 4 years. During this period, the Academy published a number of scientific works and created a database of Turkologist experts from all Turkic countries and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). During this period, the Academy was run by Professor Shakir Ibrayev.

In 2014 the Turkic Academy was officially granted the status of an international organization. The decision was made on the basis of an agreement between the Presidents of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey. By the decision of the founding states' leaders, the new president of the Academy was appointed. Additional staff and prominent specialists from Turkic countries joined the organization. This event opened a new chapter in the history of the Turkic Academy; the organization has become a full-fledged body responsible for the "scientific integration" of the Turkic states, which were simultaneously exploring possibilities for economic, cultural, and other kinds of integration. Since 2014, the Academy has been carrying out intensive international work at the cross-roads of science and diplomacy.

Many events and achievements have taken place over the past 5 years. Aiming at the rapprochement of the academic communities of Turkic countries as its main goal, the Academy still remains, first of all, a scientific organization responsible for the development of Turkology as a branch of science all over the world, giving a new impetus to the development of this sphere of humanitarian knowledge, which has come into crisis at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries for many reasons. The urgent need for revival of Turkology today and its further development in future does exist, as the Turkic peoples themselves are interested in it. It is clear that the Turkic peoples at the present stage of their development are ready to lead the process of developing the branch of academic science by studying it themselves, without relegating this important task to representatives of other countries and peoples.

Over the past years, the Turkic Academy has established strong ties and international cooperation with scientific organizations from all of the Turkic countries, as well as from a number of other countries from all over the world, including Russia, China, the U.S., France, Germany, Hungary, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Pakistan, India, Japan, South Korea, Mongolia, with whom memorandums of cooperation at the level of National Academies of Sciences and leading research organizations have been signed.

Furthermore, stable interactions with international organizations have been established, including with the UN and UNESCO, in cooperation with which the Academy has held a number of large-scale international scientific events (see below for more details). Preparations for signing a Memorandum of Cooperation with UNESCO are almost complete. In addition, the Turkic Academy received an observer status at ISESCO, with which it is also cooperating in an active way. On the initiative of the Academy, the *Union of National Academies of Sciences of the Turkic World* (UNASTW) was created in 2015. Also in 2018, the Turkic Academy initiated the creation of the *Association for Altaistics, Turkology, Mongolistics (ATAM)*. It should be noted that the Academy is also a full member of the *International Union of Academies of Sciences*.

The membership of the Turkic Academy is expanding along with its external circle of cooperation. On December 13, 2018, observer status in the Turkic Academy was granted to Hungary, an EU country, which strengthened the Academy's function as a link between Turkic scientists from different continents. In the office of the Turkic Academy in Nur-Sultan, the Hungarian flag was raised.

In this regard, it must be emphasized that the very concept of the “Turkic world” has a wider meaning for the Academy: it includes not only ethnic groups speaking Turkic, but all the countries and peoples whose cultural heritage reflects centuries-old ties with Turkic ethnic groups and states – be it direct kinship or cultural exchange.

The results of the activities by the Turkic Academy over the past years have been rather impressive. First of all, they include the implemented initiatives of the Academy, which are making a direct and significant contribution to the process of Turkic integration.

The textbook *Common Turkic History*, prepared by the Turkic Academy on the initiative of Elbasy Nursultan Nazarbayev and on behalf of the Heads of the Member States of the Turkic Council, has been introduced into the school curriculum of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey as a selective subject this year. Currently, more than 30,000 schoolchildren in Turkey, more than 30,000 in Azerbaijan, and around 8,000 in Kazakhstan have chosen to study this discipline. In Kyrgyzstan, the offering of this elective is currently in the final stage of the process.

It should be noted that it is historical awareness that forms the basis of modern national identity. This is the reason why the images and concepts grasped from the school bench and from the pictures in the textbook are so important – they form the

awareness of the common historical roots of related Turkic peoples.

During the lessons presented in *Common Turkic History*, Kazakh and Kyrgyz schoolchildren learn about the Ottoman Empire and the Safawi state, while Turkish and Azerbaijani children learn about the Golden Horde and the empires of Babur and Timur. Five years ago it was hard to even dream of this. It is no exaggeration to say that for the sake of this alone it was worth creating the Turkic Academy.

In addition to *Common Turkic History*, the work on the textbook *Geography of the Turkic World* is currently almost completed. The *Common Turkic Literature* textbook is also being rapidly prepared. These three educational disciplines, History, Geography and Literature, mutually complement each other. They are aimed at forming the mental basis of Turkic integration in the minds of the younger generation in order to give this process the most natural character and make it irreversible. The younger generation of Turkic countries should know the key events of their common history; they should have in their minds a visual image of the Turkic world on the map of Eurasia and remember at least a few bright lines from the most outstanding works that made common Turkic literature an integral part of the world cultural treasury.

Another no less important achievement of the Turkic Academy became the “Concept for the Integration of Turkic-Speaking States,” which was prepared by the Academy on behalf of the Heads of States of the Turkic Council, as instructed at the 5th Summit of the Turkic Council in Nur-Sultan in 2015. The concept was officially adopted at the 6th Summit of the Turkic Council in Cholpon-Ata in 2018. The current process of integration and cooperation through the Turkic Council is being carried out in accordance with this concept.

Another important and successfully implemented project of the Academy, which is valuable for the entire Turkic world, as well as for the world community of Turkologists, is the creation of the “Atalar Mirası” multimedia portal, also carried out on behalf of the Heads of the Turkic Council. The goal of this scientific and information portal is to preserve and promote the cultural heritage of Turkic peoples through digitalization. The portal operates in four languages - Kazakh, Turkish, Russian and English. Launched on January 1, 2018, the portal contains a wide range of written monuments of the Turkic peoples in digital form, as well as samples of folklore and other data on the cultural heritage of the Turkic world, which can now be freely used by researchers from all over the world.

Apart from the languages and cultural heritage of the Turkic peoples, the International Turkic Academy is interested in conducting sociological studies of the current situation in Turkic countries, primarily from the perspective of the development of the Turkic integration process.

In particular, for this purpose, the Academy is running the “Turkbarometer” sociological research project. This study of public opinion in the independent Turkic states has already been carried out twice (in 2017 and 2018), and has revealed a rapid increase in interest in Turkic integration among the population of our countries. It should be noted that today the “Turkbarometer” is the only sociological project in the world that studies the attitude of the population towards the “Belt and Road” Initiative; this aspect of the study proved to be of great interest for the Chinese scholars.

Listing all the scientific activities of the Turkic Academy over the past five years would prove quite challenging, but it is worth focusing on the most significant ones, each of them promoting a specific message at the international level, relevant for both the Turkic world and the world community. Below we shall list them in reverse chronological order.

Starting in 2016, for the past 4 years, the Academy has held “The Great Steppe International Forum of Humanities” in the capital of Kazakhstan, with the broadest international participation of leading scholars of humanities experts. This forum has already become a tradition and an effective regular platform for scholarly discussions and exchange of opinions. For example, approximately 250 leading scholars from 21 countries across the world took part in the 4th Forum held in June 2019 and entitled, “Turkic Civilization: From Origins to the Present.” The 4th Forum was inspired by President Nazarbyev’s article “Seven Facets of the Great Steppe.”

On May 15, 2019, at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris, the Turkic Academy jointly with UNESCO held the international forum entitled, “The Great Steppe: Cultural Heritage and Role in World History,” also inspired by Nazarbyev’s article. Several sections of the forum were devoted to the cultural heritage of the Golden Horde – the great Eurasian empire, which became the cradle for several modern Turkic peoples.

On May 30, 2018, at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris, the Turkic Academy held an international forum entitled, “Revival of Identity and Cultural Heritage: the Turkic Language from Past to Future.” The event contributed to attracting the attention of the world academic community to the problem of the endangered languages of

Turkic peoples. In addition, the forum created an important precedent for the official use of the Turkic language in UNESCO, which is very significant for its further promotion to the status of a UN working language. This is extremely important for the entire Turkic world. Globally this forum was dedicated to the development of the ideas of Nazarbyev's article "View of the Future: Modernization of Social Consciousness" and his "Ruhani Jańgyrý" ("Spiritual Revival") program, as well as the promotion of these initiatives at the international level.

On September 15-16, 2017, within the framework of the second stage of the 3rd International Expedition, "From Khentei to Ulytau – the Revival of Historical Memory," the Academy visited the Ulytau historical region, including the mausoleums of Jochi Khan and Alasha Khan, as well as the Dombauyl complex. A number of statespersons and public figures, historians, Turkologists, media leaders and journalists from Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Uzbekistan, and Turkey, as well as Bashkortostan and Dagestan (Russia) took part in the international expedition. This event had a considerable resonance, and played a significant role in popularizing the historical heritage of the Great Ulus – the Golden Horde in Kazakhstan and abroad.

On March 28, 2016, at the UN headquarters in New York, the Turkic Academy held an international symposium on "Synergy along the Silk Road and Agenda 2030," with a high level of participation, which included UN officials, heads of international organizations, diplomats and well-known scholars. The symposium was devoted to the 25th anniversary of the independence of Turkic states. The main goal of this event was to create an open discussion among the world academic community familiar with the role of the Turkic world in the history of the Great Silk Road, as well as in the modern development of international cooperation on the Eurasian continent.

On May 22, 2015, the Academy held a special expert discussion on the "Caspian Transit Corridor" within the framework of the 8th Astana Economic Forum, with a high level of international participation. This event contributed to attracting the attention of the world community to trans-Caspian cooperation and the role of Turkic countries in the economic configuration of modern Eurasia.

The Kazakh-Kyrgyz intelligentsia forums should also be mentioned. They were held by the initiative of the Turkic Academy in 2018-2019, and were aimed at strengthening fraternal relations between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. The first one, dedicated to the 90th anniversary of Kyrgyz writer Chyngyz Aitmatov, was held

in Nur-Sultan on April 25, 2018; the second, “The Heritage of Chyngyz Aitmatov: Living in Cooperation in the Era of Globalization,” was held in the Kyrgyz city of Osh on October 11, 2018; the third forum entitled “The Eternal Heritage of the Great Steppe – Manas” was held on June 28, 2019 in the land of Jetisu. These events have been highly appreciated by the senior leadership of the two neighboring Turkic states.

The Turkic Academy’s cooperation with Azerbaijan is also actively developing. This year the Academy celebrated the 650th anniversary of the Azerbaijani classic poet Imadeddin Nasimi. Numerous works have been published in the Kazakh language, including *The Anthology of Azerbaijani Poetry* and *Eline Zhol Ashkan*, dedicated to the 95th anniversary of the birth of the National Leader of Azerbaijan, Heydar Aliyev. A book on outstanding figures of Azerbaijan and on the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, dedicated to the 100th anniversary of Azerbaijan, are being prepared for publication.

Scholarly cooperation with Turkey is also active. A number of joint projects have been carried out with leading think-tanks in Turkey. For instance, a number of events dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the liberation struggle of Turkish people under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk have been held. The historical Speech of Atatürk addressed to the Turkish Grand National Assembly (“Nutuk”), read on October 15-20, 1927, has been translated and published in Kazakh.

Since gaining its international status, the Turkic Academy has held a large number of other scientific and cultural events, attended by leading scholars, cultural figures, diplomats and government officials of Turkic and other countries. Thus, over the past two years, the Academy has held 40 international conferences and forums, as well as 30 seminars and roundtables.

One of the most important areas of work of the Turkic Academy is book publishing. Over the past 5 years, the Academy has published more than 110 scientific monographs, as well as dictionaries, atlases and almanacs. This area of the Academy’s work is important, as nowadays leading Turkic scholars in many countries are often unable to publish their works for financial, organizational and other reasons. Cooperation with the Turkic Academy has become a successful solution to this problem for many recognized specialists.

Currently, on behalf of the Presidents of the Turkic Council member states at the 6th Summit of the Turkic Council, held in Cholpon-Ata in September 2018, the

Academy is working on the *Outstanding Figures of the Turkic World* and *Sacred Sites of the Turkic World* projects. The encyclopedic Turan Atlas is being prepared for publication. In addition to scholarly monographs, the Turkic Academy regularly publishes international scientific journals *GLOBAL-Turk* and *Altaistics, Turkology, Mongolistics*, issued in four languages (Kazakh, Turkish, Russian, English) and covering the widest range of studies in the field of Turkology and the modern Turkic world. In addition, in 2017-2018, the Academy ran 40 research projects in the fields of Turkology, Altaistics and Mongolistics, with the participation of leading experts from Asia, Europe and America.

Finally, another extremely important area of the Academy's work are archaeological studies, without which the study of the history of the Turkic peoples would be impossible. The Turkic Academy carries out the majority of such research in Mongolia, as a huge number of monuments of ancient Turkic culture are located there. The research within the framework of the Shiveet Ulaan 2016-2019 expedition was carried out regularly during 4 years of cooperation with the Institute of History and Archaeology of the Mongolian Academy of Sciences. The main excavations were carried out by Academy specialists in the memorial complexes of Shiveet Ulaan, Khaya Khudag and Gunburd. The last two are located in the Khentei aimag of Mongolia, the homeland of Genghis Khan. The Turkic Academy became the first foreign institution to be granted admission there, an honour for the organization.

Separately, we should mention the Nomgon-2019 expedition conducted in the Khashaat sumun of the Arkhangai aimag of Mongolia, together with the Mongolian Institute of History and Archaeology in the summer of 2019. There are dozens of ritual complexes belonging to the ancient Turkic era in this area. They are located 80 km from famous complexes in honor of Kul-Tegin and Bilge Kaghan. This is a region that occupies a very special place in the history of the Turkic peoples.

During the expedition to the Nomgon-2 complex, a sculpture of a lion with two cubs, a square stone with a hole, and a ceramic ornament were found at memorial structures. In addition, *tamgas* (tribal emblems) of the Ashina Kaghan tribe were discovered, carved on the statues in the ritual complex, along with a number of other artifacts. The archaeological studies by the Turkic Academy irrefutably prove that the culture of Orkhon Turks was far from primitive.

Archaeological excavations were also carried out by the Academy in Kazakhstan, namely in Karaganda and the east Kazakhstan regions. Preparations for archaeological

research in the territory of fraternal Uzbekistan together with the National Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan are underway.

In conclusion, it should be mentioned that in 2011, the Turkic Library was opened at the Turkic Academy. Its book fund began to rapidly expand after the Academy gained its international status, which granted the Academy new opportunities to quickly become an authoritative and globally recognized scientific organization, specializing in the field of Turkology.

The Academy's pride is the personal library of the famous Hungarian scientist and Turkologist Istvan Kongur Mandoki (16,000 books), and the personal book collections of world-famous Turkologists, such as A.Z. Velidi-Togan, A. Kaydar, A.Kuryszhonov, E. Najip, R. Syzdykova and O.F. Sertkaya, have been presented to the International Turkic Academy. To date, the library contains around 62,000 items. Along with scientific monographs, it also includes manuscripts, rare books, scientific books and fiction in almost all of the existing Turkic languages, dictionaries and periodicals. The library of the Turkic Academy is open to everyone. Today it is frequently visited by Kazakhstani and foreign scientists, as well as students studying Turkology.

In addition to the Turkic Library, the Turkic Museum was also established at the Academy on behalf of the Presidents of the Turkic countries, instructed at the 10th summit of the heads of Turkic-speaking states. Currently, the Museum includes more than 700 exhibits. They include archeological monuments (IV-III millennium BCE) and artifacts of ethnographic value. In particular, the collection includes numismatics, musical instruments and samples of Turkic national clothing.

For instance, a scientific copy of the "Mángi Tas" ("Bengü Taş" - "Eternal Stone"), created at the end of the 7th century in the steppes of modern Mongolia by Elteris kaghan, the ruler of the East Turkic Kaganate, is also located in the Turkic Museum. The *tamgas* of the main Turkic tribes, as well as some peoples of non-Turkic origin, united in the multicultural community of the Kaganate, are carved on the stele. A scientific copy of the world's oldest prototype of a *kobyz*, an ancient Kazakh string instrument, discovered by archaeologists of the Turkic Academy in the area of Berel in East Kazakhstan, as well as a number of other valuable exhibits, are also here.

Looking back at the past five years of work of the International Turkic Academy, we can rightfully say that the organization has managed to become one of the most effective institutions of Turkic integration, which conducts a great job in such a

strategically important country.

Over the 10 years of its work, the Turkic Academy has made and is continuing to make a significant contribution to the development of scientific cooperation between Turkic countries, as well as among Turkologists around the world. It is contributing to the deepening of the integration process along the line of the Turkic Council, and to its further development as an influential international organization, which possesses considerable weight in the Eurasian space.

We hope that after the ratification of all the constituent documents of the Academy, our organization, with the support of all the founding countries, will achieve a new impetus to start working at full strength, and unlocking its full potential.

THE ROAD TOWARD UNITY

Dr. Gunay AFANDIYEVA
President of the International Turkic Culture
and Heritage Foundation.



For thousands of years, the philosophical outlook, traditions, beliefs, and other moral qualities of the Turks who conquered the world with their cultural heritage and statehood experience have been in the spotlight of researchers. Undoubtedly, the glorious triumphs detailed on that pages of Turkic history inform us about the existence of their distinctive, highly fascinating inner world, unique lifestyles and the universe of their thought. History proves that there is no future without culture. From this point of view, the Turkic world's diverse culture, rich literary and spiritual heritage, and great history of statehood is a guarantee of its future existence.

