

Characteristics of Development of Integration Processes Within The Organization of Turkish States

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Abstract:

This article describes the history of the establishment of the Organization of Turkic States, the activities of the organization, including important changes in the organization's activities and historical decisions made by the heads of state, as well as, it makes prognoses on the future economic and political cooperation among the Turkic states by assessing the current status of their cooperation and the likelihood of future development in this area.

Keywords: Civilization, Turkey, Turkic states, summit, cooperation, diversification, functionality, integration, institutionalism.

Introduction

International organizations and structures are studied through the theories of regionalism, institutionalism and functionalism, and a historical approach within the framework of international relations. American political scientist Samuel P. Huntington in his book "Clash of Civilizations" analyzes the methods of cooperation under the shadow of the common civilization of developing Turkic-speaking countries. According to Huntington's theory, after the end of the Cold War, countries tend to form alliances with countries that have common cultural elements, and politicians and public figures of these countries tend to trust each other precisely because of the closeness of language, religion, and mutual values, as well as fraternal relations. [1]

Looking at the history of the organization of Turkic states, it can be seen that it has undergone a number of transformation processes until today. The first summit of the heads of Turkic-speaking countries was held in Ankara on October 30, 1992 at the initiative of the President of the Republic of Turkey, Turgut Özal. On October 3, 2009, in Nakhchivan, one of the oldest cities of Azerbaijan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey signed an agreement on the establishment of the Cooperation Council of Turkic States. As a result of this document, a cooperation mechanism was created between the Turkic states, which united these states based on their historical roots, common language, religion, culture and traditions.



The first summit of the Turkic Council (now known as the Organization of Turkic States) was held on October 21, 2011 in Almaty, Kazakhstan. The Turkish Council had several goals in mind. For example, the development of political, trade-economic, tourism, transport, digitization and cultural-humanitarian relations among the member states of the Council, creating an environment of mutual trust and mutual support in international relations, strengthening brotherly relations and good neighborliness and etc. [2]

Discussion

In order to become a full member of the organization of Turkic states, in addition to the state language being Turkish, the state must also recognize itself as Turkic, and other countries must also recognize this. This is a strict procedure. From this point of view, the member states are: Turkey, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. In addition, there are observer countries within the organization, which are Turkmenistan, Hungary and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (received observer status on November 11, 2022). The requirement for the observing countries is that they have recognized one of the Turkic languages as an official language at the national level, or have been given the status of a state language within the framework of a sister language (for example, the Altaic language).

On September 14, 2019, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev signed the law "On Ratification of the Nakhichevan Agreement on the Establishment of the Cooperation Council of Turkic-Speaking Countries" and became a full member of the Council in October. On November 12, 2021, at the VIII Summit of the Cooperation Council of Turkic-Speaking Countries held in Istanbul, a decision was made to change this structure to the Organization of Turkic States (OTS). Changing the name of the Turkic Council to the "Organization of Turkish States" created a solid foundation for the further development of cooperation between sister countries. [3]

So why was the name "council" changed to "organization"?

First, this decision was hotly debated in political and scientific circles, and ultimately received a warm welcome. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said at a press conference within the framework of the summit, "We have decided to change the name of the Council. From now on, it will be called the Organization of Turkic States. Thanks to the new name and structure, the Organization of Turkic States will develop more actively, strengthen and multiply." Commenting on this decision, Professor Cengiz Tomar of Ahmet Yesevi University noted that the main event of the Istanbul Summit was changing the name of the Turkish Council, because this change is a historical and fundamental change. [4]

From a legal point of view, the absence of the word "organization" in the name of an international structure does not prevent it from functioning as an international organization. Over the past 12 years, a number of efforts have been made to develop mechanisms for cooperation in various fields between member states of the Turkic Council and to attract non-member Turkic-speaking countries to its membership. From this point of view, the activity of the organization can be divided into two periods, that is, the initial period from the establishment of the council to 2019 and the ongoing period after that. Because, with



Uzbekistan becoming a full member in 2019 and Turkmenistan joining the Turkic Council as an observer at the Istanbul summit, the institutional stage of cooperation between the Turkic countries was completed and relations within the organization became much more active. It was a timely and logical decision to officially transform the Council, which has been acting as a dialogue space, into a full-fledged organization.

