



A NEW TURNING POINT IN THE INTEGRATION OF THE TURKIC WORLD: “TURKIC WORLD VISION-2040”

The 8th Summit of the Turkic Council, held in Istanbul on November 12th 2021, can be considered as a turning point in various aspects. First of all, the Turkic Council (Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking Countries), which was the result of a process started in 1992 was transformed into the Organization of Turkic States, in accordance with the decision taken at the summit, besides its symbolic meaning, it should be evaluated as a specific indicator of a strong desire to cooperate in the future. Another point that makes the Istanbul Summit even more important, is that it coincides with the 30th anniversary of the independence of the Turkic states in Central Asia, and the participation of the President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov for the first time with observer status. Turkmenistan's participation in the 8th Summit of the Organization of Turkic States, which has been distant from the beginning of its “permanently neutral country” status is like participation of Uzbekistan as a full member in the 7th Summit held in Baku in 2019 after a long time, is a development that needs to be addressed separately for the future of the Organization.

However, one of the most important results of the Summit that should be emphasized is undoubtedly the “Turkic World Vision-2040” adopted by the member states. The vision document, confirming the expansion and deepening of cooperation and solidarity among the Turkic people, consists of four main titles: “Political and Security Cooperation”, “Economic and Sectoral Cooperation”, “People-to-People Cooperation” and “Cooperation with External Parties”. The vision document, which is detailed with sub-headings, also mentions fields of cooperation and solidarity in many areas, most of which have started and continue in some way. However, it should be noted that there are some remarkable changes in the method and tone used in the document to implement collaboration in these areas. For instance, with the expression “Ensuring effective cooperation and coordination with Turkic cooperation organizations such as TURKSOY, the Turkic

Academy, the Turkish Culture and Heritage Foundation and TURKPA, in order to develop cooperation in the cultural, academic and parliamentary fields” in the document, it can be said that the Organization of Turkic States, will assume a “coordinating” role in the policies and activities of these institutions listed from now on. Another striking goal in the vision document is to initiate research to establish the necessary infrastructure for the free movement of goods, capital, services and people among the member states.

One of the issues included in the document entitled “Economic and Sectoral Cooperation” is the revival of the Middle Corridor with the intersection of Caspian Sea, which has long been on the agenda of such countries on the route as Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkey. The inclusion of the Middle Corridor, the shortest and safest corridor on the East-West route, into regional and global production and supply chains will positively affect regional development, as well as increase economic, commercial and human mobility between Turkic states. However, for this, it is obvious that the existing infrastructure deficiencies, harmonization and implementation differences in transportation and customs legislation should be eliminated. In this context, the fact that the document clearly includes the introduction of the Zangezur Corridor, which will provide a direct link between Turkey and Central Asia, on international platforms, is a concrete indicator of the desire to cooperate in this area. Taking into account the previous policies and areas of study under this title, in order to bring the cooperation between member states into an institutional dimension, it can be seen that the framework of cooperation in areas such as the establishment of the Integrated Turkic Energy Market, the development of green and innovative policies for economic growth, the mutual exchange between members to exchange experiences in public-private partnerships have also been clearly defined.

On the other hand, by highlighting the common values of the Turkic people in the Vision 2040 document, identifying principles for increasing the mobility of

professionals in fields such as information, media and production, as well as students and academics in education, that will improve communication and interaction between people and societies, can also be considered as a roadmap for relevant institutions, organizations and non-governmental organizations in the future. Considering that the production of documentaries, films, series and animated films for children that reflect our historical and cultural common values is insufficient, it is possible to say that the relevant public and private sector organizations have important duties.

It can be expected that in the near future the Organization will publish a strategic document for the implementation of the goals of the “Turkic World Vision - 2040”, which are summarized briefly with certain aspects within the framework of the “road map” to be determined. As mentioned in the vision document, it is important to clearly define the objectives and goals in the strategic roadmap to be prepared, and to redefine the duties and responsibilities of TURKSOY, the Turkic Academy, the Turkish Culture and Heritage Foundation, TURKPA and the new institutions to be established in terms of coordination, effectiveness and efficiency. Based on the fact that the vision document has set a wider universe such as “Turkic World” or “Turkic people” as a target instead of Turkic states, it can be predicted that the development of cooperation between Turkic people and societies in geographies stretching from Asia to the Caucasus, the Mediterranean, the Middle East, the Balkans and Europe will also be considered within the scope of this vision.