The formation of a Turkic identity is the first stage of the struggle for the unification of the Turkic people, who have spread across a wide geography, yet have identical historical roots. Without this ideology, or, more precisely, without a full understanding of the essence of Turkism – the collective identification with common roots, history, culture and principles, the unity of Turkic people would not be possible. There are many factors that unite people. One of them is a common religious heritage. However, being very diverse in this respect, we know that the Turkic world has historically held various beliefs, and one can claim that many of these beliefs are younger than the Turkic people themselves. Thus, the Turkic World can be better united under the concept of common roots, rather than religious background. Hence,

Turkism became an ideology and started the initial stage of the unification of the Turkic people.

Today, the Turkic nations have taken the next step towards unity. This is the integration of Turkic people. International organizations have been created to bring the Turkic world even closer together. These organizations cover political, cultural, socio-economic, scientific, educational and other important areas. Heydar Aliyev, the National Leader of the Azerbaijani people, and one of the great figures of the Turkic world, participated in one of the first steps in this direction in the establishment of TURKSOY in 1993. 15 years later, in 2008, the Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic Speaking Countries - TURKPA was created. The efforts of the Kazakhstan's First President, outstanding politician of the Turkic World Nursultan Nazarbayev, contributed to the strengthening of the ties within the Turkic world by the establishment of TURKPA, and later, the Cooperation Council of the Turkic Speaking States, commonly known as the Turkic Council. The relationships between the Heads of the Turkic-speaking states lay at the foundation for deepening ties. The integration of the Turkic World is further enhanced by organizations such as the International Turkic Academy and the International Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation.

This year we are celebrating 10th anniversary of the Nakhchivan Agreement, the anniversary of the establishment of the Turkic Council. The formation of this organization has played a vital role in the development of multilateral relations and cooperation in various fields between the Turkic-speaking countries. The main objectives of the Turkic Council cover important issues, such as maintaining peace in the region and beyond; strengthening mutual confidence among parties; coordinating actions to combat international terrorism, separatism, extremism and trans-border crimes, and expanding interaction in various fields. In a short period of time, the Turkic Council has done much in terms of building its prestige, activity and efficiency.

Creating and maintaining an international organization for the purpose of preserving culture and uniting civilizations is challenging in today's world. As we know, global issues such as poverty, terrorism, war, violence, and economic crises leave cultural heritage at the back stage. Moreover, in the era of globalization and the internet, it will take a great effort of will to protect the moral values of people and pass them to the next generations. Nevertheless, with desire combined with faith, any obstacle can be overcome. This was the impetus behind the establishment of the

International Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation by the Heads of the Turkic-speaking countries, created as a basis for the further consolidation of Turkic unity.

The International Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation was established by the initiative of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the support of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Turkey. The Charter of the Foundation was adopted at the Bishkek Summit of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States held on August 23, 2012. Following the 5th Summit of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States in Astana (now Nur-Sultan) on September 11, 2015, the Foundation started its activities. The objectives of the Foundation are to protect, study and promote Turkic culture and heritage through supporting and funding activities, projects and programs.

Despite being a young organization and making first steps of formation, with many difficulties, the Foundation has already contributed to the common goals of the Turkic World. In this regard, the Foundation has carried out a number of projects, including the promotion of cultural heritage belonging to the Turkic-speaking people, celebrations of outstanding personalities and anniversaries, symposiums, exhibitions and similar projects related to the Turkic World. The Foundation has been represented and has voiced its opinion at various conferences organized and supported by the UN, UNESCO, ISESCO, and other international organizations, as well as the Foundation's member states. In this regard, some of the abovementioned events should be emphasized:

- XII Session of the ISESCO General Conference: November 26-27, 2015, Baku
- VII Global Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations: April 25-27, 2016, Baku
- Opening ceremony of the 40th Session of the UNESCO World Heritage Committee: July 10, 2016, Istanbul
- IV World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue: May 5-6, 2017, Baku
- 202nd Session of the UNESCO Executive Board: October 5, 2017, Paris
- The 7th Foreign Ministers Conference of the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process, November 30-December 1, 2017, Baku
- Non-Aligned Movement Foreign Ministers Conference: April 5-8, 2018, Baku
- III UNWTO - UNESCO World Culture and Tourism Conference, December 3-5, 2018, Istanbul
- VII Global Baku Forum: March 14-16, 2019, Baku
- The V World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue, May 2-3, 2019, Baku

It should be noted that within the framework of the IV and V World Intercultural Dialogue Forums held in Baku, high-level round tables were organized by the Foundation. Thus, the roundtable on May 6, 2017 was devoted to the theme “Turkic Heritage at the Crossroads of Cultures and Civilizations.” Also, as part of the V World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue, held on May 3, 2019, the roundtable on “The role of the Great Silk Road in establishing dialogue between Turkic-speaking states” was organized. The discussions between Turkologists and scientists from around the world were aimed at exposing the religious diversity and cultural richness of the Turkic-speaking people along with the promotion of their historical and cultural heritage.

The International Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation cooperates with all Turkic-speaking organizations. In this context, the organization was represented at the coordination meetings of TURKPA, TURKSOY, the Turkic Academy and the International Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation under the auspices of the Turkic Council in 2016, 2017 and 2018. During these years, the Foundation organized and participated in many events in collaboration with these organizations. The Foundation gives the highest importance to the celebration of the anniversaries of great personalities. Accordingly, the Foundation has contributed to the implementation of events dedicated to great figures of Turkic literature, such as Imadaddin Nasimi, Khoja Ahmed Yasevi, Molla Panah Vagif, Magzhan Zhumabayev, Magtymguly Pyragy, Abay Kunanbayev and others, memorable events such as the 550th anniversary of the Kazakh Khanate, the 100th anniversary of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, and the 90th anniversary of the First Turkology Congress. The performance of Kyrgyz actors held in Baku on October 19, 2018 based on *Jamila*, the first novel by the eminent writer Chingiz Aitmatov on the occasion of the celebrations of his 90th anniversary, is an example. In the near future, a book containing the selected works of the writer will be published in Italian. At the same time, with the support of the Foundation, the play *Iblis* (Devil) by the prominent writer and advocate of Turkic ideas Huseyn Javid was staged in Turkey, at the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality City Theatre.

The International Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation participated at the exhibition-presentation event, where Fayzavar khanum Alpsar, the daughter of Ali Bay Husseinade, the bright Turkic literary and public figure, famous Turkologist and writer, presented the artwork, photo-archives and personal belongings of her father and brother, famous painter Selim Turan, from his house in Turkey to the Museum of National History of Azerbaijan.

One of several important projects of the Foundation is the *Anthology of Poetry by Women in Azerbaijan* published in Italian, as one of the steps of propagating Turkic culture and history in the world. The anthology comprises the selected collection of works of the prominent female poets who have lived and created in various cities of Azerbaijan for 800 years. The first presentation of this book was held in the Italian Senate in Rome in December 2018 with the participation of high-level officials.

The Great Silk Road is one of the most important common cultural landmarks of the Turkic World. Thus, in a new project, a comprehensive study will be elaborated about the importance of the traditional Silk Road for Turkic-speaking people, its benefit to their economic, commercial and cultural interconnection, as well as the role of Turkic nations in the formation of the Great Silk Road.

Today, ‘spiritual unity’ between Turkic states and among Turkic-speaking people has special meaning and importance. In this regard, the Foundation published the book *The Idea of Unity in Turkic Thought*, which includes a collection of articles by prominent scholars of the member states of the organization – Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey. The Foundation is also implementing a number of projects to promote the history, literature, and oral tradition of the Turkic people. Within this framework, the Foundation supported publication of the book *Koroglu is the Hero of the Turkic People*, containing multifaceted information about the epic *Koroglu*, the common cultural monument of the Turkic people. In February 2018, a photo exhibition entitled *Never, Ever: Asharshilik, Holocaust, Cambodia, Khojaly, Rwanda*, commemorating the victims of these tragic events was organized in Astana (now Nur-Sultan), Kazakhstan.

On December 20, 2017 the International Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation organized a solo exhibition of young Turkish artist Alp Gurhan Yalçiner, entitled “One Nation, Two States!” Along with presenting the ancient monuments, historical sites, cultural heritage and common values of the fraternal republics, the exhibition also featured words with the same spelling but different meanings in Azerbaijani and Turkish, humorously reflected in caricatures. At the event, organized on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of Azerbaijan-Turkey fraternal relations, 25 works of the young artist were presented. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan Elmar Mammadyarov, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey Mevlut Cavusoglu, members of Parliament, artists, and other officials attended the opening ceremony.

One of the activities of the Foundation involves raising awareness about the protection of destroyed and appropriated Turkic cultural heritage. In this regard, with

the support of the Foundation, a book entitled *Historical and Cultural Monuments in the Occupied Territories of Azerbaijan: Damage and Loss* has been prepared with the aim of investigating and acknowledging the truths about destroyed historical and cultural monuments as a result of the occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh and seven surrounding districts. The book contains information about the aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan, previously unpublished photos from before and after the ruins, and the amount of tangible and intangible damage caused by destruction of these monuments in Azerbaijan. The destruction and misappropriation of various monuments, buildings, works of art, and manuscripts damages not only Azerbaijan, since each piece of this treasured heritage carries features belonging to the whole Turkic world. That is why this book is of timely importance with regard to the protection and promotion of the culture and heritage of the whole Turkic world, which holds a special place in world culture.

Various projects have been implemented with the support of the Foundation for the promotion and preservation of the historical and cultural heritage of the Turkic-speaking people; one of them is the formation of the *Dada Gorgud* Chamber Orchestra in 2018. The Chamber Orchestra, named after the main hero of the Turkic epic poem *Kitabi Dada Gorgud*, unites musicians from Turkic-speaking countries. The orchestra works to promote the rich culture and art, folk art and the works of the great composers of the Turkic world around the world and performs the music of the Turkic-speaking nations on the international platform. The first performance of Chamber Orchestra in international stage was in Finland on June 5, 2018 at 15th International Black and White Theater Festival.

For the last 10 years, Kazakhstan has hosted the International Festival of Turkic Traditional Music *Astana-Arkau*, bringing together musicians from Turkic-speaking countries. In July 2017 and 2018, the Foundation supported the participation of Azerbaijani musicians in this Festival. Also with the support of the Foundation, Turkish national musical instruments were presented to the State Museum of Musical Culture of Azerbaijan on March 19, 2019 with the aim of increasing familiarity with each other's culture.

Another important project implemented by the Foundation is the "Turkey and Azerbaijan, Traditional Handicrafts Project" on the study of the common handicrafts of Turkic people. In accordance with the project, women's handicrafts, including carpet and silk weaving, were widely studied. Still in its early stage, the lifestyle and activities of women living in Azerbaijan and Turkey are being investigated, and the project is expected to expand to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Implementation of this

project individually in each Turkic-speaking country will reveal the specific local characteristics, national features and values.

The Foundation organizes events, conferences, exhibitions, programs and performances in different countries around the world in order to promote Turkic literature, art and culture. An example is the conference held on October 23, 2017 in Brazil and on October 28, 2017 in Argentina entitled a “Continental, Regional, Scientific Approach to Turkic and Latin American Culture, History and Traditions.” At the conference, the mutual cooperation between Turkic and Latin American cultures was discussed. Within the framework of the conference, a photo exhibition entitled “Turkic Heritage in Brazil” was opened in the Parliament’s Exhibition Hall.

With support of the International Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation, postage stamps reflecting the politics, history and culture of member states of the organization were demonstrated in the International Philatelic Exhibition organized by the Brazilian Postal and Telegraph Company (*Empresa Brasileira de Correios e Telégrafos*) on October 24, 2017 in Brazil.

As part of a series of events to share Turkic culture and heritage widely with global audience the International Conference on “The Turkic World: Enlightenment and Identity” was held in Paris on June 18, 2018. The opening ceremony of the exhibition, entitled “The Paradise Gardens of the Turkic World” took place in the Azerbaijan Cultural Center in Paris. Representatives from Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Turkey performed folk music on national instruments.

Taking into account the importance of the Nowruz holiday, one of the ancient traditions of Turkic-speaking people, celebrations were held in March 2019 in the capital Sofia and in Kirjali, the largest Turk-populated city. During the events, the exhibition entitled “By the Trail of our Ancestors” was featured, folk songs and works by well-known composers from the Turkic World were demonstrated by Bulgarian musicians. The Vice President of Bulgaria Iliana Iotova, Chairman of the Bulgarian People’s Assembly Tsveta Karayancheva, and other officials were among the participants. The Foundation has signed agreements in cooperation with various agencies and international organizations since it was established. As an example, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Foundation and IRCICA (Research Center for Islamic History, Art and Culture) on April 12, 2017.

One of the purposeful ideas of the Foundation is the establishment of Turkic World Centers in universities and institutions of higher education. The Centers will feature

different aspects of the culture and heritage of Turkic-speaking people and will cooperate to become a Network of Turkic World Centers in the future. With this aim in mind, the Foundation signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Azerbaijan University of Languages on February 28, 2019, where the creation of a Turkic World Scientific Research Center is being considered. At the same time, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the International Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation and the National Conservatorium of Azerbaijan where the establishment of a Turkic World Music Center is under consideration. The Organization is planning to cooperate more closely with countries and international organizations in the near future. Despite facing numerous obstacles in the creation of the organization, we were not stopped, because we serve and believe in a higher ideal for the Turkic world.

We are honored to mention that during the 6th Summit of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States held on September 3, 2018 in Cholpan-Ata, Kyrgyzstan, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev and the President of the Republic of Turkey H.E. Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan in their speeches highlighted the specific activities of the International Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation and expressed their appreciation for it.

The organizations of Turkic-speaking countries continue to develop. We are glad to mention that Uzbekistan has announced its wish to become a permanent member of the Cooperation Council of the Turkic-speaking States. Hungary, reflecting its own Turkic roots, has expressed desire in obtaining the status of observer at the International Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation on the basis of its common cultural values with the Turkic World.

To conclude, the integration of the Turkic world must be a bridge that connects us. Firstly, Turkic ideology was formed. In the second and current stage, the Turkic World should get closer through international organizations that are based on this ideology. In this regard, like all of our organizations, the International Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation, has an honorable and responsible duty. Our goal is to bring the Turkic world together. This proximity should strengthen our interrelationship, solidarity, and unity of thought in all directions. From this point of view, the signing of the Nakhchivan Agreement is one of the biggest steps taken toward the consolidation and fraternization of the Turkic-speaking people.

THE TURKIC COUNCIL ON THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NAKHCHIVAN AGREEMENT

Dr. Farid SHAFIYEV
Chairman of the AIR Center



Introduction

The idea of the unification of the Turkic-speaking people in a single state or organization emerged at the end of the 19th century during debates among the intellectuals of the Turkic world. However, this idea had a chance to become a reality only with the creation of five new independent Turkic states after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Since the early 1990s, steps have been taken to make this emerging opportunity a reality, and hence a tradition of summit meetings between the heads of Turkic-speaking countries was established. Heydar Aliyev, President of Azerbaijan (1993-2003), explained the importance of these meetings by pointing out that these “summits are an important path for the future of our nations and independent countries.” The holding of regular summit meetings was followed by the establishment of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States (CCTS - the Turkic Council) after the 10th Summit. The Turkic Council was established by the Nakhchivan Agreement on October 3, 2009; it is the institutionalization of cooperation between the Turkic states as a result of the summits held from 1992-2009. Azerbaijan is an active participant in the summits of the heads of state of the Turkic-speaking countries, and is one of the four founding members of the Turkic Council: Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkey.

The main feature that distinguishes the Turkic Council from other regional cooperation organizations is that it is based on a common language, culture and traditions. The preamble of the Nakhchivan Agreement states that Turkic-speaking countries have established the Turkic Council “based on historical ties, common language, [and the] culture and traditions of their peoples.” Official statements and joint declarations adopted at Heads of States and Government meetings have also emphasized unifying values such as shared culture, language, and history.

Factors Leading to the Formation of the Turkic Council

There are specific reasons why the idea of forming the Turkic Council materialized only 17 years after the summits began. First, the attainment of political and economic stability and power by the two post-Soviet Turkic states, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan, opened up the possibility for the summits to become a full-fledged organization. These countries, together with Turkey, have consolidated their positions on the global stage as independent and sovereign states, and have gained experience in foreign and security policy. Second, the successful implementation of energy and transportation projects between the Turkic states expanded the nodes of cooperation among them. Third, strong bilateral relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan played an important role in the establishment of the organization, with these relations becoming a foundational model for the Turkic Council. For instance, at the 11th Friendship, Brotherhood and Cooperation Congress of Turkish States and Communities, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev said that successful cooperation between Azerbaijan and Turkey had a positive impact on the entire Turkic world.¹ As a result, the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States was established as an international intergovernmental organization based on the agreement signed by Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey in Nakhchivan on October 3, 2009.²

The signing of the agreement is of great importance for both Azerbaijan and the Turkic world. Nakhchivan, located in a geographically sensitive area for both Azerbaijan and the Turkic world, faces external threats. Therefore, the support of the leaders of the Turkic states to Nakhchivan as an autonomous republic within the borders of Azerbaijani land can be seen as a guarantee of its security.