Secondly, the Istanbul summit in a sense officially completed the process of uniting all Turkic states around a single organization. Turkmenistan, which has been an honored guest of the organization's summits until now, has been officially given observer status. Although the Turkish states have not hidden their interest in Turkmenistan joining the organization as a member, its neutral status prevents it from becoming a full-fledged member of the organization. Nevertheless, in recent years, Turkmenistan has actively mobilized its observer status in the field of multilateral diplomacy. Received observer status at the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2020 and at the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) in 2021. [5] The legal grounds for obtaining observer status within the organization are detailed in Article 16 of the Nakhchivan Agreement, according to which states, international organizations, and international forums may be granted observer status.

According to Baghdad Amreyev, Secretary General of the Organization of Turkic States, the existence of the Organization of Turkic States as a regional mechanism institutionalized cooperation relations between the Turkic states on a multilateral basis. This institutionalization was achieved as a result of the efforts that started in the 1990s and has become the perfect tool to define the rules of cooperation in the Turkish region, to ensure the conditions for its management, to deepen and diversify it, to prevent any regression and to take countermeasures. Relying on the continued political will of the member states, this solid foundation has enabled them to achieve significant progress in a short period of time in various areas of cooperation within the organization. The key to this successful operation is embodied in the organization's principles and structure, its result-oriented approach in the political, economic, cultural-educational and social-humanitarian spheres. In addition, its role as an umbrella organization in cooperation with organizations such as the Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic-Speaking Countries (TURKPA), the International Turkish Culture Organization (TURKSOY), the Foundation for the Culture and Heritage of Turkic Languages, and the Academy of Turkish Languages promotes Turkish at the parliamentary, cultural, academic, and scientific levels. contributed to the development of linguistic relations. [6]

Hungary's current participation in the organization, which received observer status in 2018, is a clear example of the use of this status in all formats of the organization. The opening of the European representative office of OTS in Budapest in 2019 is a full proof of Hungary's active participation in the activities of the organization as an observer country. In an interview, General Secretary B. Amreyev noted that "the nature of the OTS does not allow for unlimited expansion of the Organization, and only countries with one of the official languages of the Turkic language can be observers." [7]

In addition, the fate of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, which is trying to achieve observer status, has been one of the important issues. The President of the Republic of Turkey,



Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, said in his speech at the meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Organization of Turkic States held in Samarkand on November 11, 2022, that the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus was accepted as an observer state in the Organization of Turkic States, having fulfilled the requirements of the Law of Brotherhood.

This is where there is a little disagreement. Because the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus depends only on the country recognized by Turkey and its economic, political and military support. Turkey, with the support of Northern Cyprus, is deploying a contingent of its troops to Northern Cyprus.

Currently, more than 150 million people live in the territories of member and observer states of the Organization of Turkic States. These countries are located in a large and important geopolitical region with a total area of 4,242,362 square kilometers, and their gross domestic product exceeds 1 trillion US dollars. In this regard, the Organization of Turkic States plays a significant role in the world economy.

According to official sources, the main purpose of Uzbekistan's participation in this organization is to develop cooperation between member and observer countries in completely new conditions in the fields of trade and economy, agriculture, transport, industrial cooperation, and climate change. Also, Uzbekistan is interested in the development and implementation of large-scale projects in the fields of youth policy, ecology, digital technologies, culture and tourism.

It should be noted that many local and international expert-analysts express a positive opinion about the prospects and bright future of the organization. During the presidency of Uzbekistan, the adoption of the organization's "Turkish World Vision - 2040" concept became one of the notable examples. As noted in the concept, there are wide opportunities for cooperation between the Turkic peoples. In this regard, he planned to hold forums for the development of cooperation in the field of sports and education among young people, entrepreneurs and representatives of the diaspora.

Another important thing is that the membership of the organization, the unity of the Turkic peoples, the organization's expansion and growing influence will help to strengthen the geopolitical balance in the Central Asian region. According to Zbigniew Brzezinski, two countries of Central Asia - Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan - play an important role in the region. [8] Kazakhstan acts as a shield in the region, and Uzbekistan is a center for the awakening of diverse national feelings and a large population. It is clear that stability in Central Asia depends more on these two Turkic-speaking countries.

