



THE ARMENIAN FACTOR IN THE CONTEXT OF THE ORGANIZATION OF TURKIC STATES: CENTRAL ASIAN POSITIONS AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION

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Abstract. This study examines the Armenian factor within the system of the Organization of Turkic States (OTS) by analyzing its impact on the foreign policy positions of Central Asian countries and on the broader dynamics of regional integration. The article focuses on Azerbaijan's role in political, economic and transport-communication connectivity between the South Caucasus and Central Asia, while also taking into account the cautious diplomatic approaches of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan. The study argues that the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict and the post-conflict regional environment should not be interpreted only as a bilateral security issue, but also as a factor that reveals the degree of political solidarity, institutional coordination and strategic maturity within the OTS. Special attention is given to the influence of external actors, the internal ethno-demographic context of Central Asian states, the comparative experience of other protracted conflicts, and the economic role of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan in the development of Turkic integration. In this context, the OTS is understood not as a confrontational bloc directed against Armenia, but as a platform for political dialogue, transport connectivity, economic cooperation and sustainable regional security (Organization of Turkic States, 2021; Yaldız, 2023).

Keywords: Organization of Turkic States, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Central Asia, regional integration, multi-vector policy, South Caucasus, Turkic world.

Introduction

The state's foreign policy course, anchored in national interests, is fundamentally based on the principle of protecting sovereignty and independence. Azerbaijan is forming an effective cooperation model by pursuing a balanced policy in a multipolar world. In this context, the activities of official Baku in the Organization of Turkic States (OTS) are of particular importance (Organization of Turkic States, 2021). The assessment of the OTS not only as a political-diplomatic platform, but also as a strategic union based on a common culture, language, history and civilization has made integration into the Turkic world one of the priority directions in the foreign policy of our country.

Multilateral cooperation mechanisms within the organization - economic integration initiatives, transport-transit projects, energy security, the formation of joint media and information strategies - are making a real contribution to political and economic stability in the region.

This increases the likelihood that the organization will move away from the classic cooperation platform and become a regional powerhouse focused on strategic directions such as security and economic integration. Official Baku's deepening cooperation with the organization's members based on common interests shows that it has a long-term strategic vision.

Research methods.

The main problem of this study is to evaluate how the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict and its post-conflict dynamics influence the multi-vector foreign policies of Central Asian states within the OTS, and how this influence is shaped by external actors, domestic ethno-demographic considerations, transport connectivity and the economic institutionalization of Turkic integration.

The primary objective is to define Azerbaijan's role in transport and economic integration, to analyze the diplomatic balance maintained by Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan regarding the Armenian factor, and to demonstrate that the OTS develops through the collective contribution of its member states rather than through the initiatives of one actor alone.

The methodological basis of this study is based on qualitative political science analysis, a comparative approach, and content analysis of sources related to the activities of the Organization of Turkic States, Azerbaijan's foreign policy, the positions of Central Asian countries, and the Armenian factor in regional integration processes. Since the research topic is primarily geopolitical, institutional, and diplomatic in nature, the paper does not aim to conduct quantitative analysis or statistical modeling. The primary focus is on identifying political trends, foreign policy positions, and the logic of state behavior in the context of Turkic integration.

The study employs a systems approach, allowing it to consider the Organization of Turkic States not only as a cultural and humanitarian platform but also as an emerging mechanism for political, economic, and transport and communications interaction between the Turkic states. This approach allows us to analyze the role of Azerbaijan as a link between the South Caucasus and Central Asia, as well as to determine how the Armenian factor influences the nature and dynamics of integration processes within the OTS. A comparative method was used to analyze the positions of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan regarding the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict, the post-conflict situation in the South Caucasus, and prospects for regional cooperation. This method demonstrates that, despite a shared Turkic identity and a high level of political and cultural affinity with Azerbaijan, the Central Asian states do not demonstrate entirely identical foreign policy approaches. Their approaches differ in the degree of diplomatic activity, the level of support for Azerbaijan, their cautious approach to relations with Armenia, and their desire to maintain a balance between various external centers of power (Atamuratova, 2021).

The study also utilizes content analysis of official statements, analytical materials, academic publications, and documents reflecting the development of Turkic integration and regional policy. Particular attention is given to documents and materials related to the Organization of Turkic States, Azerbaijan's foreign policy statements, as well as the positions of Central Asian countries on security, territorial integrity, regional cooperation, and transport connectivity. This allows us to identify how attitudes towards the Armenian factor are formed at the level of political discourse and how it fits into the broader context of regional integration.