The Turkic Council was established on the basis of common language, history, and culture in accordance with the Nakhchivan Agreement and it continues to facilitate

cooperation in various areas among the member states. While cooperation in political, economic, trade, cultural, and legal areas are of top priority for the organization, it is clearly stated that the Turkic Council also facilitates cooperation in many other different areas. Following the Nakhchivan Agreement working groups and committees were created in different areas. Among them are the Working Group for Economic Cooperation, the Working Group for Customs Cooperation, the Working Group for Transport Development, the Contact Group for the Security Service, the Contact Group for Diaspora Affairs, the Inter-University Contact Group, the Committee of the Senior Officials in Higher Education, the Working Group for Cultural Cooperation, and the Joint Terminology Committee. According to Article 14 of the Nakhchivan Agreement, the parties may agree to convene a meeting of heads of relevant ministries, agencies and organizations to discuss specific and/or technical issues. Meetings at the ministerial level are also held.³

Educational, Scientific and Cultural Cooperation

The main pillars of cooperation within the framework of the Turkic Council are common language, common culture and the common history of the Turkic states. This is the main feature that sets the Turkic Council apart from other regional cooperation organizations. In this sense, it was very symbolic that the second summit of the Turkic Council was held under the theme of “Educational, Scientific and Cultural Cooperation.” In the meeting of the ministers of tourism of Turkic-speaking countries held prior to this summit, the members established the Turkic Writers Union and the Turkic Cinema Union. The former working group was founded with the purpose of developing common history and literature books. Preparation of the common history book is being carried out by the Turkic Academy in Kazakhstan.

The Common Terminology Committee, which was established with the purpose of creating a unified terminology within the Turkic Council, decided to publish a common Latin alphabet to be used for scientific purposes, and adopted some terms common to all Turkic languages. It was also decided to develop various dictionaries of common terms.

The Union of Turkic Universities of the Turkic Council was established with the aim of broadening cooperation among the universities of member states. The rectors and deputies of the member universities of the Union held meetings in Istanbul in March 2013, in Bishkek in May, in Eskishehir in November and in Izmir in March 2014.

An exchange program called the “Orkhan Process” was also implemented within the Turkic Council with the participation of students and university teachers.

Steps were taken to create a common educational television channel and establish a “Turkic Academic Research Fund” to provide financial support for scientific research regarding the Turkic world. It is of utmost importance to adopt resolutions at the summits of the Turkic Council concerning the Turkic cultural heritage destroyed in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, and even raise this issue at the UN.

Economic Cooperation

The creation of a common market and the adoption of a common currency to facilitate trade, in short economic and trade themes, were on the agenda of the first meetings that took place in 1992. However, these suggestions proposed by Turkey were not accepted, and later the relations mainly focused on energy themes. The member states were primarily interested in promoting the cultural aspects of the Council and only then in addressing economic issues. Such an attitude stemmed from two reasons: 1) to demonstrate that the organization did not have geopolitical objectives; and 2) to protect the political sovereignty of member states within the Council. Unlike the European Union, the member states do not want to delegate matters pertaining to domestic jurisdiction to the Council.

The creation of the Turkic Council took place against the backdrop of global economic crisis. First, it was the time when the center of trade was moving from West to East, which increased the importance of the Turkic states located in Central Asia as trade corridors. Second, it was the beginning of a period when the states and organizations started implementing gradual protectionist trade policies. Third, starting in 2008 the world economy entered into a deep and long-lasting recession from which it has never fully recovered, and which negatively affected the member states of the Turkic Council. Fourth, a fall in oil and gas prices, which are the main sources of income for the economic engines of the Turkic world, namely Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan, prompted increased efforts to reduce dependence on energy resources in these countries. Because commercial and economic dependence increases political dependence, every member state of the Turkic Council at that time was trying to avoid being economically dependent on external powers in order to preserve their independence in domestic and foreign policies and to develop trade relations with each other. That is why the topic of the

first meeting of the Turkic Council was “economic cooperation.”

Regular meetings are held with the participation of the Economic Ministers and various working groups in order to facilitate economic cooperation. The working groups were established in three main areas: “improving the investment climate,” “diversifying the economy,” and “entrepreneurship as the foundation of economic relations.”⁴

The first summit aimed at developing economic and trade relations based on the principles of equality and mutual benefit, broadening cooperation in all spheres, including industry, agriculture, transport, communication, water and energy issues, alternative energy, and tourism.⁵ During the first summit, the member states also decided to set up an Association of Insurance Companies to guarantee the security of commercial exchanges and simplify the process of acquiring work permission and visas in order to improve the investment climate.⁶

At the initiative of Kyrgyzstan, during the second summit of the Turkic Council held in Bishkek on August 23, 2012, the Council decided to set up a Development Fund.⁷ At the Summit of the Turkic Council held in Gabala, the parties agreed to invite representatives of the private sector to the relevant economic commissions. The projects of the Turkic Business Council that aim to develop public-private partnerships (PPP) in order to broaden trade relations among the member states were particularly supported.⁸ Prior to the Gabala Summit, the Azerbaijan Export and Investment Promotion Foundation (AZPROMO), the Kazakhstan National Export and Investment Agency, the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan and the Prime Ministry of Investment Support and Promotion Agency of Turkey signed a Memorandum of Understanding.⁹

Despite these measures, the volume of trade among the Turkic states remains insufficient. For example, the trade volume among the member states of the Turkic Council is 5 billion dollars, which is 1% of Turkey’s 430 billion dollar trade volume.¹⁰ This figure is higher in Azerbaijan. The trade volume between Azerbaijan and the Turkic Council constitutes 14 % of Azerbaijan’s overall trade volume.¹¹

Cooperation in the Tourism Sector

Developing their own tourism potential and expanding cooperation in the tourism sector among each other is very important for the member states of the Turkic

Council. Developing tourism among the Turkic states and deepening cooperation in this area was a major theme during the fourth Turkic Council Summit of the Heads of the Turkic Republics held in Tashkent in 1996. At this summit, it was decided to develop a new program called “Reviving the Historical Silk Road,” which would focus on developing cultural tourism, and rebuilding, preserving and ensuring the sustainability of the cultural heritage of Turkic countries. However, despite the fact that similar decisions on rebuilding the Silk Road were made at every Summits after Tashkent, no serious progress has been achieved in this direction to date.

There are two reasons why the Turkic Council focuses so much on the tourism sector: 1) to increase the number of touristic travels among member states and get to know each other more closely; and 2) to promote cultural and religious values, music and various forms of art of the Turkic world on the global stage. Tourism is not just an economic or commercial activity for the states, it is also a way of promoting their cultural and material heritage, as well as preserving and passing this heritage on to the next generation.

Tourism is both an important tool of “soft power” and a crucial means of intercultural exchange. Cultural tourism gives people a chance to get to know their roots, and to increase their interest in their history and culture. Moreover, cultural tourism brings in necessary funds, thus helping to preserve both the material heritage and the cultural and religious history of the region.¹² According to UNESCO’s World Heritage List from 2015, there are 1,031 cultural heritage sites in the world. The list includes 802 cultural, 197 natural, and 32 mixed heritage sites from 163 countries. There are 29 heritage sites from the Turkic world that are included in the list.¹³

The main goal of cultural tourism, also known as “soft tourism,” is to see and understand the cultural heritage of the visited places. In this type of tourism, the socio-economic groups to which those tourists belong are more important than their sheer number.¹⁴ Through cultural tourism, tourists have the opportunity to get acquainted with the material and cultural heritage of different people and share their impressions with others, thus helping to promote that heritage across wider geographies. At the same time, they help to revive the historical and cultural sites that are on the verge of being forgotten. Moreover, cultural tourism helps to mitigate the negative consequences of globalization on national, regional, cultural and historical heritage.¹⁵

Cooperation Among the Turkic-Speaking Diaspora

One of the objectives of the Turkic Council is to boost the image of the member states on the international stage, and to increase the influence of Turkic people in the countries in which they live. In order to broaden the scope and quality of cooperation among diaspora organizations, the Turkic Council regularly holds meetings of relevant institutions and agencies in charge of diaspora affairs. In May 2013, at the meeting of Ministries and Committees of the Member States in charge of diaspora affairs in Ankara, a new strategy called “Turkic Speaking Diaspora Joint Activity Strategy of the Turkic Council” was adopted.

The first forum of the Heads of Diaspora Organizations of the Member States of the Turkic Council was held in Baku in June 2013. At the end of the forum, the Baku Declaration was adopted. In the declaration, it was emphasized that strengthening the unity of the Turkic people is important for the preservation of peace and security in the region. It was also noted that the participants of the forum considered it crucial to support the organization of the Turkic-speaking diasporas, create regional centers in order to provide better coordination between Turkic speaking diaspora organizations, communities and institutions, and to better inform the world community about the history, culture, and contemporary life of the Turkic world. It was stated that the forum of the Heads of Diaspora Organizations of the Member States of the Turkic Council would be convened every two years, while the meetings of the working group would be held regularly throughout the year.¹⁶ During the forum, it was also decided to establish regional diaspora centers.¹⁷

Azerbaijan and Turkey are more active in diaspora affairs than other members of the Council. Occasionally, Azerbaijan and Turkey work together to oppose the Armenian lobby, especially in Western countries. As President Ilham Aliyev noted, “sometimes negative opinions about us (Turkey and Azerbaijan) are artificially created and it is the activity of the Armenian lobby, which harbors hostile attitudes towards us, that is behind them.”¹⁸

For this reason, the need for jointly-coordinated activities by the Azerbaijani and Turkish diaspora organizations emerged. For this purpose, at the initiative of President Aliyev,¹⁹ in March 2007, the First Forum of the Heads of Azerbaijan and Turkish Diaspora Organizations was held in Azerbaijan. According to the Declaration adopted at the end of the Forum, the diaspora organizations were instructed to protect the interests not only of Azerbaijan and Turkey, but also the

interests of other Turkic states. The declaration recommended Azerbaijanis and Turks living abroad to increase their engagement in the social and political life of the countries in which they live. President Aliyev also suggested centering their joint action efforts not just on defense, but also on diplomacy-based offense.²⁰ At the Forum, the Coordination Council to synchronize the activities of Azerbaijani and Turkish diaspora organizations was created.²¹

Cooperation in the Field of Transportation

The Turkic-speaking states are located between East and West on the historical Silk Road. Although three out of four member states of the Turkic Council – Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan – are landlocked and do not have access to the open sea, once they get connected to Turkey through Georgia, they also gain access to the seas and their strategic importance for the Silk Road increases. For this purpose, it was necessary to build transport infrastructure between Azerbaijan-Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan-Turkmenistan through the Caspian Sea and resolve issues concerning bureaucratic red tape and maritime shipping costs. Since Azerbaijan is located at the intersection of East-West and North-South trade and transport corridors, its importance as a transit country has increased. Some regional and international geopolitical events have increased the importance of the middle route, along which the member states of the Turkic Council are located. These include increased trade between Asia and Europe, China's efforts to restore the historical Silk Road, and periodic episodes of crisis in relations between Turkey-Russia and Turkey-Iran.²²

During the First Summit of the Turkic Council in Bishkek in 2012, the Heads of States instructed their Ministers of Transport to hold regular meetings in order to expand transport cooperation among them. Furthermore, the relevant agencies were instructed to assess the existing situation in the transport sector in order to apply the most advanced exchange of experience in the area of transport infrastructure.

²³ The main theme of the third summit of the Turkic Council, which was held on August 15-16, 2013 in Gabala, was “Transport and Connectivity.” By declaring that “for the first time in history, the Caspian Sea was connected to the Mediterranean... Azerbaijan is already playing the role of a transit country for our brothers, for the countries located on the eastern shore of the Caspian Sea,”²⁴ President Ilham Aliyev emphasized once more the importance of transport corridors for Azerbaijan. Since Azerbaijan is trying to develop its non-oil sector, improvement of transport

infrastructure is of the utmost importance for the country.

The first meeting of the Transport Ministers of the Turkic Council member states was held in Baku in July 2013. Efforts are still underway to eliminate the existing barriers that impede the sustainable, centralized and easy transition of efficient transport operations along the Central Transportation Corridor through the Member States. Developing links between the Caspian Sea and Black Sea ports, increasing the multimodal transport potential of the region and creating a regulatory framework along the Trans-Caspian transport route are an integral part of the agenda of the member states' meetings on transport and customs. In July 2013, during the first meeting of the transport ministers of the Turkic Council in Baku, a memorandum on the "Sister Ports" (Aktau-Baku-Samsun ports) was signed.²⁵

Cooperation in the Fields of Foreign Policy and Security

Pursuant to Article II of the Nakhchivan Agreement, making a constructive contribution to preserving peace, ensuring security and strengthening trust in the region and the whole world is one of the main objectives of the Turkic Council. Moreover, one of the main goals of cooperation between member states is to explore common approaches to foreign policy issues of mutual interest, including those arising within the framework of international organizations and international forums. In accordance with the Nakhchivan Agreement, one day prior to the annual summit meeting, the meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the CCTS is held.²⁶ At the second Summit in Bishkek, the Heads of States instructed their Foreign Ministers to hold informal meetings at the annual sessions of the UN General Assembly to ensure closer coordination between their respective foreign and security policies. At the same time, it was decided that special meetings of the Council of Foreign Ministers can be held at the request of any party.²⁷ Following the decision made at the Bishkek Summit, the informal meetings of foreign ministers within the UN General Assembly sessions in New York quickly became a tradition.²⁸

At the first CCTS Summit held in Almaty on October 21, 2011, the parties agreed to hold meetings within the framework of the Turkic Council in order to form common positions on security issues.²⁹ The Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the Istanbul Process on Afghanistan, regional conflicts, and the fight against international terrorism have been topics of discussion during these meetings.³⁰ Joint Declarations signed at the Leaders Meeting of the Turkic Council Summits have

put forward common positions on specific issues that are of particular interest to the Turkic-speaking countries:

- Resolution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict within the framework of Azerbaijan's sovereignty and territorial integrity,
- Preservation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq, and ensuring the fundamental rights and freedoms of the Turkmen who are an integral part of Iraq,³¹
- Resolution of the Cyprus issue based on the political equality of both peoples living on the island,
- Resolution of the Syrian conflict based on the will and wishes of the Syrian people within the territorial integrity and national unity of Syria,³²
- Resolution of the Ukrainian conflict through dialogue.³³

Nevertheless, the decisions made at the end of Summit meetings are not binding. The fact that decisions are optional means that the Member States do not always act in a unified manner.³⁴

After the establishment of the Turkic Council, the states began to take more practical steps in the area of foreign policy and security. According to Muhittin Kaplan, Abdullah Yuvaci and Shatlyk Amanov, who studied the political position of the Turkic states during UN votings, note that since 2011, and after the establishment of the Turkic Council, the Member States of the Council started to act in a more unified manner at the UN.³⁵ According to this study, in the UN General Assembly, the member states of the Turkic Council have taken a more cohesive position on the Middle East, colonialism and economic issues, while differing on nuclear and developmental issues.³⁶

Taking a joint position on foreign policy and security matters that are of particular interest for member states has had a positive impact on the spirit of cooperation within the Turkic Council. For instance, although Armenia tried to solicit support for its control over the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan allowed Armenia to enter the Eurasian Economic Union and Customs Union only within internationally recognized borders (without occupied Azerbaijani territories). The position of Kazakhstan on the issue of Nagorno-Karabakh is the evidence of complementarity in foreign policies of Baku and Nursultan.

At the summit dedicated to the 5th anniversary of the Eastern Partnership program with the participation of heads of states and government in Prague, the Armenian president, taking advantage of the fact the Turkey was not represented at the summit,

went beyond the agenda of the plenary session and raised the issue of the so-called “Armenian genocide,” aiming his criticism at Turkey. Responding to the accusations of the Armenian side, President Ilham Aliyev famously proclaimed “Turkey is not here but I am,” and made remarks in defense of Turkey. After the April War between Armenia and Azerbaijan in 2016, TURKPA Secretary General made a statement supporting Azerbaijan. Active mediation efforts conducted by the presidents of Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan played a role in normalizing Turkish-Russian relations.³⁷

The security of the Caspian Sea and the transport and energy corridors that pass through the region is a common issue for Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan signed a military cooperation agreement in Astana on March 1, 2004. The agreement envisages cooperation between the parties in the following areas: experience exchange and consultations; participation in training programs, internships, and advanced professional development courses; mutual participation in military drills, conferences and seminars; exchange of documents and scientific papers; and exchange of information of mutual interest. Under this agreement, the parties are developing an annual plan for bilateral cooperation.³⁸ According to the agreement signed by the defense ministers of the two countries in Astana on November 4, 2015, the parties agreed to develop a military cooperation plan for 2016. According to the Defense Ministers, the plan serves to strengthen the security of the Caspian Sea and enhances mutual military experience.³⁹

Since the member states are also members of different security organizations, there were concerns that this would create contradictions in terms of formulating a common position on security and foreign policy. For instance, Turkey is a member of NATO, and Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Kyrgyzstan cooperate with NATO in the framework of the Partnership for Peace, while Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan are members of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). However, Turkey’s NATO membership and Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan’s CSTO membership do not prevent them from cooperating in the field of security, since the founding texts of these organizations do not contain any conditions that impede cooperation with non-member states. At the 4th Bodrum Summit of the Turkic Council in 2014, President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev stated that there were no contradictions between the Turkic Council and the Eurasian Economic Union.⁴⁰ Indeed, the fact that the member states of the Turkic Council are also members of different security organizations plays a positive role. For instance, Turkey has played an active role in the development of cooperation between Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan on

the one hand and NATO on the other. At the same time, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan prevented the CSTO from taking a position against Azerbaijan at the demand of Armenia.⁴¹

Future Directions

The Turkic Council coordinates its efforts at times with non-member states in the region such as Turkmenistan, and Georgia. Both demographically and geopolitically, Uzbekistan – the economic and military powerhouse of Central Asia – is an important country for the Turkic Council. Uzbekistan's membership strengthens both the Council itself and Uzbekistan's position in the region. Turkmenistan similarly cooperates with the Council in certain areas. The successful implementation of the Council's projects and the expansion of cooperation among its member states may open up some possibilities for other regional states to participate in the Council. Georgia's position in the region is also very important in order to successfully complete the projects that unite the Turkic states. For this reason, the member states of the Turkic Council have also included Georgia in some energy and transport discussions.