As a result, the process of cooperation and integration between the Turkic states and Turkic people has gained a new impetus with the establishment of the Organization of Turkic States and we can predict that it will assume a more active role in regional and global policies, and for this, existing institutions, organizations and structures will be restructured to increase coordination.

Politics, Foreign Affairs, and Security

- The President of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan held a phone conversation with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin. The leaders discussed the development of bilateral ties and touched upon recent regional issues in Azerbaijan and Armenia, Syria, Libya and Ukraine. President Erdogan voiced support for Ukraine's territorial integrity and admitted that Turkey could mediate between Ukraine and Russia amid increasing tensions in the region (Dailysabah.com, 03.12.2021).
- According to the Central Electoral Committee of Kyrgyzstan, only six parties managed to overcome the 5% threshold to the parliament. The pro-government Ata-Zhurt Kyrgyzstan party won 17.21% of the votes, Ishenim - 13.55%, Yntymak - 10.90%, Alliance - 8.26%, Butun Kyrgyzstan - 7.01%, Yiman Nuru - 6.10%. About 1.2 million voters have voted in the elections, which means that the turnout was 34.39% (Rus.azattyk.org, 04.12.2021).
- The Prime Ministers of Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine Irakli Garibashvili, Natalia Gavrilitsa and Denis Shmygal had a meeting in Brussels. During the conversation, the parties discussed cooperation with European structures on the eve of the Eastern Partnership summit. The Prime Ministers discussed the possibilities of developing partnerships between the countries, opportunities for political dialogue, and sectoral cooperation. The heads of government also agreed to coordinate the dialogue with the European Union (SNG. Today, 01.12.2021).
- Dushanbe hosted the 14th Central Asia – the Republic of Korea Cooperation Forum (Central Asia-ROK). The event brought together the foreign minister of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Korea, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan and was joined by some 100 experts from Korea and the five Central Asian countries. The participants discussed the issues of developing cooperation in forestry, carbon neutrality, health, digitalization, and other areas between the Republic of Korea and Central Asian states (ASIA-Plus, 01.12.2021).
- President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev had a meeting with the Director-General of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala in Geneva. They discussed prospects of cooperation between Kazakhstan and the WTO, including in the context of Kazakhstan's Chairmanship at the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference. The parties debated the release of the first Trade Policy Review of Kazakhstan by the WTO scheduled for November 2022. President Tokayev emphasized the key role of the WTO in restoring the global economy amid the pandemic (Kazinform, 30.11.2021).
- Within the Economic Cooperation Organization summit in Turkmenistan's capital Ashgabat, the President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev had a meeting with his Tajik counterpart Emomali Rahmon. The Presidents discussed issues of further strengthening the Uzbek-Tajik relations of the strategic partnership with an emphasis on building up full-scale trade and economic cooperation. Moreover, the parties considered issues of the implementation of joint projects in the fields of energy, agriculture, transport, tourism, and covered topics on cultural and humanitarian exchange (UzReport, 29.11.2021).