In order to strengthen the analytical balance of the study, the source base is expanded beyond Azerbaijani and Turkish academic literature and includes selected Western, Russian, Central Asian and institutional sources. Publications of Chatham House, Carnegie Endowment, International Crisis Group, SWP, ECFR, RAND Corporation, RIAC and IMEMO are relevant for understanding how major external actors interpret the Armenia-Azerbaijan settlement, South Caucasus connectivity and the rise of Turkic institutional cooperation. The comparative dimension is also used not to equate different conflicts mechanically, but to identify recurring patterns through which unresolved or post-conflict territories influence regional organizations, diplomatic alignments and transport-economic integration.

Results and discussions.

The role of Azerbaijan in the Organization of the Turkic States.

Azerbaijan acts not only as a member state in the Turkic States Organization, but also as one of the coordinating actors of the Turkic world in terms of politics, economy and communication. Azerbaijan's location in the South Caucasus and its natural transition position between Central Asia and Turkey increase its importance within the OTS. In this regard, Azerbaijan plays an important role in the formation of the organization, not only as a platform for cultural and historical solidarity, but also as a real geopolitical and economic cooperation mechanism. Azerbaijan's activity within the OTS serves to expand political dialogue among the Turkic states, deepen economic relations and strengthen transport and communication opportunities. Especially after the Second Karabakh War, the strengthening of Azerbaijan's regional position has further increased its political weight within the OTS. In this context, Azerbaijan considers it important to base integration among the Turkic states on practical results and seeks to ensure that cooperation within the organization does not remain only at the level of symbolic unity. The development of the OTS as a regional organization shows that relations with the Turkic world have become a priority direction in Azerbaijan's foreign policy. This approach is important both in terms of Azerbaijan's national interests and in terms of strengthening the collective geopolitical position of the Turkic states.

Azerbaijan's role in the OTS is also reflected in its relations with the Central Asian states. Azerbaijan is trying to bring the relations with these countries, based on common historical, cultural and ethnic ties, to the level of modern political and economic cooperation. While the idea of integration between the Turkic states was based on cultural affinity and common identity for a long time, at the modern stage, this process has begun to cover the areas of transport, energy, trade, investment and security. In this regard, Azerbaijan's activities within the OTS serve not only to strengthen the organization's institutional framework, but also to make the Turkic world a more visible actor in the international system. The document "Turkic World Vision — 2040" envisages the development of long-term cooperation between the Turkic states in political, economic, transport and humanitarian directions, which allows Azerbaijan to place its role in the organization in a broader strategic context.

At the same time, Azerbaijan's prominent role within the OTS should be interpreted within a collective rather than unilateral model of Turkic integration. The OTS is not merely a platform for the projection of Azerbaijani initiatives; it is a multilateral institution shaped by the converging interests of Azerbaijan, Türkiye, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and other participating actors. Azerbaijan performs a crucial bridging function between the South Caucasus, the Caspian basin and Anatolia, but the strategic content of the organization is also formed through Central Asian economic potential, demographic resources, transport geography and institutional participation. Such an approach makes it possible to avoid a one-dimensional interpretation of the OTS and to present Turkic integration as a shared regional project.

Central Asian countries' cautious approach to the Armenian issue. The Central Asian countries' approach to the Armenian issue is based more on cautious diplomatic balance than on open confrontational rhetoric. Although these countries have historical, cultural, and Turkic-related ties with Azerbaijan, they are reluctant to take a completely sharp line of blockade in their relations with Armenia. One of the main reasons for this is that the Central Asian states pursue a multi-vector foreign policy and want to maintain balance in their relations with various power centers such as Russia, China, Iran, and the West. The Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict is an important example for the Central Asian countries not only as a problem in the South Caucasus, but also in terms of how border, territorial integrity, and regional security issues are managed in the post-Soviet space. For this reason, on the one hand, these states are close to positions supporting the principle of Azerbaijan's territorial integrity, and on the other hand, they try to avoid direct diplomatic confrontation with Armenia. Kuliyeva's (2025) research underscores that the occupation of Azerbaijani lands historically constrained Armenia's relations with the Turkic states of Central Asia and the impact of the Karabakh occupation on these relations.