Situated in the geopolitical area that connects the Turkic world, Azerbaijan is located in a favorable geographical position to expand cooperation among the member states of the Turkic Council, as well as other regional states. Cooperation with the Turkic Council member states has contributed to the success of Azerbaijan's energy and communication projects, as well as to the increased geopolitical importance of the country. President Ilham Aliyev's remarks about active participation in the process of expanding cooperation between the Turkic-speaking countries being "one of the priorities of Azerbaijan's foreign policy"⁴² shows that Azerbaijan has political will to broaden cooperation between the Turkic states.

Conclusion

The Turkic Council is primarily concerned with the organization of cooperation between the Turkic states. In other words, the Turkic Council is an organization based on voluntary cooperation. Within a short period of time, the Turkic Council formed its internal structure, such as the "Council of Heads of State," "the Council of Foreign Ministers," "the Senior Officials Committee," "the Council of Elders" and the "Secretariat."

A number of institutions were also established within the framework of the Turkic Council to enhance cooperation between the Turkish states. TURKSOY (the International Organization of Turkic Culture) was established to develop cooperation between the Turkic states in the fields of education, science, culture and art, to promote the common values of the Turkic world at the international level, and to deepen cultural ties between the Turkic states. Located in Baku, the Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic-speaking Countries (TURKPA), serves to establish cooperation between the parliaments of Turkic states. The International Turkic Academy (TWESCO), located in Astana, plays the role of an international research center that promotes research in the field of Turkic languages, history and ethnography. The Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation, located in Baku, was established with the aim of promoting, preserving and studying Turkic culture. The Turkic Business Council was created with the purpose of developing economic cooperation among the member states of the Turkic Council. All of these organizations are actively working to deepen and expand cooperation among the Turkic Council member states. Two of the five organizations established under the auspices of the Turkic Council are located in Azerbaijan.

Today the member states of the Turkic Council are successfully cooperating in the fields of energy, transport and communications. In recent years, we have also seen the deepening of cooperation in the areas of foreign policy and security. Studies have shown that after the establishment of the Turkic Council, the Turkic states intensified their cooperation within the framework of the UN. In particular, the member states of the Turkic Council played an active role in the election of Turkey and Azerbaijan as non-permanent members of the UN Security Council. In contrast with the summits of the 1990s, when the Turkic states avoided expressing their views and opinions on the Nagorno-Karabakh issue, in recent years, we can see the increased support of the Turkic Council member states for Azerbaijan on this issue. Of course, on the one hand, this is because of Azerbaijan's intensified cooperation with these countries; but, on the other hand, it is also because of the ability of the Turkic Council member states to act more independently on foreign and security matters.

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TURKIC COUNCIL: ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROSPECTS

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An important direction of Kazakhstan's foreign policy is strengthening ties with Turkic-speaking countries. In this regard, the promotion of the idea of Turkic solidarity by the government and the creation of a fully-fledged organization for cooperation between the countries of the Turkic world was natural. The initiative to establish the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States (CCTS, or the Turkic Council) was first put forward by the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Elbasy Nursultan Nazarbayev, who was at the origins of the organization's formation and development, back in 2009. By the decision of the Heads of State of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States, in 2018, the Kazakh leader was awarded the lifelong status of Honorary Chairman of the Turkic Council in recognition of his significant contribution to the development of the Turkic countries.¹

It should be noted that the establishment of a CCTS dialogue platform was preceded by the Forum of Heads of Turkic-Speaking States with the participation of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Turkey and Uzbekistan, held from 1992 to 2010. This Forum laid the foundations for the institutionalization of Turkic integration, and served as the impetus for the creation of the organization of the Turkic Council.²

As Kazakh leader Nursultan Nazarbayev stressed on the sidelines of the 9th Summit of Heads of Turkic-Speaking States in October 2009 in Azerbaijan, “We need an effective mechanism for making and implementing our joint decisions. In this regard, the Kazakh side proposes to create a body that would have all the required attributes of a political regional association, with a certain legal and organizational status.”³

As is commonly known, the agreement to establish the CCTS was signed in Nakhchivan on October 3, 2009, at the 9th Summit of the Heads of Turkic-Speaking States, by four Turkic-speaking countries: Turkey, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Kyrgyzstan.

Today, the Turkic Council is an authoritative, fully-fledged international organization with established institutions and structure. The Council of State Heads, the Council of Foreign Ministers, the Committee of Senior Officials and the Council of Elders of Turkic-Speaking States have been established and function under the auspices of the CCTS and hold meetings on an annual basis.

Within the Central Body of the CCTS, that is the Council of State Heads (CSH), regular meetings are held to discuss issues of cooperation in resolving major international problems and priorities of interaction between countries, and to review the activities of the organization.

It is within the exclusive competence of the Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) mainly to supervise the current activities of the Turkic association and to define the most important issues on the international agenda for discussion at the meetings of the CSH. CFM meetings are usually held on the eve of the CSH meetings.

The Committee of Senior Officials (often simply called the Committee) includes at least one representative from each state of the CCTS; it coordinates the work and approves the draft documents of the Secretariat. Committee meetings are held before meetings of the Council of Foreign Ministers.

The Council of Elders of the Turkic-Speaking States is a consultative and advisory institution functioning on a permanent basis.

In addition, the main executive body, the Secretariat, headed by the Secretary-General and acting on a permanent basis, plays an important role in ensuring the work of the organization. The work of the central advisory and coordination institution focuses on the implementation of administrative and organizational measures for the meetings of the CSH, CFM and the Committee, and other events

of the association, the development of draft documents and the dissemination of information. Furthermore, the Secretariat has an international legal capacity and is authorized to conclude agreements under the consent of all countries of the association.

Political Cooperation

The key format of political cooperation within the framework of the Cooperation Council of the Turkic Speaking States remains the annual Summits at the level of Heads of State, where topical issues are discussed and important decisions are made in all areas of cooperation between the countries. The final declarations of the Summits reflect the common views of the participants on the main issues of the international agenda. In total, six CCTS Summits have been held from 2011 to 2018.⁴

Chaired by the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev, the Summit of the CCTS on the “Economic Cooperation of Turkic-Speaking Countries” was held on October 21, 2011 in Almaty with the participation of the Heads of State of Azerbaijan and Kyrgyzstan, and the Deputy Prime Minister of Turkey. The forum participants discussed the prospects of cooperation in investment, trade, economics, and cultural and humanitarian spheres.⁵

As noted in the Almaty Declaration, the final document of the summit, “the first Summit of the Turkic Council held in Almaty marks a new era in the development of bilateral and multilateral relations and cooperation between the Turkic-speaking states.” The Rules of Procedure of the Secretariat of the Turkic Council were also signed at the Summit.

The second CCTS Summit on “Cooperation in Cultural and Humanitarian field” was held on August 23, 2012 in Kyrgyzstan represented by Almazbek Atambayev with the participation of the Presidents of Kazakhstan and Turkey and the Prime Minister of Azerbaijan.⁶ The main result of the forum was the signing of the Bishkek Declaration, the Agreement on the Financial Rules of the Secretariat of the Turkic Council, the Agreement on Establishment of the International Turkic Academy, and the Agreement on the Establishment of the Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation.

The third CCTS Summit on “Cooperation in the Field of Transport and Communications” was held on August 16, 2013 in Azerbaijan and was attended by

the Heads of State of Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Turkey and Kyrgyzstan.⁷ The joint Gabala Declaration, as well as the Decision of the Heads of Member States on the extension of the term of office of the Secretary-General of the Turkic Council Halil Akıncı for 1 year were signed following the results of the CCTS.

The fourth CCTS Summit on “Cooperation in Tourism” was held on June 5, 2014 in Turkey with the participation of the leaders of Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey and Turkmenistan.⁸ In his speech, President Nazarbayev drew attention to the effectiveness of the international organization, and the need to strengthen the overall economic potential of the Turkic States, specifically the implementation of transport opportunities and the modernization of tourism infrastructure.

Noting the importance of the Turkic Academy, Nazarbayev proposed to instruct the Turkological research center to create a program of identifying ways of integrating the Turkic States.

The Bodrum Declaration and the Decision of the Heads of Member States “on the Appointment of a New Secretary-General of the Turkic Council and his Two Deputies” were signed following the meeting.

The fifth, “anniversary” CCTS Summit on “Cooperation in the Field of Information” was held on September 11, 2015 at Nur-Sultan with the participation of the Presidents of Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, and Kyrgyzstan, the speaker of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, and the Deputy Prime Minister of the government of Turkmenistan.⁹ At this Summit, President Nazarbayev stressed the importance of early adoption of the concept of Turkic World integration, noting the compliance of the prospective TC observer status in the UN and OIC with the interests of the Turkic States.

Nazarbayev focused on the global issues on the agenda, including the importance of ensuring peace and stability in Syria, Libya and Iraq, the settlement of the conflict between Palestine and Israel, the peaceful reconstruction of Afghanistan, and joint efforts to neutralize terrorist, extremist and separatist threats. He also stressed the need to increase the transit and transport capabilities of the organization’s countries and noted the relevance of the issue of creating a multimodal Eurasian transcontinental transport corridor.

During the Summit, Nazarbayev made a number of proposals on deepening cooperation among the Turkic countries, including the establishment of a Common Fund of Turkic Integration, the establishment of a credible center for the

implementation of a cultural and informational development strategy for the Turkic World, the intergration of textbooks on the history of the Turkic peoples until the fifteenth century in the school curriculum of the Turkic states, and the publication of scientific work on Turkic cultural heritage, i.e. the “Heritage of Ancestors.”

The Astana Declaration and the Decision on the appointment of the Deputy Secretary-General of the Turkic Council and the President of the Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation were signed within the framework of the event.

The sixth CCTS Summit on “Cooperation in the field of National Sports and Youth” was held on September 3, 2018 in Kyrgyzstan with the participation of the Head of State of Uzbekistan and the Prime Minister of Hungary. In his speech, President Nazarbayev paid special attention to the importance of preserving national culture and traditions for future generations in modern conditions, proposing to hold a Turkic Council Young Leaders Forum, scientific conferences and seminars, and to organize expeditions to the unique historical places of the Turkic world. These proposals aimed to deepen the knowledge of young people about the cultural features of the Turkic-speaking states on a regular basis.

Nazarbayev noted the achievements of Kazakhstan’s chairmanship in the CCTS, including the integration of the textbook “General History of the Turks” in the school curriculum of Azerbaijan, Turkey, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, the publication by the Turkic Academy of more than 90 books on history, the launch of the “Atalar Mirasi” portal (“Heritage of Ancestors”), the sociological research project “TurkBarometer,” and the “Modern Great Silk Road” tourist project. In addition, Nazarbayev put forward an initiative to develop special projects under the auspices of the Turkic Council, including “100 People of the Turkic World” and the “Holy Land of the Turkic World.”

As a result of the event, such documents as the Declaration of the 6th CCTS summit, the decision on the appointment of the Secretary-General of the CCTS and his Deputy, and the decision to grant Hungary an observer status in the CCTS were signed. The Concept of Turkic Speaking States Integration, the Joint Statement of Heads of States of CCTS on Cooperation Development in the field of National Sports and Youth Policy, and the Joint Statement of Heads of States of CCTS on the occasion of the 90th anniversary of Chingiz Aitmatov were adopted during the summit.¹⁰

The seventh CCTS Summit on “Small and Medium-Sized Business Development”

is scheduled to be held in October 2019 in Azerbaijan.

Undoubtedly, the effective work within the framework of the Summits has had a positive impact on the strengthening of mutually-beneficial comprehensive relations between the countries within the Turkic integration association, and contributed to strengthening the authority of the international organization in the world arena.

At the same time, meetings of the Council of Foreign Ministers and the Committee of Senior Officials, as well as regular security consultations and election observation missions serve to strengthen the political dialogue of the countries of the CCTS.¹¹

Economic Cooperation

Cooperation in trade and economics, including the fields of industry and agriculture and based on the principles of equality and mutual benefit, remains a priority for the Turkic countries.¹² As far back as the first CCTS Summit, the members of the organization identified the key direction of economic cooperation, “ensuring the free movement of goods, money, services and technologies.” Thus, since 2015, the total trade turnover between the member states of the CCTS has increased by 22%, amounting to almost 9 billion USD.

If Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan join the organization, which is being negotiated, the volume of trade between the countries of the Turkic Council shall be about 16 billion USD.¹³

Memorandums of Understanding were signed between the member states of the organization, including those on improving the investment climate and investment statistics, as well as the development of small and medium-sized businesses. In this regard, it should be noted that the meetings of Ministers and working groups are contributing to the strengthening of trade and economic cooperation between the countries. Four CCTS working groups have been established to strengthen the dialogue of the states in the field of economic diversification, improvement of the investment climate and development of entrepreneurship. A total of 8 ministerial meetings and 10 working group meetings have been held since 2009.

The First CCTS Summit Declaration (The Almaty Declaration) as of October 21, 2011¹⁴ established a Business Council, which includes representatives of the business communities of the member states. The activity of the Council is designed to “strengthen productive interaction between the business communities of the Turkic-

speaking States.” Since the establishment of the Turkic Council, six meetings of the Business Council and four business forums have been held with the participation of more than 500 entrepreneurs.¹⁵

At the same time, following the initiative of President Nazarbayev, the Turkic Chamber of Commerce and Industry was established, the founding document of which was signed at the scheduled meeting of the Turkic Business Council in 2019. The organization’s activities shall be aimed at improving regional development.¹⁶ As Prime Minister of Kazakhstan Askar Mamin noted at the event, “the establishment of the Turkic Chamber of Commerce and Industry shall give a new serious impetus to the development of mutually beneficial cooperation between the business communities of the countries.”

Cultural and Humanitarian Cooperation

The rapprochement of related Turkic-speaking countries has recently been clearly seen in the intensification of traditional cultural and humanitarian ties between the countries of the Turkic Council. This is facilitated by successfully operating the affiliated structures of the CCTS, including TURKSOY, the Turkic Academy, and the Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation.

The International Organization of Turkic Culture (TURKSOY) was established in 1993 on the basis of an agreement between the Ministers of Culture of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Turkey. To date, eight states, including Altai, Bashkortostan, Moldova, Khakassia, Northern Cyprus, Sakha, Tatarstan and Tuva are observers to the organization.

The organization’s activities are aimed at “strengthening the brotherhood and friendship between the Turkic peoples, and spreading the common Turkic culture and preserving it for future generations.” As noted by UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova, “this organization is central to all our cultural activities. The work we do together with TURKSOY aims at the preservation of our cultural values and their transmission to future generations.”¹⁷

Currently, the work of TURKSOY is focused on the protection of the cultural heritage of the Turkic world countries, including the preservation and restoration of historical and cultural monuments, as well as the study of the traditions, customs and folklore of the countries.

The next significant organization is the Turkic-Speaking States Parliamentary Assembly (TURKPA), which was founded on the initiative of President Nazarbayev and on the basis of an Agreement between the Heads of Parliaments of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey in 2008.¹⁸ The activities of TURKPA, including the plenary sessions held within the framework of the organization, contribute to the successful development of inter-parliamentary relations between the states of the Turkic Council.

The Assembly consists of four standing commissions, including the Commission on Legal Issues and International Relations, the Commission on Social, Cultural and Humanitarian Issues, the Commission on Economic Cooperation, and the Commission on Environment issues. Plenary sessions serve as the main format of meetings within the Parliamentary Assembly. A total of eight meetings were held from 2009 to 2018.

The capital of Kazakhstan hosted the second and sixth plenary sessions of the Parliamentary Assembly in 2011 and 2015. The chairmen of the standing committees were elected at the 4th plenary session. The Astana Declaration was adopted as a result of the 6th plenary session of the Parliamentary Assembly.

Representatives of the Parliament of Kazakhstan, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Hungary and Uzbekistan took part in the eighth plenary session of TURKPA on November 21, 2018 in Izmir, Turkey, under the leadership of the Chairman of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, Binali Yildirim.

In his speech, the Chairman of the Majilis of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nurlan Nigmatulin noted that the CCTS Assembly went through the long way of development, also stressing that the strengthening of cooperation ties, and each implemented project lay the foundation for future projects.¹⁹

The International Turkic Academy was established in 2010. The initiative to create a special scientific center for the study of the Turkic world was first put forward by President Nazarbayev at the 9th Summit of Heads of Turkic-Speaking States in 2009. The agreement on granting the Turkic Academy an international status was signed by the Heads of State of Kazakhstan, Turkey and Kyrgyzstan and the Prime Minister of Azerbaijan in 2012.