Economy, Finance, and Energy

- Representatives of the Eurasian Development Bank forecasted macroeconomic indicators of Kazakhstan. According to their estimates, Kazakhstan's GDP will grow by 3.8% in 2021 and 4.2% next year. The acceleration of economic activity will be facilitated by the implementation of 10 national projects launched this year. Inflation will slow down in 2022 and approach the upper threshold of the target of 4-6%. Removing global transport and logistics barriers and an increase in the base rate will affect the rate of inflation (Qazaq TV, 03.12.2021).
- Mutual trade between members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) demonstrates positive dynamics. Despite the pandemic, trade among the organization's member states increased by 40% in the first seven months of 2021. The SCO countries plan to establish an SCO food security reserve and an investment fund in the food sector. During the reported period, Kazakhstan's trade with the SCO countries grew by 19% and amounted to \$36.5 billion, while cargo transportation through Kazakhstan increased by 25% (Qazaq TV, 02.12.2021).
- The Asian Development Bank approved a \$50.65 million package to procure 120 battery-electric buses and enhance transport infrastructure in the capital of Kyrgyzstan, Bishkek. This assistance will result in better air quality and lower carbon emissions. The financial package consists of a \$25 million loan from the Urban Transport Electrification Project, a \$25 million grant, and \$650 thousand in co-financing from the High-Level Technology Fund (Kabar, 01.12.2021).
- The authorities of Turkmenistan and Russia's Astrakhan region had an online meeting on entrepreneurship and discussed the opening of the logistics center of Turkmenistan on the territory of a special economic zone in the port of Olya. According to the presented data, trade between the Astrakhan region and Turkmenistan during the nine months of 2021 amounted to \$198.5 million. Astrakhan region plans to export agricultural and industrial products and import textile and polypropylene (Orient, 02.12.2021).
- Russian Gazprombank plans to finance oil and gas projects in Uzbekistan implemented by Uzbekneftegaz. In particular, it will allocate \$120 million for the launch of the Shurtan gas chemical complex, which will produce synthetic liquid fuel. In total, Gazprombank invested \$1.1 billion in the country's oil and gas complex and helped Uzbekneftegaz in negotiations with Chinese and Korean financial structures. In the recent meeting, the head of Uzbekneftegaz and representatives of Gazprombank also agreed to continue cooperation on promising projects (Kun.uz, 01.12.2021).
- According to the Finance Ministry of Ukraine, as of November 1, 2021, the country is implementing eight projects worth a total of €1.7 billion in cooperation with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD). All projects are in the public sector and Ukraine attracted the funds from the EBRD under state guarantees. The EBRD remains a leading institutional investor in Ukraine, which has invested €15.6 billion in 507 projects across the country (Ukrinform, 02.12.2021).

Society and Culture

- TURKSOY organized a presentation of the book published in Turkish on the occasion of the 1150th anniversary of the birthday of the great scholar and teacher of the Turkic World Farabi. The event was held at the Nation's Library of the Republic of Turkey and was attended by the Ambassadors of Kazakhstan, Bosnia Herzegovina, and Afghanistan to Ankara along with representatives of diplomatic missions in Ankara, scholars, writers, and other guests. The opening speeches were followed by the ribbon-cutting ceremony in which all participants untied the ribbon together (Turksoy.org, 01.12.2021).
- Kazakhstan's Kazinform JSC joined the Turkic World project. This is a media platform that unites the news about the Turkic-speaking states, created on the initiative of Trend News Agency and the Turkish Albayrak Media Group. The event was attended by leaders, diplomats of the Turkic-speaking states, parliament members, and public representatives. From now on, the news on the Turkic World platform will be published also in Kazakh along with Azerbaijani, English, Kyrgyz, Russian, Turkish and Turkmen languages (Turkic World, 30.11.2021).
- A Kazakh film "Mukagali" directed by Bolat Kalymbetov received the Ecumenical award at the 25th edition of the Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival. The film tells the story of the last three years of the life of the great Kazakh writer and translator Mukagali Makatayev, whose poetry collections were eventually included in the gold fund of Kazakh poetry. This year's program included the screening of 19 films. (The Astana Times, 29.11.2021).
- The Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) renovated and equipped the Center for the Elderly of Nalakh Municipality in Mongolia. The opening ceremony held for the center was attended by Deputy Prime Minister of Mongolia - Amarsaikhan Sainbuyan, the Ambassador of Turkey - Zafer Ates, TIKA's Coordinator in Ulaanbaatar - Naran TUYA Purevdorj, and other officials. In his speech, Amarsaikhan Sainbuyan stressed the friendly relations between the Turkish and Mongolian people and thanked TIKA and the Turkish government for the assistance (Tika.gov.tr, 01.11.2021).
- Two intergovernmental agreements were signed in Dushanbe by the Minister of Education of Tajikistan Mahmadyusuf Imomzoda and the First Deputy Minister of Education of Russia Alexander Bugaev. The signed documents define the status of Russian teachers and the principles of functioning of five schools under construction in Tajikistan with the Russian language of instruction. Besides that, the Russian government has allocated about \$150 million for the construction of five Russian schools in Tajikistan. These schools are expected to start functioning on September 1, 2022 (ASIA-Plus, 30.11.2021).
- The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) appealed to the world community to allocate \$374.9 million for international assistance to internal refugees in Afghanistan. Currently, there are 3.5 million internally displaced people in Afghanistan. About 23 million people, or 55% of the population, suffer from severe malnutrition and almost nine million of them are facing the threat of hunger (Avesta News Agency, 04.12.2021).