Central Asia's cautiousness on this issue is also related to the region's own internal experience. After independence, the Central Asian states have faced complex issues such as border problems, water resource sharing, ethnic tensions, and regional leadership competition. Therefore, they are trying to draw certain lessons for their regions from the long-standing conflict in the South Caucasus. Current geopolitical realities also show that the tensions in the South Caucasus are being closely monitored by the Central Asian countries and this experience is considered

important in terms of strengthening regional cooperation. Within this framework, the Armenian factor is explained here not only as an Azerbaijani-Armenian relationship, but also in the context of the security vision and regional integration policy of the Central Asian states.

The cautiousness of Central Asian states is also connected with their internal ethno-demographic structures and the political importance of interethnic stability. Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan are multiethnic societies where Azerbaijani and Armenian communities, although not among the largest ethnic groups, participate in social, cultural and humanitarian networks. For this reason, the governments of these states seek to prevent external conflicts from being transferred into the domestic political space. Their restrained rhetoric on the Armenian issue is therefore not only a product of multi-vector diplomacy, but also an instrument of domestic stability, social cohesion and careful management of diaspora-related sensitivities.

Balanced policy of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan. The attitude of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan to the Armenian issue should not be assessed as a completely rigid and unified position along the same line, but as a balanced policy based on different diplomatic priorities. Kazakhstan acts more from a position of mediation, dialogue and regional stability. Its provision of a platform for negotiations between Azerbaijan and Armenia demonstrates Kazakhstan's desire to contribute to the peace process rather than an open anti-Armenian position.

Uzbekistan, on the other hand, demonstrates clearer solidarity in its relations with Azerbaijan and has generally expressed support for Azerbaijan's position regarding territorial integrity. However, Uzbekistan does not make direct confrontation with Armenia the main direction of its foreign policy. Kyrgyzstan's position is more shaped around the principle of calling for a political solution and preserving regional stability. Turkmenistan, on the other hand, acts as the Central Asian country that most avoids open blocs due to its policy of permanent neutrality. These differences show that, although the Central Asian states demonstrate solidarity with Azerbaijan, they do not want to raise the Armenian issue to a level that would disrupt their multi-vector foreign policy balance (Kushkumbayev, Mussabekova, 2022).

The balanced policy of these countries also determines the nature of integration within the OTS. Although the OTS unites the Turkic states on a common historical and cultural platform, the foreign policy priorities of its members are not entirely identical. For the Central Asian states, the OTS is an important cooperation mechanism, but this organization is not the only foreign policy line that replaces their relations with Russia, China, Iran, the European Union and other actors. Therefore, the Armenian factor simultaneously reveals the solidarity of the Central Asian countries with the Turkic world and their cautious behavior within the framework of multi-vector diplomacy. In this regard, the Armenian issue acts as an important test measuring the degree of political unity within the OTS.

Avoidance of direct confrontation with Armenia by Central Asian countries. The avoidance of direct confrontation with Armenia by Central Asian countries should be explained not as a weakness on their part, but by the logic of regional security and multi-vector diplomacy. For these states, the Armenia-Azerbaijan issue is a sensitive issue in terms of both solidarity with the Turkic world and maintaining stability in the post-Soviet space. Although they demonstrate positions close to the principle of territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan, they are reluctant to be seen as participants in a political bloc that openly targets Armenia. This approach is especially due to the reality that the Russian factor is still strong in the region, and Armenia has long been in Russia's security orbit. The Central Asian states prefer diplomatic caution to a tough ideological position on the Armenia issue. This indicates both their participation within the OTS and their attempt to balance their relations with extra-regional powers.

In explaining this approach, it can be noted that the experience of the conflict in the South Caucasus is also important for the Central Asian countries in terms of preventing similar tensions in their regions. The strategic realities of the post-conflict era emphasize that the experience of the South Caucasus is a lesson for Central Asia, and that freezing regional problems can lead to more serious consequences in the future. This analytical dimension aligns with the core thesis of this study, because the Armenian factor is conceptualized here not merely as a localized security dilemma for Azerbaijan, but as a critical variable influencing Central Asian perceptions of broader regional stability. Therefore, the avoidance of direct confrontation with Armenia by the Central Asian countries can be seen not as a rejection of solidarity with Azerbaijan, but as a form of cautious diplomatic behavior that takes into account broader regional risks (Atamuratova, 2021).