The activities of the international scientific organization are mainly focused on “coordinating and promoting scientific research about the history of the Turkic world, ranging from ancient times to the present, studying the Turkic language and literature, culture, and exploring the common Turkic world on the base of the

discovery of unique sources and identifying the role and place of Turkic States in world.”²⁰ In addition to conducting scientific activities held on a regular basis, the number of which has reached more than 80, including the “Great Steppe” International Humanitarian Forum, the Academy publishes the *Altaistics and Turkology* journal, as well as *Global-Turk* scientific and analytical magazine.

The book fund of the Academy has more than 50,000 books on turkology, and the Museum of the organization includes more than 240 exhibits. The research center developed secondary school textbooks – “General Turkic History” and is working on draft textbooks of “General Turkic Literature” and “General Turkic Geography” up to the 15th century.²¹

As noted by Kairat Abdrakhmanov, former Minister of Foreign Affairs and presently the Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Sweden, “in a short period the Academy has done a great job, made a significant contribution to the development of cultural-historical and scientific-research cooperation between the member states of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States - Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey. The Academy has transformed into an intellectual organization.”

On the initiative of the President of Azerbaijan, the Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation was established in 2012. According to the Charter, the international organization “shall protect, explore and develop Turkic culture and heritage through the financing of events, projects and programs.”²² Since its creation, the Foundation has helped to organize and has participated in a number of events of the international scope, conferences, exhibitions and forums aimed at preserving culture and strengthening unity among the peoples of the Turkic world. Thus, in June 2018, with the assistance of the Foundation and on the initiative of the Turkic Academy, a conference on “The Turkic World: Identity and Enlightenment” was held in Paris. The growing authority of the Foundation is evidenced through the signing of Memorandums of Understanding with a number of international organizations and national institutions.²³ Joint training programs for young diplomats and meetings between foreign policy research centres also serve to strengthen the countries’ cultural dialogue.

Diasporas

The issue of diasporas is an integral part of the dialogue between the Turkic-speaking states. The Turkic Council plays an important role in supporting relations

between diasporas, and ensuring the interaction of the relevant structures of the Turkic-speaking countries.

Three meetings of heads of institutions in charge of diaspora affairs and five meetings of the contact group working with diaspora issues have been held under CCTS auspices, where experts from the relevant institutions of the member states were represented.²⁴ The key document regulating the cooperation of countries on diaspora issues is the “General Strategy of the Activities of the Turkic Council of Turkic-Speaking Diaspora,” approved by the relevant Ministers and heads of departments in 2013. The strategy outlines the priorities and goals of the Turkic diasporas, and presents an assessment of the further action plan. In November 2018, at the third meeting of heads of institutions in charge of diaspora affairs in Turkey, the strategic document was signed by the parties and put into effect. A Joint Action Plan for its implementation in 2019 was also adopted.²⁵

Different forums are held in order to consolidate the efforts of organizations to support diasporas, as well as to strengthen ties between the diasporas of Turkic-speaking states. The First Diaspora Forum of the member states of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States was held in 2013 in Baku; it was attended by more than 600 representatives from more than 50 countries, including heads of state structures and organizations of diasporas. For the first time, this historic event brought together at one table representatives of the organizations of Turkic-speaking diasporas from other countries and the diasporas institutions of the member states. The Second Diaspora Forum is expected to be held in November 2019 in Turkey with the participation of about 1,000 representatives of Turkic-speaking diasporas from the United States, Europe and other regions of the world.²⁶

It is noteworthy that the the First Turkic Council Regional Diaspora Center was opened in Ukraine in 2014.²⁷ The regional structures of the diaspora are designed to strengthen the authority of Turkic countries on the world stage, promote cultural values, and raise awareness of the problems of the Turkic world countries among the international community. The institutional strengthening and expansion of the international organization’s sphere of activities provide additional impetus to the multilateral cooperation of countries within the Turkic Council. In this regard, the granting of observer status to Hungary in 2018 seems promising. Similarly, the potential accession of Uzbekistan to the organization would open new opportunities for cooperation. Back in September 2018, at the 6th Forum of the CCTS Heads, the President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev expressed his country’s intention to

become a member of the Turkic association: “We are happy and ready to join this organization. We offer the Uzbek city of Khiva as the capital of the Turkic Council,” said the leader of the country.²⁸

Thus, united by common history, language, traditions, and similar interests, the Turkic-speaking states have successfully institutionalized their interactions in all areas of cooperation in the format of an international organization. The dialogue platform within the Turkic Council has proven to be an effective mechanism for promoting the interests and priorities of the Turkic-speaking states in the field of politics, trade, economics, and cultural and educational cooperation at the multilateral level, both in Eurasia and in the global arena. At the same time, the accession of new states as members of the organization and the expansion of the geography of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States shall further strengthen the international position of the organization.

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THE COOPERATION COUNCIL OF TURKIC SPEAKING STATES: MAIN STAGES AND PROSPECTS OF DEVELOPMENT

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Currently, the world has entered a period characterized by dynamic changes and events. At both the global and regional levels, a system shift is taking place in all spheres: economic, trade, political, cultural, social and technological. The changes in the familiar international environment and development conditions are pushing many countries to search for and design development models that will take into account the new challenges and opportunities. The modern time opens up various opportunities for implementing and spreading new technologies, and the transition to new models of interactions where the exchange of resources of states takes place.

Relationships between states are possible within the framework of various integration associations, in particular for widening of economic cooperation. Integration occurs for various reasons: economic, political, geographical, historical, etc. The stability of such integration associations is sustainable if they are based not only on momentary political and economic interest, but also on cultural and civilizational foundations. The union of Turkic-speaking states can provide an example of such an interaction, based on cultural and civilizational commonalities.

The development of multilateral relations among Turkic states can be divided into three stages, each of which has its own characteristics:

- First stage (1992-2001). Period of searching for common interests and values, forming modes of cooperation and elaborating unified positions;
- Second stage (2001-2010). This is a period of developing and deepening cooperation, searching for and crystallizing unity, and giving new impulses to the integration processes;
- Third stage (2010-present). This period is characterized by the building of pragmatic relations and the more specific implementation of joint projects, the emergence of cooperation on a fundamentally new level of integration.

The creation of an organization of a higher level and a new format became possible by means of long and focused work carried out by the Heads of State to unite the Turkic world.

Participants of the 9th Summit of the Heads of State of Turkic-speaking countries – the Republic of Turkey, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Kyrgyz Republic, on the initiative of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N. Nazarbayev, signed the Nakhichevan Agreement, “On the Establishment of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States (CCTS).” Thus CCTS became an international organization of modern Turkish states. The decision was made because of consultations and the desire for joint development, based on the spirit of mutual trust, mutual benefit, and equality, established at the summits of the Heads of Turkic-speaking States.

The agreement to form the CCTS was based on the historical ties, common language, culture and traditions of their people. The Turkic-Speaking States desire to deepen further comprehensive cooperation and to contribute together to strengthen peace, and ensure security and stability in the region and the world as a whole under the conditions for the development of processes of political multipolarity, and economic and information globalization. At the same time, the parties believed that their interaction within the framework of a common structure would help to reveal the huge potential of good neighborliness, unity and cooperation between states and their peoples.

The agreement also confirmed each state’s commitment to the goals and principles of the UN Charter. These are the universally recognized principles and norms of international law, including the principles of sovereign equality, territorial integrity and the inviolability of the internationally recognized borders of states, as well as those norms related to the maintenance of international peace, security

and the development of good neighborly and friendly governmental relations and cooperation among states.

It is important to note that within the framework of this agreement, the states determined the main goals and objectives of the CCTS. They aim to create conditions for the development of countries and the well-being of their citizens, including: strengthening mutual trust, friendship and good neighborliness between the parties; maintaining peace and strengthening security and confidence in the region and the world as a whole; coordination of actions in the fight against international terrorism and separatism, extremism, human trafficking, and drug trafficking. This includes the promotion of international policies to control the illicit trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. States join to create favorable conditions for trade and investment and promote discussion of issues on ensuring the rule of law, and the effective management and guarantee of human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with generally-recognized principles and norms of international law. They also sought opportunities to expand interaction in the fields of science and technology, education, health, culture, youth, sports and tourism, and popularization of the great cultural and historical heritage of Turkic peoples.

Further, according to the results of the 9th Summit of the Heads of State of Turkic-speaking countries, members approved the Cooperation Council of Turkic States' structure: the Council of Heads of State, the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, the Council of Elders, the Committee of Senior Officials, and the Secretariat, which is the permanent executive body of the CCTS. Thus, the ideas of Turkic integration for the first time received the institutions necessary for their practical implementation. Prior to this, cooperation of the Turkic countries was expressed in the form of periodic summits of Heads of State.

The 10th summit of the Heads of Turkic-speaking countries was held in Istanbul on September 16, 2010. At the summit, an exchange of views took place on issues of peace and security, the development of economic cooperation, current issues about the activities of the CCTS Secretariat, the Council of Elders and the Academy of Turkic Peace were discussed, and the organizational structure of Turkic cooperation, which can purposefully coordinate the activities of these countries, was established. Thus, in accordance with Article 4 of the Nakhichevan Agreement, the following organizations are currently operating under the auspices of the CCTS:

- The International Turkic Academy with headquarters in Astana, Kazakhstan. The Academy was established on May 25, 2010, with the aim of creating a specialized international scientific center for the study of the Turkic world.
- The Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation, headquartered in Baku, Azerbaijan. The fund was established on August 23, 2012, with the aim of promoting projects aimed at reviving, developing and promoting the culture and historical heritage of the Turkic peoples.
- The Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic-speaking States (TurkPA) with headquarters in Baku, Azerbaijan. The Assembly was established on November 21, 2008, with the aim of strengthening inter-parliamentary ties between Turkic-speaking countries.
- The International Organization of Turkic Culture (TURKSOY) with headquarters in Ankara, Turkey. The organization was established on July 12, 1993, with the aim of reviving cultural and humanitarian ties between Turkic-speaking peoples.

Within the framework of the CCTS, annual meetings of the Council of Heads of State, the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, the Committee of Senior Officials, the Council of Elders, as well as meetings of heads and experts of sectoral state bodies of member countries take place. They are conducted in the fields of economics, investment, customs, transport, education, tourism, information etc.

The 1st Summit of the CCTS took place on October 21, 2011 in Almaty, Kazakhstan, on the topic, “Economic Cooperation of Turkic Speaking Countries.” At the summit, it was noted that the first summit of the Turkic Council had marked a new era in the development of bilateral and multilateral relations and cooperation between Turkic countries. The summit addressed issues of developing the relations of the CCTS members in the field of economics, trade, improvement of the investment climate, and the activities of the Turkic Business Council. The parties decided that the main goal of economic cooperation is to ensure the free movement of goods, capital, services and technologies between members of the Turkic Council. Within the framework of the CCTS summit, a business forum was held at which the parties signed an Agreement establishing the Business Council of Turkic-speaking countries, which was another step towards the integration of Turkic-speaking states. The Council included representatives of the large organizations and companies of Turkic-speaking countries. The Business Council has two main tasks – removing existing barriers in mutual trade and economic relations, including customs barriers,

and developing new projects for cooperation.

The 2nd Summit of the CCTS was held on August 23, 2012 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan on the topic, “Cooperation in the Cultural and Humanitarian Sphere.” During the summit, the Bishkek Declaration, the agreement “On the financial rules of the CCTS secretariat,” the agreement “On the establishment of the Turkic Academy,” and the Charter of the Turkic Cultural Heritage Fund were signed. In addition, the Summit adopted a Protocol on the meeting of transport ministers which covers the connection of a transport hub through Turkey, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and China.

At a press conference, Turkish Foreign Minister A. Davudoglu announced that the Turkic-speaking states had adopted a symbol for the Turkic Council, a single flag in which the symbols of all four states were included: the sun from the flag of Kyrgyzstan, the star from Azerbaijan, the crescent from Turkey, and the color from Kazakhstan, stating: “Our countries and peoples will blend with each other and walk towards the future together.”¹

The Secretary General of the CCTS, H. Akinci, added, “In addition, it is planned to create a museum of Turkic-speaking states at the Turkic Academy in Astana. There is general agreement on this issue, and I hope that this issue will be positively resolved.”²

The 3rd Summit of the CCTS was held on August 16, 2013 in Gabala, Azerbaijan on the topic “Cooperation in the Field of Transport and Communications.” The Heads of State speaking at the event spoke about various projects being implemented in their countries, including the strengthening of regional cooperation. They noted there was a need to pay attention to the development of communications between the member states of the Turkic Council. Transport and communications should be the basis for the development of economic power. The issue of joint activities in the tourism sector was also raised. It was noted that the joint activities of the Diaspora organizations of the Turkic world could bring success to the Turkic states. Members acknowledged the importance of the import of production capacities and exchange of new technologies.

The 4th Summit of the CCTS took place on June 5, 2014 in Bodrum, Turkey, on the topic, “Cooperation in the Field of Tourism.” At the summit, specific directions for deepening cooperation were worked out – the creation of a joint investment fund for the Turkic states, transport opportunities, tourism under the Silk Road brand, and the

intensification of humanitarian cooperation. It was proposed to open a TV-channel representing the international community of the Turkic world.

The 5th Summit of the CCTS took place on September 11, 2015 in Astana on the topic, “Cooperation in the Field of Information.” Participants noted that the challenge now is to make cooperation in the economic, cultural, educational and scientific fields, as well as in the field of tourism and information more robust and balanced.

Emphasis was placed on the need to accelerate the adoption of the concept of the Turkic world, which can be prepared by the Turkic Academy, on how geopolitical and geo-economic changes in the world affect the Turkic world. It was proposed to create a fund to attract sponsors for the development of the Turkic world and create a center for Turkic history.

The 6th Summit of the CCTS was held on September 3, 2018 in Cholpon-Ata, Kyrgyzstan, on the theme “cooperation in the field of national sports and youth.” The Heads of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Azerbaijan Republic, the Republic of Kazakhstan, and the Republic of Turkey attended the summit. The Head of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Prime Minister of Hungary for the first time also participated in the summit as honorary guests.

President of the Kyrgyz Republic S. Jeenbekov expressed gratitude to the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N. Nazarbayev for his successful Chairmanship during the last three years of CCTS; he also noted that Uzbekistan’s intention to join the Turkic Council will give a new breath to this organization and will become a source of many updates. Addressing the Prime Minister of Hungary V. Orban, he noted that “Hungary, located in the very center of Europe, does not forget its Turkic history, customs, traditions, and family-friendly roots, and at today’s Summit receives the status of an observer state in the Turkic Council, which will become confirmation of the expansion of the geography of the Organization. This will positively affect the activities of the Turkic Council, and will contribute to strengthening cooperation with other organizations”.³

The 6th Summit emphasized that the creation of decent living conditions for young people is a holy duty and obligation of each state. The implementation of work and projects in this direction depends on the economic capabilities of countries. In this regard, a need was noted to expand investment cooperation between the member states of the Turkic Council and relations between private sectors, and to reduce obstacles to the flow of goods and services, capital and labor.

The head of state noted that Kyrgyzstan considers it necessary to pay attention to the issues of diversifying the economy, expanding transport corridors, developing entrepreneurship and improving the investment climate. To this end, it was proposed to revive the work of ministers of economics and working groups on economic cooperation.

In addition, it was emphasized that Kyrgyzstan, as a landlocked state, is interested in the successful development of transport routes that fully link trade between East and West. In this regard, the China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan railway project is important to the country.

The need to step up work on cybersecurity, e-government, and satellite communications, and to advance the process of cooperation in the field of information and communication technologies were also noted. In this direction, Kyrgyzstan is implementing the *Taza Koom* national program of digital transformation, which involves the automation of all business processes and the transformation to a digital economy.

As indicated, Kyrgyzstan actively supports the dynamic development of tourism between the participating countries. Successful implementation of the Modern Silk Road travel package, which covers Turkey, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan, will grow the tourism industry, and the gradual addition of Uzbekistan and Hungary to this project, will make this package even more attractive.

The President of the Kyrgyz Republic also suggested paying special attention to expanding ties between the youth of the states. He noted that in modern geopolitical conditions, the upbringing of the Turk speaking youth in a spirit of respect for the history, culture, language and traditions of fraternal peoples and inter-religious tolerance is of particular importance. This is the only way to block fanaticism, violence, the radicalization of youth, and their adoption of an alien ideology. These efforts will work to rebuff the various destructive forces that adversely affect the consciousness of youth. In order to increase youth interest in innovative projects and entrepreneurship, and joint implementation of special projects in economic and humanitarian areas, it was proposed to create a special working group of the Secretariat of the Turkic Council.⁴

In addition, the Head of State called for the further creation of favorable conditions for the development of cooperation among Turkic-speaking states in the fields of national sport and ethnic culture. In particular, he noted the unique and unifying project launched by the Kyrgyz initiative – the World Nomad Games, stating:

I want to express my gratitude to the heads of state who attended the official opening of the Third World Nomad Games, which is held under the auspices of UNESCO. With the support of the Turkic-speaking states, we propose to further disseminate and develop the World Nomad Games. The member states of the Turkic Council not only spread the concept of ethnosport, [and] ethnoculture all over the world, but were also able to make these areas very popular.⁵

S. Jeenbekov noted the symbolism of the fact that the meeting was being held in the hall named after Chyngyz Aitmatov, a famous, great writer of the Turkic world. “This year, together with the world community, we celebrate the 90th anniversary of the great writer. I take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to the states and their heads, [and the] international organizations conducting special events in this direction,” he said.⁶ He also noted that the great thinkers of our peoples in their works left many valuable thoughts and instructions to the younger generation. The present generation should keep these instructions and pass them to youth. Therefore, it was proposed to release a book on Turkic literature as part of the activities of TURKSOY, the Turkic Academy and the Fund for Turkic Culture and Heritage; Kyrgyzstan is ready to actively participate in joint work on this project.