The main feature of the position of the Central Asian countries is the existence of solidarity with Azerbaijan, but this does not turn into an open anti-Armenian bloc. Such behavior allows the OTS to be built not only on the rhetoric of security and conflict, but also on economic cooperation, transport links, investment, humanitarian relations and regional stability. From this point of view, solidarity with Azerbaijan is an important political principle within the OTS, but this solidarity does not manifest itself in the form of a bloc policy that completely limits the foreign policy flexibility of the Central Asian countries.

Political, economic and transport integration within the OTS. Political, economic and transport integration within the OTS is one of the main directions of the organization's future development. Cooperation between the Turkic states is no longer limited only to common language, history and cultural factors; This cooperation acquires a more practical content with the expansion of economic relations, increasing trade turnover, creating investment mechanisms and developing transport corridors. Azerbaijan's special role in this process is due to its location in the South Caucasus and its function as a connecting link between Central Asia and Turkey. The Middle Corridor, port infrastructure, railway connections and multimodal transportation strengthen the real foundations of economic integration within the OTS. In this regard, Azerbaijan acts not only as a political bridge between the Turkic states, but also as an important link in logistics and energy relations.

The OTS's document "Turkic World Vision – 2040" presents directions such as political coordination, economic cooperation, transport relations, simplification of customs procedures, energy security and humanitarian integration as long-term development lines. This document indicates the OTS's intention to become a more systematic and institutional organization in the future. In this context, the Armenian factor as an obstacle to integration can be explained not only in terms of political conflict, but also in terms of the security of regional communication and economic ties. However, it would be wrong to focus too much attention on the issue of Zangezur or a specific corridor; it is necessary to show more broadly how the Armenian factor affects the political, economic and transport integration of the OTS (Gök, 2022).

The economic dimension of the OTS should therefore be analyzed through the contribution of all key member states. Kazakhstan is one of the central actors in the development of the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route, since the route links China and Southeast Asia with Kazakhstan, the Caspian Sea, Azerbaijan, Georgia and European markets. Kazakhstan's Caspian ports, railway infrastructure and interest in diversifying export routes make it an indispensable participant in the practical realization of the Middle Corridor. Uzbekistan, in turn, has become one of the important drivers of economic institutionalization within the OTS by supporting industrial cooperation, investment coordination, digital economy initiatives and the simplification of trade procedures. The Turkic Investment Fund also reflects this collective logic, because it is designed as a joint financial institution aimed at mobilizing the economic potential of the Turkic states and supporting common investment projects (Turkic Investment Fund, 2024; Trans-Caspian International Transport Route, 2024).

The Armenian factor as an obstacle or test for Turkic integration. The Armenian factor is both an obstacle and a test for Turkish integration. It acts as an obstacle because the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict has limited the possibilities of regional cooperation in the South Caucasus for many years, preventing the full opening of transport and communication lines and the realization of the integration potential of the region. During the occupation of Azerbaijani lands, this conflict was one of the main problems affecting the geographical and political coherence of the Turkic world. It acts as a test because this issue reveals the level of solidarity of the OTS members with Azerbaijan, their attitude to regional security issues, and the possibilities of political coordination within the organization. The position of the Central Asian states is particularly important here, since they are both part of the Turkic world and conduct cautious multi-vector diplomacy on the issue of Armenia (Baghirov, 2022).

From this point of view, the Armenian factor can be considered one of the important indicators of whether the OTS has become a real political organization. If the OTS had remained only as a platform for cultural unity, the Armenia-Azerbaijan issue would have occupied a limited place on the organization's agenda. However, in recent years, the organization's activation in the political, economic, and transport spheres has brought this issue into the context of broader regional integration. The Armenian factor, on the one hand, strengthens the need for solidarity for the Turkic states, and on the other hand, shows that the foreign policy interests of the member states differ. Therefore, it would be more correct to present Armenia in this regard not only as an opponent, but also as a factor that reveals the relationship between unity, caution, and geopolitical balance within the OTS. Kuliyeva's research

directly corresponds to this section, since it studies Armenia's relations with the Central Asian Turkic states and the impact of the Karabakh factor on these relations.