Following the results of the 6th Summit of the CCTS, the Heads of State signed the Declaration of the 6th Summit of the CCTS. The decision to grant Hungary observer status in the CCTS was adopted. Members also approved the concept of integrating the Turkic-speaking states, the joint statement of the heads of the CCTS countries on the development of cooperation in the field of national sports and youth policy, and the joint statement of the Heads of the CCTS countries on the occasion of Aitmatov’s 90th anniversary.

In the Declaration of the 6th Summit of the CCTS, the Heads of State of the Turkic Council approved the outstanding political and socio-economic progress achieved by the Turkic-speaking states since their independence, and expressed their desire to continue cooperation among member states, as well as in the region. The achievements and prospects for further cooperation in the field of youth and sports were noted, along with economic and institutional cooperation, and cooperation in foreign policy, security, and relations with international organizations, and in the fields of social, media and cultural relations, education and science, across the Turkic world.

Particularly, the Heads of State in the framework of cooperation in the field of youth and sports highly appreciated and emphasized the role of Kyrgyzstan as the founder of the World Nomad Games (WNG). They approved the initiative of the Kyrgyz Republic in introducing and promoting ancient culture and traditions to the whole world through the World Nomad Games, recognized by the UN General Assembly resolution 71/249 of December 22, 2016, as an important tool for intercultural dialogue, and a valuable contribution to strengthening social cohesion, peace and development. The Heads of State also noted the successful organization of the World Nomad Games which were held in Issyk-Kul in 2014, 2016 and 2018, with the participation of representatives from different countries of the world.

The World Nomad Games

Taking a closer look at Kyrgyzstan's initiative, we should mention the history of the World Nomad Games. The previous century was a time of great and serious change. Accelerated economic development and technological progress, combined with increased nationalism and scarcity of resources, led to a deterioration in relations between states, resulting in conflicts, and even wars. The increase of conflict called upon human society to create peace-loving, inter-state institutions, promote ideas, and create new forms of mutual communication. Searching for ways to create new forms of mutual communication, preserve cultural diversity and humanize sports, the Kyrgyz Republic proposed the idea of holding the first World Nomad Games, whose mission is to revive and preserve the culture, identity and lifestyles of the peoples of the world, and to foster a tolerant relationship between ethnic groups and peoples. The Heads of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Republic of Azerbaijan, and the Turkish Republic supported the initiative.

The first World Nomad Games were held from September 9-14, 2014, in the city of Cholpon-Ata, in the Issyk-Kul Oblast of Kyrgyzstan. 583 athletes from 19 countries attended the games. Competitions were held in 10 types of ethnic sports. 1,200 people attended the cultural program. TV broadcasting reached an audience of 230 million people. The Second World Nomad Games were held from September 3-8, 2016, also in the city of Cholpon-Ata. 1,200 athletes from 62 countries attended the games. Competitions were held in 26 types of ethnic sports, and TV broadcasting reached an audience of 500 million people. The Third World Nomad Games were held on September 2, 2018. The actions of the Games took place in three locations:

a hippodrome and a sports and recreation center in the city of Cholpon-Ata, in the Kirchyn gorge. More than 3,000 athletes from about 80 countries took part in the third world games. The competition was held under the motto: “One by force! We are one in spirit!”

The goals and objectives of the 3rd WNG were not only to preserve the historical cultural heritage and diversity of ethnic groups and peoples of the world and popularize the development and introduction of international types of traditional games and competitions of ethnic groups and peoples of the world. More broadly, the goals were to promote the scientific and methodological justification of the ethnic sports movement, showcase varieties of ethnic sports, traditional games and competitions of ethnic groups and peoples of the world, and to study ethnic culture. The 3rd WNG aimed to strengthen and promote the further development of interreligious and intercultural dialogue, mutual understanding, friendships, harmony and cooperation between peoples and nations of the world and to demonstrate their cultural diversity.

Special attention during the World Nomad Games was paid to the issue of ecology – the snow leopard was chosen as the official mascot of the 3rd WNG. Thus, the organizers of the games wanted to draw the attention of the world community to the protection and preservation of the habitat of this unique animal.

The ethno-cultural program included an ethno festival, “The Universe of the Nomads,” which included storytelling (epics, legends, tales), an ethno-bazaar (crafts fair and master classes), an ethnoteam (house of nomads), an ethnohouse (traditional and modern clothing), ethnodance (folk dance), ethnohit (pop song, folklore), nomad theatre (drama and puppet performances in open areas), and contemporary art exhibitions.

The ethnosports program included a harmonious combination of many types of competitions popular in different countries. The following list shows the diversity of the national sport games of Turkic world. They include: *Ordo*, a traditional game from the Kyrgyz Republic; horse races such as *At-chabysh* (long-distance races), *Kunan chabysh* (two-year-old races), *Zhorgo salysh* (race of amblers), *Byshty jorgo* (race of three-year-old amblers), smooth races, and *Kok-boru* (Kyrgyz Republic national horse racing); *Taigan* (greyhound racing); *Er enish* (wrestling on horseback); national wrestling competitions such as *Alysh* (national belt wrestling of the Kyrgyz Republic), *Ashyrtmaly aba gureshi* (national belt wrestling of the Republic of Turkey), *Goresh* (national belt wrestling of Turkmenistan), *Gustini*

milli kamarbandi (from the Republic of Tajikistan), *Gulesh* (national wrestling of the Azerbaijan Republic), *Kazakh kures* (national wrestling of the Republic of Kazakhstan), *Kurash* (national wrestling of the Republic of Uzbekistan), *Kyrgyz kurosh* (national belt wrestling of the Kyrgyz Republic), Mongol Beugh (national wrestling of Mongolia), *Pakhlavani* (national wrestling of the Islamic Republic of Iran), *Sambo* (national wrestling of the Russian Federation), *Ssirim* (national belt wrestling of the Republic of Korea), *Sumo* (national wrestling of Japan); as well as martial arts competitions, arm wrestling and tug of war (world competition); traditional intellectual games such as *Toguz Korgool* from the Kyrgyz Republic, *Mangala* from the Turkish Republic), and *Owari* from the West African countries; traditional archery competitions from the Kyrgyz Republic, the Turkish Republic, the Republic of Korea, and Hungary; and competitions in national types of hunting *Salbuurun* from the Kyrgyz Republic, *Burkut saluu* (hunting with golden eagle), *Dalba* (hunting with falcon).

At the WNG, each participating country may present its national sports, folk games, traditions and customs in the form of demonstrations that are not part of the competitive sports program: *Kyz Kuumai* (*Catch up with a young woman*), *Tyiyn enmey* (Get coins from the ground by riding a horse) and *Dzhigitovka* (Stunts on a horse) are some examples.

Within the framework of the scientific program, the Scientific Forum of the 3rd World Nomad Games “World Nomad Games: Historical Heritage and Future” aimed to study the history and culture of nomadic people, and the role and place of the culture of nomadic people in the development of human civilization, and to provide scientific and methodological substantiation for various aspects of traditional physical culture and ethnic sports and others.

It is important to note that the World Nomad Games reap political, economic and social dividends in terms of strengthening political dialogue between the countries of the world, creating new investment opportunities, developing infrastructure, building sports facilities, popularizing national sports and folk art, increasing the mutual flow of tourists, and stimulating the sphere of tourist services.

Tourism

The activities of the CCTS focus a lot on the development of tourism, which is one of the most important and fruitful areas of multilateral cooperation between the

Turkic-speaking countries. Following the results of the 6th summit, the leaders of the CCTS announced the launch of a joint tour package, the “Modern Silk Road,” as a unique tourist project to identify the joint cultural and historical heritage of the Member States along the Silk Road. They endorsed the development of a website (www.modernsilkroadtour.com), and also noted the efforts to promote the joint tour Package through the implementation of study visits, joint exhibitions, and presentations at international events including the New Silk Road Festival, to be held in Kazakhstan in 2019.

The development of the “The Modern Silk Road” joint tourist package took four years and is the result of 3 ministerial meetings and the activity of 11 working groups, as well as study tours to the participating countries. In 2016, a consortium of 11 leading tour operators of the region was created to develop the project; at the third meeting of the heads of tourism agencies of Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Turkey and Azerbaijan in Issyk-Kul (Kyrgyzstan), the initial roadmap of the communication strategy of the project, i.e. a joint tourism package of the modern Turkmen council was approved. During the meeting, the Consortium members also signed the UNWTO Global Code of Ethics (UN World Tourism Organization), which is aimed to promote the value of developing responsible and sustainable tourism. It is also important for our countries to pay special attention to the social, cultural and economic issues in the context of sustainable tourism development.

Chyngyz Aitmatov

Another important outcome of the 6th meeting of the Summit of Heads of State of the Cooperation Council of Turkic-speaking States was the adoption of a joint Statement dedicated to the 90th anniversary of world-renowned writer and philosopher Chyngyz Aitmatov. The document emphasizes the importance of events to celebrate Aitmatov’s 90th anniversary in the member States of the CCTS. The importance of Aitmatov’s great heritage to promote and expand dialogue and strengthen cooperation for the development of relations in the Turkic-speaking States played a big role. The urgency of expanding the format of dialogue among civilizations and cultures, and creating platforms for the interaction of intellectuals, scientists, and thinkers is also noted in the Statement.

It was proposed to continue the efforts of Member States to preserve and promote Aitmatov’s literary heritage through the support of initiatives such as the translation

and publication of the writer's works, the use of dramatic art, cinema, and modern media, the creation of "Aitmatov's Corner" in the libraries of member States of the Turkic Council, and the establishment of the "Prize for Aitmatov's Young Writer" for young authors from Turkic speaking States.

Information and Communication Technologies

An important area of interaction and cooperation, which the President of the Kyrgyz Republic noted during his speech at the 6th summit, is to intensify work in the field of information and communication technologies. In the framework of the Declaration of the 6th Summit of the CCTS, the Heads of State also emphasized the importance of cooperation in the field of ICT; and called for continued efforts to enhance cooperation and coordination in the areas of e-Government, the Trans-Eurasian Information Superhighway (TASIM), fiber infrastructure, cyber security and satellite services.

In this regard, it seems promising to carry out work in this area by creating appropriate funds to finance competitions of innovative digital projects, exchange experience on the promotion and support of start-up companies and young professionals in the field of IT. The competition of innovative digital projects will be a permanent platform for the exchange of practical experience in the field of digital transformation of the economy of the CCTS member States and will give impetus to the formation of interstate relations in the main prioritized areas, such as various sectors of the economy, the humanitarian and educational sphere, and others.

Performance of such platforms could be realized as an analogy of the international competition of innovative projects "Eurasian digital platforms". As an example we can consider the competition held in 2018 in Yerevan, where was presented more than 300 projects, the jury chose the winners in four nominations.⁷

In particular, various nominations were presented, for example in the nomination "Digital Future of EEU", the project Apilog.kz project (Republic of Kazakhstan) won the nomination. The project is a platform for transport logistics and cross-border trading with intelligent routing and tracking of invoices.⁸ In the nomination "Best technological resolutions for digital agenda of EEU" the project "Eurasian Factoring Platform" (Republic of Belarus) won a nomination. The project is a digital platform for the development and financing of mutual trade among member states.⁹ Another project the CML-Bench project (Russian Federation) won a nomination

“Best digital projects of EEU”. Project is a platform for integrating the software and computing infrastructure of all participants in the development of digital twins.¹⁰ The Shadow-matic project (Republic of Armenia) won the nomination “Best game for children and teenagers on the topic of nuclear power plant digital agenda.” Shadow-matic is an imaginative 3d puzzle game. Children in the Russian Federation, China, India, Japan and many other countries have already played it. It has been translated into 13 languages.

The Kyrgyz Republic also took a participation in the Competition with the project “Platform 8” and won in the nomination “EEC Sympathy.” The author of the project is Dastan Dogoev, Formal Advisor to the President of the Kyrgyz Republic on digital transformation, Chairman of the State Committee of Information Technologies and Communications of the Kyrgyz Republic. It is a single digital platform for the exchange of skills in the business environment, migration and social services. “Platform 8” aims to solve the lag problem, wherein the level of professional qualifications of civil servants, businesspeople and other citizens of the EEU States lag behind current digital trends. The project provides an opportunity to communicate with experts on business issues, and assists users in obtaining information about migration conditions of stay and social services in the EEU countries.

At the same time, it is possible to carry out work in the field of information and communication technologies not only within the framework of the CCTS, but also jointly with the EEU. This step will be one of the most promising directions of the interaction of the cooperation Council of the Turkic-speaking States and the Eurasian Economic Union, which will further allow the EEU and CCTS to reach a completely new quality level.

The idea of joint cooperation was announced in 2019 by Kazakhstan’s Minister of Information and Communications, Dauren Abayev. He urged his colleagues from the Council of the Commonwealth of Turkic-speaking States (CCTS) to join the promising technology alliance. “Tomorrow technoparks of the member States of the Eurasian economic Union will sign a Declaration on integration. In this regard, I also call on our partners from the Commonwealth of Turkic-speaking States to join this promising technological alliance,” Abayev said during his speech at the third meeting of Ministers of Information and Communication Technologies of the CCTS on Thursday, January 31, in Almaty.¹¹

The leaders of the CCTS also paid special attention to the role and importance of

small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The theme of the 7th Summit, which is scheduled to be held in October 2019 in Azerbaijan, will be “Development of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises.” The presence of a broad layer of SMEs is the basis for the sustainable development of the state and prevents the emergence of mass unemployment in the country, which is one of the most acute social problems in many regions of the world. Employment of citizens in SMEs, their stability and the stability of their incomes are also the basis for human development, ensuring an appropriate quality and standard of living. Well-being and a decent standard of living form the basis of social and economic reforms, and are the guarantors of political stability and the democratic development of society. Cooperation in this area is aligned with the objectives of the national development strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2018-2040, where it is noted:

the quality and standard of living, human rights and obligations are at the center of a state policy. The strategy is aimed primarily at creating an environment for human development, unlocking the potential of everyone who lives in our country, ensuring its well-being... Human development is the basis of state policy in the social sphere, economy, social protection and pension insurance, health care, education and science, [and] youth policy.¹²

Of course, the development of large investment projects is necessary. However, usually large enterprises tend to focus on large capital investments; they have very little need for labor and thus do not solve employment problems. Therefore, along with the development of the legal system, various forms of state support aim at creating conditions for the development of SMEs as a whole. It is proposed, within the framework of the large investment projects of the CCTS, to consider measures to create separate, pilot large enterprises that will be inextricably connected with SMEs, forming a single whole. In this case, SMEs in the sphere of industry should connect with the help of different subcontracts with large companies and become participants in technological chains. For this purpose it is necessary to provide certain state support. For example, in Japan, financial support is provided through tax incentives that allow SMEs to reserve a portion of their profits. The tax rates for SME businesses and cooperatives are 27-28%, compared to 37.5% for large firms.¹³ This approach will not only have an economic effect, but will strengthen the social role and authority of the integration Association of the CCTS.

Security revitalization is another area of cooperation where emphasis should be placed. The last decade has been characterized by increasing problems of international security – terrorism, religious extremism, uncontrolled migration, illegal trafficking of narcotic drugs, etc. In this regard, within the framework of the CCTS, one of the most important and most needed areas for further cooperation is active cooperation on these threats, the development of measures and programs to prevent the deterioration of the situation, and of course their practical implementation. Coordination of actions on these issues is one of the tasks of the CCTS, according to the Nakhichevan agreement. At the 6th summit of the CCTS, the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan noted that these factors certainly have a negative impact on the Turkic world, one which requires comprehensive measures.¹⁴

It is also necessary to add impetus to the joint activities of the official foreign policy research centers of the CCTS member States. In this direction, it seems promising to expand scientific and analytical cooperation through the creation of a special fund to finance research, including the above-mentioned promising areas of interaction within the CCTS – the development of information and communication technologies, small and medium-sized enterprises, security, etc.

In conclusion, it is important to note that integration is necessary not only to recreate national patterns of culture and economy, but also to reproduce a new generation of people who understand the importance of integration and are able to work with new challenges and threats. It is obvious that solving these problems will require non-standard thinking, and new solutions, approaches and actions.

Kyrgyzstan and the sovereign Turkic republics have concluded all the necessary legal agreements related to the development of cooperation, friendship, kinship and the foundations of strategic partnership. Thus, the basic conditions for further stable and effective cooperation are laid. Of course, there are problems in these relations that need to be addressed. But even more, there is a desire to cooperate, and to use the existing huge potential for the development, further harmonization, and optimization of relations with each other.

Endnotes

- 1 URL: <https://www.dunya.com/gundem/foreign-ministers-of-ccts-gather-in-bishkek-haberi-183135>
- 2 URL: <http://www.rosbalt.ru/world/2012/08/23/1025873.html>
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- 4 URL:http://www.president.kg/ru/sobytiya/12403_prezident_sooronbay_gheenbekov_prizval_kdalneyshemu_rasshireniyu_investicionnogo_sotrudnichestva_meghdu_gosudarstvami_chlenami_tyurkskogo_soveta
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- 7 URL:https://mir24.tv/index.php/press_release/16332261/podvedeny-itogi-konkursa-evraziiskie-cifrovye-platformy
- 8 This single operational platform will allow the The Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) to become a common logistics zone and significantly increase the level and speed of service delivery, project developers say. The platform will provide cost optimization of the transport and logistics complex by an average of 55% due to the intelligent construction of optimal routes, the digitalization of document management, including waybill generation, and real-time delivery tracking. The project will be monetized through a subscription to the service. In the EAEU, the project will help solve the problem of congestion at border crossings, speed up customs clearance and border crossing, increase transparency and reduce the time of goods turnover.
- 9 It is intended to solve the problem of low indicators of mutual trade among the EAEU countries, weak involvement of the financial sector in the process of mutual trade, the disunity of exporters, importers, and financial organizations, as well as the weak development of industrial, trade and cooperation chains in the EAEU. The platform provides traceability for the complete cycle and all stages of a digital transaction between a supplier and a buyer (exporter, importer, financial institution). It supports domestic and cross-border factoring, accelerates operations, reduces risks and allows you to quickly replenish working capital.
- 10 Exact models of real objects or business systems that function as their prototypes and work on the basis of operational data. Developers and manufacturers of high-tech products (cars, aircraft, ships, trains, etc.) today face high costs, inaccessibility of software, the difficulty of integrating standards and the need to ensure the work of a large number of cooperation participants in a single environment across a whole range of technologies. CML-Bench improves the efficiency of product quality management and the entire cooperation chain. The CML-Bench platform will contribute to the digitalization of the real EAEU sector and can be included in the EAEU Integrated Information System.
- 11 URL:https://lenta.inform.kz/ru/dauren-abaev-prizval-kolleg-iz-stran-tyurkskogo-soveta-vstupit-v-tehnologicheskoy-al-yans_a3493542
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THE TURKIC COUNCIL ON THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NAKHCHIVAN AGREEMENT: A VIEW FROM TURKEY



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Introduction

The Nakhchivan Agreement, which was signed among Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey in Azerbaijan's city of Nakhchivan 10 years ago on October 3, 2009, is a key legal document establishing the Cooperation Council of the Turkic-Speaking Countries, commonly known as the Turkic Council.¹ At its tenth anniversary, the Turkic Council has already demonstrated that it is a very capable international organization that could enable its members to achieve their collective objectives effectively. The tenth anniversary of the Nakhchivan Agreement and the establishment of the Turkic Council seems to be a very convenient time in order to review the past, present and the future of the Turkic Council as a very promising and young international organization of the Turkic-speaking countries.

This paper seeks to explore the formation, structure, and performance of the Turkic Council as an intergovernmental organization of Turkic-speaking countries ten

years after the signing of the Nakhchivan Agreement in 2009. Although the paper focuses mainly on the period after the signing of the Nakhchivan Agreement, it will also briefly cover the historical background of the Turkic Council since the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991. The paper will also evaluate Turkey's contributions to the activities of the Turkic Council, as well as the Council's future prospects.²

Following this introduction, the paper will explore the historical origins of the cooperation among the Turkic states before the signing of the Nakhchivan Agreement in 2009. Afterwards, the paper will analyze the key aspects of the Nakhchivan Agreement and the organizational structure of the Turkic Council. Next, the paper will explore the performance and major achievements of the Turkic Council at its 10th anniversary. Furthermore, the paper will reflect on Turkey's contributions to the activities of the Turkic Council. The penultimate section of the paper discusses the prospects for the future of the Turkic Council. The paper will be concluded by highlighting key points about the Nakhchivan Agreement as well as the Turkic Council.

Origins of Cooperation Among the Turkic States

The Turkic-speaking states and peoples have long shared common historical, cultural and civilizational orientations. Therefore, the development of diplomatic, socio-economic, and cultural relations among the Turkic-speaking states was an expected development when five Turkic-speaking states declared independence from the Soviet Union in late 1991. In this context, Turkey's lead in recognizing the independence of the Turkic-speaking states played an important role in the decisions of other members of the United Nations to welcome the Turkic-speaking countries into the international community.³

Diplomatic, economic and cultural cooperation started quickly as the leaders of the Turkic-speaking states met in Ankara in October 1992. The Presidents of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan joined their host, then Turkish President Turgut Özal, and agreed that the economic and transportation infrastructures of these countries should be integrated so that the economies of the Turkic-speaking states could play a greater role in the global economy. Their understanding became known as the Ankara Declaration. Shortly after this announcement, when they met in Kazakhstan in 1993, the Turkic-speaking states expressed their common political will to form TURKSOY as an international organization in order to promote Turkic culture, science and education.⁴

In the absence of formal international organizations for promoting the cooperation among the Turkic states, the leaders of the Turkic states met each other at various summits of the Turkic-speaking states between 1994 and 2006. These summits include the 1994 Istanbul summit, the 1995 Bishkek summit, the 1996 Tashkent summit, the 1998 Astana summit, the 2000 Baku summit, the 2001 Istanbul summit, and the 2006 Antalya summit. Although these summits were attended by the majority of the Turkic leaders, in the absence of a formal international organization like the Turkic Council, these meetings did not result in concrete decisions about enhancing cooperation among the Turkic states.⁵

Hopes for greater and deeper cooperation increased in November 2008 when the Turkic states signed the Istanbul Agreement for founding the Parliamentary Assembly of the Turkic-speaking Countries (TURKPA) to be based in Baku. The formation of TURKPA in 2008 as well as the prior establishment of TURKSOY as formal international organizations, convinced the leaders of the Turkic states that they could make progress in deepening their cooperation if they established an umbrella international organization with a standing bureaucratic structure for both exploring new opportunities for cooperation among the Turkic-speaking countries and harmonizing the activities of the already-established Turkic international organizations, such as TURKSOY and TURKPA, so that they could generate more effective synergy.⁶

These historical experiences and the lessons learned shaped the historical context in which the leaders of the Turkic-speaking states seemed to have converged in recognizing the need to form a coordinating international organization like the Turkic Council, just before their meeting in the Nakhchivan city of Azerbaijan in 2009.

Key Aspects of the Nakhchivan Agreement

The Nakhchivan summit of Turkic-speaking states was attended by the Presidents of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey, as well as the Vice President of Turkmenistan. At the end of the summit, all participating Turkic states except Turkmenistan signed the Nakhchivan Agreement on the establishment of the Cooperation Council of Turkic-speaking States – the Turkic Council – on October 3, 2009.⁷ The Nakhchivan Agreement came into force among its signatories on November 17, 2010, following the completion of its ratification process in the signatory states. Unfortunately, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan were not among the

signatories of the Nakhchivan Agreement of 2009. Turkmenistan cited its neutral state status for its preference of not signing the Nakhchivan Agreement.⁸ Uzbekistan's Instrument of Accession to the Agreement reached Turkey, the depositary country of the Nakhchivan Agreement, on September 14, 2019. Uzbekistan will assume full member status on October 14, 2019.

The key aspects of the Nakhchivan Agreement are clearly visible in the signed text of the agreement. The Agreement has 23 articles, in addition to the introductory part in which the signatory states express their principles in creating the Turkic Council. Accordingly, the Nakhchivan Agreement reaffirms the commitments of the signatory states to the Charter of the United Nations and the established principles of international law, peace, security and stability. The introduction also states that based on their historical ties as well as common language, culture and traditions, the Turkic states seek to create the Turkic Council in order to deepen their comprehensive cooperation and contribute to peace, security and stability.⁹

The main purpose and tasks of the Turkic Council are listed in article 2 of the Nakhchivan Agreement. The objectives of the Turkic Council include strengthening mutual confidence, friendship and good neighborliness among the signatory states, maintaining peace and security regionally and globally, developing common foreign policy positions, coordinating their actions against international terrorism, separatism, extremism and illegal trafficking, cooperating in all areas of common interest at the regional and bilateral levels, as well as promoting economic, cultural, social, technological and legal cooperation.¹⁰

Article 3 of the Nakhchivan Agreement identifies the organizational structure of the Turkic Council as composed of the following bodies: the Council of the Heads of State, the Council of Foreign Ministers, the Senior Officials Committee, the Council of Elders of the Turkic-speaking States (Aksakals), and the Secretariat.¹¹

The Council of the Heads of State, with its annually rotating chairmanship, is the highest decision-making organ of the Turkic Council. According to Article 5 of the Nakhchivan Agreement, the Council of the Heads of State meets once a year. The Council of Heads of State reviews the performance of the Turkic Council in the previous year and sets new objectives for the upcoming year when it meets at the Turkic Council summits.¹²

The Council of Foreign Ministers discusses international developments and approves the Secretariat's reports on the financial and personnel matters of the Turkic Council Secretariat. The Council of Elders, as a consultative body composed

of eminent statespersons and intellectuals from member countries, submits policy recommendations to the Turkic Council about challenging issues. The Senior Officials Committee coordinates the activities of the Secretariat.¹³ The Council of Foreign Ministers, Council of Elders, and the Senior Officials Committee also meet on a regular basis to discuss matters under their competence according to Articles 6, 7, and 9 of the Nakhchivan Agreement respectively. According to Article 10 of the Nakhchivan Agreement, the Secretariat, which is based in Istanbul, coordinates and monitors all activities of the Turkic Council organs.¹⁴

According to Article 3 of the Nakhchivan Agreement, the Turkic Council serves as an umbrella organization for all other cooperation mechanisms among the Turkic states. The Nakhchivan Agreement lists only the International Organization of Turkic Culture (TURKSOY) based in Ankara, and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Turkic-speaking Countries (TURKPA) based in Baku; following its signing, the Turkic Council member states created new affiliated organizations: the Turkic Business Council based in Istanbul, the International Turkic Academy based in Astana, and the Turkic Cultural Heritage Fund based in Baku.¹⁵

The other clauses of the Nakhchivan Agreement address financing, immunities, representation in other international organizations, granting of observer state status, language (the state languages of member states and English), as well as rules about dispute settlement, amendments, validity, and the designation of a depositary state (Turkey). With these articles, the Nakhchivan Agreement seems to be very-well written and compatible with the inclusion of new member states.¹⁶

Performance and Major Achievements of the Turkic Council

Ten years have passed since the establishment of the Turkic Council after the signing of the Nakhchivan Agreement in 2009. Since ten years is a very short period in the history of any organization, the Turkic Council can be considered a very young international organization. The following section highlights the major achievement of this young but very energetic and promising international organization.

One of the major achievements of the Turkic Council is its success in the completion and implementation of its institutionalization. In addition to the establishment of its Secretariat in Istanbul, all of the organizational structures of the Turkic Council have been established and meet on a regular basis.¹⁷

An equally important achievement of the Turkic Council is the increase in its membership profile. In addition to the founding members of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan,

Kyrgyzstan, and Turkey, Uzbekistan has just recently become a full member of the Turkic Council. The membership of Uzbekistan, which has the largest population among the Turkic states in Central Asia, will definitely increase the attractiveness and effectiveness of the Turkic Council. The inclusion of Uzbekistan is likely to convince Turkmenistan about the desirability of full membership in the Turkic Council in the near future.¹⁸ Another important achievement of the Turkic Council regarding its membership profile includes the granting of observer state status to Hungary in late 2018. Since Hungary belongs to the Uralic-Altaic linguistic family, its observer status could enable the Turkic Council to have relations with the other Uralic-speaking states such as Finland and Estonia. The fact that Hungary, Finland and Estonia are European Union members, the Turkic Council's granting of observer status to the Uralic-speaking states could enable it to project greater influence internationally.¹⁹

The Turkic Council Summits, which have replaced the Summits of the Heads of Turkic-speaking States since 2010, could also be considered largely successful achievements of the Turkic Council. In fact, unlike the former Summits of the Heads of Turkic-speaking States, the Turkic Council Summits have been much more focused and effective in responding to the common needs of the Turkic-speaking states, since the Turkic Council Summits have been held on specific, thematically-defined agenda topics unlike the all-inclusive, general and vague agendas of the Summits of the Heads of Turkic-speaking States. The effectiveness of these meetings have increased since the themes of the next Turkic Council Summit are agreed upon one year before the summit, which allows enough time for preparation and deliberation.²⁰

The first Turkic Council Summit was held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, between October 20-21, 2011. The main theme of this summit was the promotion of economic cooperation among the Turkic states. During this summit, the member states agreed to create the Turkic Business Council as a Turkic Council-affiliated organization bringing together the chambers of commerce and industry in all member states. Likewise, the second summit was held in Kyrgyzstan's capital Bishkek on August 23, 2012 on the theme of promoting educational, scientific and cultural cooperation among the member states. During this summit, the Heads of State agreed to create an International Turkic Academy to be based in Astana, and a Turkic Cultural Heritage Fund to be based in Baku. The third Turkic Council Summit in Azerbaijan's city of Qabala on August 16, 2013 focused on cooperation in transport and connectivity, while the fourth summit in the Turkish city of Bodrum on June 5, 2014 concentrated on cooperation in tourism. The fifth summit, which was held on September 11,

2015, focused on cooperation in mass media as well as information technologies. The sixth summit was held on September 2, 2018 in Kyrgyzstan's city of Cholpon Ata, with a focus on cooperation in youth and sports.²¹

The Turkic Council promotes political cooperation among its members through Senior Officials Committee meetings, Regular Security Consultations, Junior Diplomats Joint Training Programs, meetings of Official Foreign Policy Research Centers, and Election Observer Missions. It also coordinates the activities of Turkic-speaking Diasporas.²²

In addition, the Turkic Council has supported and contributed to the successful completion of several concrete projects in the fields of economy, culture, education, transport, customs, and diaspora. In addition to establishing the Turkic University Association and overseeing the writing of a common history textbook, the Turkic Council has supported various economic development projects, and the coordination of policies in the areas of trade, customs, transportation and education.²³

The international engagements of the Turkic Council are also noteworthy. The Turkic Council has been an observer at the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) since 2012, and has applied for observer state status at the United Nations (UN) and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). In addition, the Turkic Council cooperates with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia (CICA).²⁴

Reflecting its desire to contribute to regional peace, security and stability, the Turkic Council has contributed to security consultations among the Turkic Council member states about key regional security challenges, including Afghanistan, since April 2013. In accordance with its vision for regional peace and stability, and reflecting the common views of the Turkic Council member states on Afghanistan, the Turkic Council attended the Ministerial Conference of the Istanbul Process of the "Heart of Asia" in Almaty in April 2013.²⁵

Turkey's Contributions

Turkey has always supported the idea of realizing closer cooperation among the Turkic-speaking countries. In fact, Turkey was the first state to consider the independence declarations of the post-Soviet Turkic states as a positive move that could contribute to regional peace and stability, as well as development in Eurasia. Turkey has provided strong diplomatic support and generous technical and economic

assistance to the post-Soviet Turkic-speaking states since their reentry into the international system as independent nations in late 1991.²⁶

Turkey has also played a very important role in both the establishment and development of the Turkic Council as an international organization. The fact that the Secretariat is based in Istanbul demonstrates the importance attached by Turkey to the Turkic Council. Likewise, a well-known Turkish Diplomat, H. E. Ambassador (R) Halil Akıncı, served as the founding Secretary General of the Turkic Council for almost five years between October 3, 2009 and September 16, 2014. Since 2015, Dr. Ömer Kocaman has served as the Deputy Secretary General of the Turkic Council.²⁷ The top-level roles of both Turkish bureaucrats and their cordial cooperation with H. E. Ambassador Baghdad Amreyev, the current Secretary General of the Turkic Council, as well as the Turkic Council bureaucrats from the other Turkic Council member states, seem to have contributed very positively to the largely successful performance of the Turkic Council.²⁸

Similarly, Turkey hosts two other Turkic Council-affiliated organizations: the International Organization of Turkic Culture (TURKSOY) based in Ankara, and the Turkic Business Council, based in Istanbul. TURKSOY has been contributing to cooperation among the Turkic-speaking states in the areas of education, science, and culture since 1993. Likewise, the Turkic Business Council plays an active role in deepening cooperation among the chambers of commerce and industry in the member states of the Turkic Council.²⁹

In addition to its active contributions to multilateral cooperation among the Turkic-speaking states through the activities of the Turkic Council and its affiliated bodies, Turkey also prioritizes its cooperation with the individual member states of the Turkic Council in the areas of diplomacy, security, energy, socio-economic development, and culture. As the first country to establish diplomatic relations with all of the post-Soviet Turkic-speaking states, Turkey considers support for their independence to be one of the key facets of its foreign policy. To this purpose, Turkey has been acting in solidarity with the Turkic-speaking states in global and regional international organizations such as the United Nations (UN) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).³⁰

This support and solidarity also constitutes a cornerstone of the Turkic Council, and is stated in a publication authored by Ali Çiviler, a bureaucrat at the Turkic Council, and edited by H.E. Ambassador (R) Akıncı, who served as the founding Secretary General of the Turkic Council:

[the] Turkic Council is structured in such a way that [the] hard-won sovereignty of its constituent nations is maintained in full without yielding an inch. However, there is the underlying conviction that this could best be accomplished as part of a community of likeminded nations that share a common history, language and culture. This is the essence of the approach that guides the Turkic Council activities.³¹

In the security dimension, Turkey's overall strategy of contributing to the security of the Turkic-speaking states is closely related to its security strategy towards Afghanistan. Turkey has intensified its cooperation with the Turkic-speaking states in Central Asia by supporting their capacity to deal with security challenges such as international terrorism, organized crime, and human trafficking.³²

In the field of energy, Turkey's energy cooperation with the Turkic-speaking countries is also very important potentially. Turkey's contribution to the energy security of the Turkic-speaking states around the Caspian Sea region is so far mainly limited to its cooperation with Azerbaijan. Turkey has supported the oil and natural gas export pipeline projects linking Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan to the already operational Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) oil pipeline and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum (BTE) natural gas pipeline. These pipelines could enable the Turkic-speaking states in Central Asia to export their oil and natural gas to the European markets through Turkey. The recent realization of the Trans-Anatolian (TANAP) natural gas pipeline project could provide them access to the European energy markets via Turkey.³³

In the fields of socio-economic development and cultural cooperation, the Turkish International Cooperation Agency (TIKA) has provided assistance to the Turkic-speaking states in the fields of telecommunications and transportation infrastructure, the supply of clean water, training for bureaucrats in various sectors, and educational opportunities for students in Turkey's universities. In addition, Turkey's TIKA has established computer centers in various schools and training centers in all of the Central Asian countries.³⁴ Turkic Council deals with wide-range of issues concerning the Turkic World as TIKA does. The partnership between Turkic Council and TIKA will pave the way for improving the standards in several fields.