A comparative perspective makes this argument more convincing. The experience of Cyprus shows that an unresolved territorial conflict can affect relations between a regional power and a wider integration project for decades. The cases of Kosovo, Transnistria, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Northern Ireland also demonstrate that protracted territorial and ethno-political disputes may become long-term constraints on regional cooperation, institutional trust and cross-border connectivity. These examples do not reproduce the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict in identical form, but they reveal a broader pattern: post-conflict territories and unresolved status questions often become tests for regional organizations, because they oblige member states to balance solidarity, legal principles, security risks and pragmatic cooperation. In this sense, the Armenian factor performs a similar analytical function for the OTS.

The influence of the Russian, Iranian and Western factors on the positions of Central Asia. When explaining the cautious approach of the Central Asian countries to the Armenian issue, it is impossible to come to a complete conclusion without taking into account the Russian, Iranian and Western factors. Russia has long been one of the main centers of security and political influence in both the South Caucasus and Central Asia. The fact that Armenia has been in Russia's security orbit for many years, as well as the existence of political, economic, security and migration relations between the Central Asian countries and Russia, causes these countries to act cautiously on the Armenian issue. They can demonstrate solidarity with Azerbaijan, but they are reluctant to take a hard political line without considering Russia's influence in the region. From this point of view, the Armenian factor is not only an issue related to Azerbaijani-Armenian relations, but also a geopolitical issue related to the influence of great powers in the post-Soviet space.

The Iranian factor is also of particular importance in this regard. Iran is trying to protect its interests in regional processes related to both the South Caucasus and Central Asia. The Azerbaijan-Turkey rapprochement and the integration of Turkic states within the framework of the OTS can be assessed as one of the processes cautiously followed by Iran. The Western factor is related to Armenia's diplomatic maneuvers in recent years towards Europe and the United States, the interest of Western institutions in the peace process in the South Caucasus, and energy and transport security issues. Since the Central Asian states are trying to maintain a balance between these power centers, they are pursuing a pragmatic and measured policy on the Armenian issue rather than taking a radical line. In this regard, their position reflects both solidarity with Azerbaijan within the Turkic world and cautious behavior in relations with major powers. The existing literature also discusses the role of Russia, Iran and other foreign actors in the context of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict and Central Asian security separately.

The Chinese factor should also be included in this analytical framework. China does not usually frame the South Caucasus through the logic of identity-based alignment, but through the categories of connectivity, trade corridors and the stability of Eurasian supply chains. The Belt and Road Initiative and the growing importance of the Middle Corridor make the normalization of Armenia-Azerbaijan relations relevant not only for regional security, but also for wider geoeconomic planning. For Beijing, the opening of communications and the reduction of conflict risks in the South Caucasus may strengthen alternative east-west routes connecting Central Asia, the Caspian region and Europe. Therefore, the positions of Central Asian states within the OTS are shaped not only by Russia, Iran and the West, but also by the economic presence of China and its interest in predictable transport corridors (RAND Corporation, 2018; RAND Corporation, 2024).

The fact that the head of state characterized the Organization of Turkic States (OTS) as the primary international platform and family for Azerbaijan at the inauguration ceremony held on February 14, 2024, is evidence of a thoughtful and long-term strategy. This approach shows that Azerbaijan's cooperation with other international and regional organizations has a deeper meaning. Azerbaijan's bringing the OTS to the forefront acts as an expression of its regional leadership ambitions in both political and cultural-spiritual contexts. The special position of our republic in the OTS is explained by diplomatic activity and multi-layered historical and cultural heritage. Geographically located between the Caucasus and Central Asia, Azerbaijan has become an important carrier of common Turkic memory in historical processes as a bridge between these two regions (Özsoy, 2021). Especially after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the political configuration created the basis for the formation of parallel development trajectories between Azerbaijan and the Central Asian republics. During this period, both sides faced similar political, economic

and ideological challenges, which facilitated mutual understanding and coordination. The role played by Azerbaijan within the OTS is not limited to accelerating integration processes but further strengthens its status as a leading actor in the formation of a new geopolitical order. The Second Karabakh War radically changed the balance of power in the South Caucasus and the Eurasian geopolitical space. The outcome of the Second Karabakh War significantly contributed to strengthening Azerbaijan's national security architecture. The role and position of Azerbaijan in the Organization of Turkic States have reached a new stage. Official Baku, in addition to promoting the integration process within the organization, contributes to the institutional strengthening of the OTS and strengthening its normative foundations (Ağır, 2023).