The opening of Yunus Emre cultural centers is an important development for Turkey's relations with Turkic-speaking countries, since these centers are expected to enhance cultural dialogue. Similarly, Ahmet Yesevi University and Manas

University, which are Turkey's joint initiatives with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan respectively, constitute the main platforms for deepening scientific and educational cooperation.³⁵

Prospects for the Future

Potentially speaking, the prospects for the future of the Turkic Council seem to be very positive. The promising performance of the Turkic Council in the first decade since its establishment in 2009 demonstrates that the Turkic Council has all the necessary organizational tools and – more importantly – the political will of its member states for promoting and deepening the level of cooperation among the Turkic-speaking countries. The promising potential of the Turkic Council could be realized adequately if the solidarity among the member states of the Turkic Council, as well as their commitment to the Council's key objectives, are strengthened further through the initiatives of both the member states and the Turkic Council itself. In this regard, establishment of the Turkic Chamber of Commerce and Industry (TCCI) by member states of Turkic Council in Nur-Sultan, on May 17, 2019, assumed a crucial role for the future perspectives of the organization. Istanbul based TCCI, which was founded by the initiative of the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey (TOBB), is a new and robust mechanism to enhance trade and investment cooperation among the member states. The First and Second General Assembly Meetings of the TCCI were held on July 31, 2019 in Istanbul. The Third General Assembly Meeting was held on the margins of the VII. Summit of the Turkic Council in Baku. Undoubtedly, this new initiative has opened a door to foster the joint business projects among its member states.

More importantly, it will be crucial for the Turkic Council to update and adjust its strategic vision and organizational tools continuously in order to cope with the challenges emanating from the dynamic and quickly-changing global and regional strategic environment in which both the Turkic Council and its member states seek to achieve their strategic objectives. This point is confirmed by a former expert of the Turkic Council, Alim Bayaliyev:

Whether this alliance will evolve into a comprehensive union possessing significant geopolitical clout depends on a number of factors, most importantly on the strategic vision and political will of the national elites. The fact that the geostrategic context of Eurasia as well as the global tectonic shifts, including the rise of regionalization,

call for strengthened bonds, cooperation, and coordination does not ensure that the right strategy and policies will be implemented. Turkic integration will have to be buttressed by sound intellectual groundwork, effective structures, and appropriately educated and motivated domestic and international bureaucracies.³⁶

The potential capacity of the Turkic Council could be enhanced further if the Turkic Council and its member states could take advantage of the opportunities and cope with the risks created by the changing global geostrategic dynamics. In fact, the members of the Turkic Council could enhance their future prospects by utilizing their huge geostrategic role as a bridge between Asia and Europe. This point is also noted in a publication authored by Ali Çiviler, a bureaucrat at the Turkic Council, and edited by H.E. Ambassador (R) Akıncı:

Our Member States occupy a geo-strategically important location in the world. The Turkic States, located on an approximately 5 million square km landmass in Eurasia, with 140 million population, generate some 1.5 trillion dollars GDP. Eurasia is home to 75% of the world population, 60% of overall global GDP and 75% of the total energy supply in the world. Hence, the relative importance of Eurasia in economic and trade relations, as a bridge between Europe and China, is by all measures on the rise.³⁷

The Turkic Council and its members could increase their future role in regional and global politics by developing innovative economic and socio-cultural projects, which could bring Asia and Europe closer and foster the integrative dynamics of globalization processes both in Asia and Europe. The geo-economic significance the Turkic Council and its member states is quite evident as the Turkic-speaking countries are located at the center of the Silk Road initiatives. Dr. Ömer Kocaman, Deputy Secretary General of the Turkic Council, notes that the Silk Road “connects China with Europe, with a daily trade volume of 1 billion dollars, expected to reach \$3-4 billion in the near future. By promoting the Central Corridor of the Silk Road passing through our countries, the organization is aiming at connecting infrastructures and developing new routes to bring the East and West together.”³⁸

To sum up, the future prospects of the Turkic Council and its member states are very positive. The key to realizing this huge potential lies in the capacity of the Turkic Council and its member states to further their internal solidarity, deepen their level of cooperation, and engage with the rest of the world very constructively by developing innovative projects both at the regional and global levels.

Conclusions

To conclude, the Nakhchivan Agreement, signed on October 3, 2009, is a key milestone in the development of cooperation among the Turkic-speaking states since it established the Turkic Council as a full-fledged international organization on a solid legal basis.

The analysis in this paper has demonstrated that the Turkic Council has already completed its institutionalization process, strengthened its membership profile, and emerged as a promising regional organization. The first decade of the Turkic Council is full of success stories.

Turkey, as a founding member of the Turkic Council and host to three of its key bodies (the Secretariat, TURKSOY and the Turkic Business Council), has always been supportive of the Turkic Council and all initiatives for deepening cooperation among the Turkic-speaking states. Turkey's unwavering support to the Turkic Council and its solidarity with the members of the Turkic Council will grow even stronger in the future as the Turkic Council moves toward achieving its strategic objectives.

All in all, the Turkic Council has every reason to celebrate the tenth anniversary of its establishment by the signing of the Nakhchivan Agreement in 2009. The Turkic Council is a very young and energetic international cooperation organization, which promises to continue to contribute to the security, economic welfare and cultural development not only of its members but also its international partners regionally and globally in future decades.

Endnotes

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NAKHCHIVAN AGREEMENT

**ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF
THE COOPERATION COUNCIL OF TURKIC SPEAKING STATES**

Turkic Speaking States, hereinafter referred to as “the Parties”;

based on historical ties, common language, culture and traditions of their peoples;

aiming at further deepening the comprehensive cooperation;

desiring to jointly contribute to strengthening peace, ensuring security and stability, in the region and in the world as a whole, in terms of development of processes of political multipolarity, economic and informational globalization;

considering that the interaction within the common structure facilitates the disclosure of huge potential for good-neighborhood, unity and cooperation among states and their peoples;

proceeding from the spirit of mutual confidence, mutual benefit, equality, mutual consultations and aspiration towards common development established at the Summits of the Heads of Turkic Speaking States;

reaffirming their adherence to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and other universally recognized principles and norms of international law, including sovereign equality, territorial integrity and inviolability of internationally recognized borders of states, as well as those related to the maintenance of international peace, security and development of good-neighbourly and friendly relations and the cooperation among states;

have agreed as follows:

Article 1

Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States

The Parties hereby establish a cooperation mechanism in the form of an international establishment – “Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States” (hereinafter referred to as “CCTS”).

Article 2
Purposes and tasks

The main purposes and tasks of CCTS are:

strengthening mutual confidence, friendship and good neighbourhood among the Parties;

maintaining peace, strengthening security and confidence in the region and in the world as a whole;

search for common positions on foreign policy issues of mutual interest, including those in the framework of international organizations and at international fora;

coordination of actions to combat international terrorism and separatism, extremism, trafficking in human beings, drug trafficking, as well as the assistance to international policy on control over illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances;

promotion of effective regional and bilateral cooperation in political, trade and economic, law enforcement, environmental, cultural, scientific-technical, military-technical, educational, energy, transportation, credit, and finance areas and other areas of common interest;

creation of favourable conditions for trade and investment, further simplification of customs and transit procedures aiming at facilitation of movement of goods, capital, services and technologies, and simplification of financial and banking operations;

aiming for the comprehensive and balanced economic growth, social and cultural development in the region through joint actions on the basis of equal partnership in order to steadily increase and improve the living conditions of the peoples of the Parties;

discussing the questions of ensuring rule of law and good governance and guarantying human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with generally recognized principles and norms of international law,

expansion of interaction in the field of science and technology, education, health, culture, sports and tourism;

encouragement of interaction of the mass media and communication of the Parties in promoting, popularizing and disseminating the great cultural and historical heritage of the Turkic peoples;

discussing questions of exchange of legal information for the development of interaction and mutual legal assistance, and cooperation in various spheres of law.

Article 3

Structure

In order to fulfil the purposes and tasks of the present Agreement the following is established:

The Council of Heads of States;
The Council of Foreign Ministers;
The Senior Officials Committee;
The Council of Elders of Turkic Speaking States;
The Secretariat.

Article 4

Other forms of cooperation

To deepen the cooperation amongst the parliaments of the Turkic speaking countries the Parliamentary Assembly of the Turkic speaking countries is functioning pursuant to the Istanbul Agreement of 21 November 2008.

With a view of developing cooperation in the field of science, education, culture and art, dissemination and popularization of the common values of the Turkic world at international level, deepening cultural ties amongst the Turkic Speaking States, the Parties are cooperating in the framework of TURKSOY.

Article 5

The Council of Heads of States

The Council of Heads of States (CHS) is conducting its activity in the form of regular meetings of the Heads of Parties, in the framework of which, there shall be:

- considered the questions of interactions of Parties on the settlement of actual international problems;
- defined the priority directions of cooperation of Parties within the CCTS;
- held the review of activity of CCTS.

The meetings of CHS shall be held once a year. The venue of the next meeting of CHS is determined, as a rule, in accordance with the English alphabetical order of the official names of the Parties.

Extraordinary CHS meetings may be convened based on the consent of Parties. The venue of the extraordinary meeting of the CHS is determined by consent of the Parties.

Article 6

The Council of Foreign Ministers

The Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) within its competence shall:

- consider the issues of current activities of the CCTS,
- define more actual international issues for their discussion in the frame of CHS meetings;
- approve Staff Matrix and financial report of the Secretariat.

The CFM may, if necessary, make statements on behalf of the CCTS.

The meetings of CFM, as a rule, shall take place before the meetings of CHS at the venue of CHS meetings.

Extraordinary CFM meetings may be convened based on the consent of Parties. The venue of the extraordinary meeting of the CFM is determined by consent of the Parties.

Article 7

The Senior Officials Committee

The Senior Officials Committee (SOC) consists of, at least, one representative from each Party.

SOC, within its competence, shall:

- coordinate activity of the Secretariat;
- consider and endorse draft documents, worked up by the Secretariat before their adoption by the CFM and approval by the CHS.

The SOC meetings are convened, as a rule, prior to the meetings of the CFM.

Article 8

Chairmanship

Party hosting the regular meeting of the CHS shall be CCTS Chairman until the next regular meeting of the CHS.

Article 9
The Council of Elders

The Council of Elders of the Turkic Speaking States (Council of Elders) is a permanent advisory-consultative institution, functioning under the auspices of CCTS.

Detailed aspects of the activity of the Council of Elders, including financial matters, should be defined by a separate document titled Regulation of the Council of Elders, which shall be adopted (accepted) by CFM.

The Council of Elders in its activities is guided by the present Agreement and the afore-mentioned Regulation.

Article 10
Secretariat

To facilitate the implementation of the purposes and tasks of the CCTS, the Parties establish a Secretariat, which is a permanent executive body of the CCTS.

The Secretariat within its competence shall:

- take necessary administrative, organizational, protocol and technical measures for holding meetings of CHS, CFM and SOC, as well as other meetings under the auspices of CCTS;
- prepare draft documents;
- establish and ensure archiving of documents;
- act as clearing house of documents and information, submitted by the Parties and received from other international organizations and fora;
- disseminate common information on CCTS;
- implement other tasks and duties, defined by CHS, CFM and SOC;
- prepares draft Staff Matrix and submits it to the SOC for approval;
- submits to the SOC its financial activities report.

The Secretariat shall be lead by the Secretary-General, who shall be approved by the CHS upon the CFM proposal. The Secretary-General has deputies from each Party except from the Party of his/her nationality.

The Secretary-General is appointed from among the citizens of the Parties on a rotational basis in accordance with the English alphabetical order of the official names of the Parties for a period of three years without the right to prolongation of the term of office.

The Deputies of Secretary-General are appointed from among the citizens of the Parties by the CHS decision for a period of three years without the right of prolongation for the next term.

The officials of the Secretariat shall be appointed by the Parties in accordance with their national legislations from among their citizens.

In the performance of their duties the Secretary-General, his deputies and other officials of the Secretariat shall not seek or receive instructions from any Party, as well as third parties. They shall refrain from any actions which might influence their position as international officials responsible only to the CHS.

The Parties undertake to respect the international character of the duties of Secretary-General, his deputies and other officials of the Secretariat and not to influence them while performing their duties.

The location of the Secretariat is the city of Istanbul (Republic of Turkey).

The Parties endows the Secretariat with the right to conclude an international treaty with the Government of the Republic of Turkey on the conditions of Secretariat's location in the territory of the Republic of Turkey, draft of which should be initially approved by the CFM.

The Secretariat of the CCTS shall enjoy in the territory of each Party such legal capacity as necessary for the implementation of purposes and tasks of the CCTS.

The Secretariat shall enjoy international legal capacity to implement purposes and tasks of CCTS, in particular:

- conclude treaties with the consent of all Parties;
- acquire and dispose the property;
- act in the courts as plaintiff or defendant;
- open accounts and make transactions in cash assets.

Article 11

Financing

The Secretariat has its own budget, which is formed and executed in accordance with a separate international treaty concluded among the Parties.

The Parties themselves shall bear the expenses for the participation of their representatives and experts in the events within the frame of CCTS.

Article 12

Privileges and immunities

Members of delegations and officials of the Secretariat for the period of participation in the work of meetings of CHS, CMF, SOC and Council of Elders shall enjoy in the territory of Host Party privileges and immunities that

are accorded by international law to the personnel of accredited diplomatic missions.

Article 13
Permanent representatives

In accordance with their national legislations the Parties shall appoint their permanent representatives to the Secretariat.

Article 14
Other meetings

The Parties may agree to convene the meetings of heads of relevant ministries, agencies and organizations of the Parties to discuss the specific and/or technical issues.

Article 15
Relations with international organizations and fora

The CCTS can enter into interaction and dialogue, including on specific areas of cooperation, with international organizations and fora.

Article 16
Observers

The observer status with the CCTS may be granted to the states, international organizations and international fora.

The order and procedure for granting such status shall be established by the Rules of Procedure of the CCTS.

Article 17
Languages

The working languages of the CCTS are the state languages of the Parties and the English language.

Article 18
Rules of Procedure

Procedural issues shall be defined by the CCTS Rules of Procedure, which shall be adopted by the CFM and approved by the CHS.

Article 19
Relations with other treaties

The present Agreement shall not affect the rights and obligations of the Parties under other international treaties which they are parties to.

Article 20
Settlement of disagreements

In case of disagreements concerning the interpretation or application of this Agreement, the Parties shall settle them through consultations and negotiations.

Article 21
Amendments and additions

By mutual consent of the Parties amendments and additions may be made to the present Agreement in the form of separate protocols being an integral part of the present Agreement and entering into force in accordance with the procedure set forth in Article 22 of the present Agreement.

Article 22
Validity, entry into force and accession

This Agreement is concluded for an indefinite period of time.

This Agreement shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after the receipt of the third written notification by the depositary on the completion of domestic procedures required for its entry into force.

After its entry into force this Agreement is open to accession by Turkic Speaking States.

This Agreement shall enter into force for the acceding State on the thirtieth day after the receipt by the depositary of its instrument of accession.

Article 23

The depositary

The depositary of the present Agreement is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey.

Done in the city of Nakhchivan, on the 3rd day of October 2009 in a single original copy in the Azerbaijani, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Turkish and English languages. All texts are equally authentic.

The original copy of the present Agreement shall be kept by the depositary, which shall send to each signatory Party a certified copy.



For the Republic of Azerbaijan



For the Republic of Kazakhstan



For the Kyrgyz Republic



For the Republic of Turkey



TURKIC COUNCIL

10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NAKHCHIVAN AGREEMENT

BAKU-2019



TURKIC COUNCIL
10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NAKHCHIVAN AGREEMENT