The role played by President İlham Aliyev in the strategic rapprochement of the OTS member states is welcomed both within the organization and internationally. In this regard, the 11th Summit of the OTS Heads of State held in Bishkek in November 2024 was a significant event. The strategic theses voiced by the President, especially the calls for the formation of a common vision of the future of the Turkic states, deepening economic relations and increasing the international prestige of the organization, are assessed as another manifestation of the significant importance that Azerbaijan attaches to this platform. The allocation of financial assistance of 2 million US dollars to the Organization Secretariat and 100 thousand US dollars to the Council of Elders by our Head of State is a practical indicator of Azerbaijan's support for the OTS to become a single regional powerhouse in the future. The fact that the cooperation framework is based on a common language, history and culture, as well as on a specific strategic infrastructure, turns the OTS into a real economic power. In this sense,

Azerbaijan has been one of the key contributors to political and economic cooperation projects within the OTS. In particular, its important transit role in the East-West transport corridor further increases the country's strategic importance in the regional and global logistics system.

Conclusion. The geographical position of Azerbaijan creates new logistical and market access opportunities for the OTS member states. The role of Azerbaijan in the development of the Middle Corridor should be especially emphasized. Thanks to projects such as the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway and the Alat International Sea Trade Port, this corridor acts as a strategic alternative for the region. The consistent investment programs implemented by Azerbaijan to expand its transit potential - improving port infrastructure, promoting multimodal transportation, digitizing and simplifying customs procedures - generally lead to an increase in logistics efficiency in the Eurasian geography. The informal Summit of the Heads of State of the Turkic States Organization, held in the Hungarian capital, Budapest, on May 21, 2025, went down in history as a strategic turning point in terms of the political consolidation and institutional development of the Turkic world. This meeting should be evaluated as a platform where political and economic contours were drawn that determined the future development trajectory of the OTS.

The ideas voiced by Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán within the framework of the Summit symbolized a new strategic bridge being created between the European Union and the Turkic states. This is based on mutual interests and a model of deepened cooperation in the fields of energy, transport, security and trade. President İlham Aliyev's speech once again showed that Azerbaijan maintains its leadership position in this union not only based on historical and geographical realities, but also on institutional initiative and a sustainable strategic vision. Azerbaijan, which will host the official Summit of the OTS, is already becoming the coordination center of the organization. Official invitations of heads of state to Azerbaijan are considered a diplomatic gesture in terms of strengthening solidarity and strategic coordination.

Azerbaijan's investment in the Turkic states of more than 20 billion US dollars increases bilateral trade turnover; forms the infrastructure and financial foundations for the creation of a single economic space. At the same time, the launch of the Turkish Investment Fund, a new institutional initiative, will take the level of economic integration of the OTS to a new stage. The Fund will create conditions for strengthening economic synergy in the region as a common financial platform regulating capital flows between Turkic states and supporting joint investment projects. The Fund's activities can also become an important tool in terms of integration into global financial markets, risk sharing and financing sustainable development. The Budapest Declaration, consisting of 71 points, adopted at the end of the meeting, is a conceptual document that clearly defines the future integration directions of the Turkic world. With this declaration, the heads of state, while preserving the legal foundations of the TWT, identified as a priority the need to modernize and improve it in line with the challenges of the new era. The "Charter of the Turkic World", which is given a special place in the document, presents the concept of solidarity among Turkic

states based on a common language, history, customs and cultural codes not only as an ideological basis, but also as a strategic and institutional platform. By signing the document, the heads of state showed that they accept the “common Turkish identity” as a part of historical memory, a collective identity that has gained the status of an active actor in the modern system of international relations. This approach will allow for the intensification of mutual activities in the fields of education, information policy, humanitarian diplomacy and youth.

In the context of the Organization of Turkic States, the Armenian factor creates an important analytical framework for understanding the regional integration policy and multi-vector diplomacy of the Central Asian countries. Azerbaijan acts as one of the main actors connecting the South Caucasus with the Turkic world, yet the development of the OTS cannot be reduced to Azerbaijan’s initiatives alone. Kazakhstan’s role in the Middle Corridor, Uzbekistan’s contribution to economic institutionalization, Kyrgyzstan’s participation in political coordination and Turkmenistan’s cautious neutrality together show that Turkic integration is based on a complex balance of national interests and collective priorities. The Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict reveals both the limitations and the opportunities of this process. Although the Central Asian countries demonstrate historical, cultural and political solidarity with Azerbaijan, they avoid direct confrontation with Armenia in order to preserve regional stability, interethnic harmony and balanced relations with Russia, Iran, China, the West and Türkiye. Therefore, the Armenian factor within the OTS should be assessed not only as an element of conflict, but also as a geopolitical test that measures the level of unity, diplomatic flexibility, source-based policy analysis and institutional maturity of the Turkic states.

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**Түркі мемлекеттері ұйымы тұрғысынан Армения факторы:
Орталық Азияның ұстанымдары және аймақтық интеграция**

Андатпа. Зерттеуде Түркі мемлекеттері ұйымы (ТМҰ) жүйесіндегі Армения факторы оның Орталық Азия елдерінің ұстанымдарына және олардың аймақтық интеграциялық процестеріне тигізетін әсері тұрғысынан қарастырылады. Осы орайда Әзербайжанның Оңтүстік Кавказды Орталық Азиямен байланыстыратын үш өлшем: саяси, экономикалық және көлік-коммуникациялық бағыттар бойынша түркі интеграциясындағы рөлі негізделеді. Сонымен қатар Әзербайжан-Армения қақтығысы мен аймақтағы қақтығыстан кейінгі жағдайдың Қазақстан, Өзбекстан, Қырғызстан және Түрікменстанның қауіпсіздік, ынтымақтастық және дипломатиялық тепе-теңдік тәсілдеріне әсері Қазақстанның да, бүкіл Орталық Азия елдерінің де сыртқы саяси принциптері мен ережелеріне сәйкес талданады. Мақалада Армения факторы мемлекетаралық өзара іс-қимылды шектейтін фактор емес, ТМҰ үшін сынақ (тест) ретінде әрекет ететіні талданады. Ол түркі елдерінің саяси ынтымақтастық деңгейін, өзара дипломатиялық үйлесімділік дәрежесін және аймақтық интеграцияның практикалық маңыздылығын анықтауға көмектеседі. Бұл тұрғыда ТМҰ Арменияға диалог пен экономикалық ынтымақтастықтың барлық тиісті механизмдеріне сай қарым-қатынастарды құруға, көлік пен инфрақұрылым арқылы байланысуға және аймақтағы тұрақты қауіпсіздікті қамтамасыз етуге арналған платформа ретінде қарастырылады.

Түйін сөздер: Түркі мемлекеттері ұйымы, Әзербайжан, Армения, Орталық Азия, аймақтық интеграция, көпвекторлы саясат, Оңтүстік Кавказ, түркі әлемі.

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**Армянский фактор в контексте Организации тюркских государств:
позиции Центральной Азии и региональная интеграция**

Аннотация. В данном исследовании рассматривается армянский фактор в системе Организации тюркских государств (ОТГ) в контексте его влияния на позиции стран Центральной Азии и процессы их региональной интеграции. В частности, обосновывается роль Азербайджана в тюркской интеграции по

трех направлениям: политическому, экономическому и транспортно-коммуникационному, связывающим Южный Кавказ с Центральной Азией. Кроме того, анализируется влияние армяно-азербайджанского конфликта и постконфликтной ситуации в регионе на подходы Казахстана, Узбекистана, Кыргызстана и Туркменистана к безопасности, сотрудничеству и дипломатическому балансу в координации с принципами и правилами внешней политики, применимыми как к Казахстану, так и ко всем странам Центральной Азии. В статье подчеркивается, что армянский фактор выступает не ограничивающим межгосударственное взаимодействие элементом, а своего рода индикатором (тестом) для ОТГ. Он помогает определить уровень политической солидарности тюркских стран, степень взаимной дипломатической координации и практическую значимость региональной интеграции. В данном контексте ОТГ рассматривается как платформа, призванная содействовать Армении в выстраивании отношений в соответствии со всеми надлежащими механизмами диалога и экономического сотрудничества, развитию транспортно-инфраструктурной взаимосвязанности и обеспечении устойчивой безопасности в регионе.

Ключевые слова: Организация тюркских государств, Азербайджан, Армения, Центральная Азия, региональная интеграция, многовекторная политика, Южный Кавказ, тюркский мир.

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