However, Turkey remains the locomotive and the main integrator within the organization. Turkey also seeks to advance its political and economic interests in the region, including expanding its influence, and countering the influence of other regional powers such as Russia and China. Turkey has participated in several infrastructure projects in the region, including the construction of roads, railways and pipelines aimed at improving communication and trade between Turkey and Central Asian countries. However, Turkey's political influence in Central Asia is limited by several factors, including the complex geopolitical landscape of the region,



the influence of other external entities, and the internal political dynamics of individual Central Asian countries.

Results

According to political analysts, there are several factors that hinder the integration of Turkic states.

First, there is the balance of power (US, China and Russia) and political instability in Central Asia. This factor can undermine stability and economic growth in some Turkic-speaking countries, including conflicts, border disputes (such as the one between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan), internal unrest, and stagnation in political governance, which can affect regional competition.

Second, economic dependence on natural resources and limited economic diversification. Some member states are heavily dependent on natural resource exports, which can make them vulnerable to changes in commodity prices, reducing demand for their exports, reducing investment, increasing unemployment and social unrest, and economic shocks.

Thirdly, the limited economic opportunities of Turkey, the locomotive of the integration of the Turkic states, are difficult to cope with the geopolitical competition. According to experts, there are no superpowers among Turkic countries. It differs from the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in terms of the need for brotherhood, historical identity, and cooperation. [9]

Nevertheless, within the framework of the Organization of Turkic States, there are a number of opportunities that should be mentioned.

First, the strategic location: in particular, Turkey, Azerbaijan and Hungary are strategically located at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, which gives them a competitive advantage in trade and transport.

Secondly, natural resources: in particular, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan are rich in natural resources, including oil, gas and minerals, which can provide a source of income and economic growth.

Third, a young population: all member states have young populations that can provide a demographic dividend in terms of economic efficiency and innovation.

Fourth, regional integration: member states can benefit from closer regional integration, such as trade agreements, infrastructure projects, and cultural exchanges that promote economic growth and stability.

Fifth, investment in infrastructure: including transport, energy and telecommunications, can improve communication and competitiveness. In the near future, one of the main areas of cooperation facing the Turkish countries is the effective use of existing transport corridors, and the importance of the International Trans-Caspian Corridor is expected to increase in the future. The launch of the Zangezur transport corridor proposed by Azerbaijan, which is supposed to connect Nakhchivan with other regions of Azerbaijan, may further increase the possibilities. Because the Zangezur Corridor will restore transport and railway connections between Turkey and Azerbaijan and other Turkic republics. In this matter, the interests of Russia, Turkey and



Azerbaijan intersect. Through this corridor, it is possible to further strengthen Russia's relations with Armenia, Iran and Turkey. [10]

Sixth, economic diversification: including investing in non-resource sectors that can benefit from innovation and technology, which will reduce their vulnerability to external shocks and promote long-term growth.

Seventh, cultural diplomacy: in particular, by promoting one's cultural heritage, language and traditions, it can strengthen fraternal ties between societies and bring them closer together. This can promote a positive image abroad. Most importantly, having a common language and cultural heritage leads to an increase in the pace of cultural exchange between Turkic-speaking countries.

As noted by David Mitrany, the founder of the theory of functionalism in international relations, "an international organization can be functional only when it is proportionate to the conditions under which it should operate and when the organization's activities are carried out in accordance with the requirements of the present." [11]

Conclusion

The Organization of Turkic States is moving to a fundamentally new stage of development as an integrated structure. We should also not forget the process of globalization, which is an inevitable reality that is taking place and determines the rules of international relations. Globalization encourages all international organizations, including the Organization of Turkic States, to reach a consensus on global issues and solve problems together. Based on the civilizational roots of the Turkic peoples and the existing political will of the Turkic states, the process of mutual rapprochement has been activated, the transition to a single alphabet system and the connecting of sister societies through cultural events, and the bold steps being taken towards the expansion of mutual trade-economic, transport-transit relations are from the bright perspective of the organization. is evidence.

Of course, multilateral cooperation supports multilateral development. The organization follows the spirit of the times and sets its own agenda and performs its duties accordingly. This is the main reason for the dynamic development of the Organization of Turkic States today. Effective adaptation of the organization to future conjunctural changes, internal political situations, power transformation can be an important factor in its success as a "common Turkish family". From this point of view, Central Asia as a historical and spiritual center will have an important place in the integration of Turkic states.

It is worth noting that Uzbekistan is one of the central pillars of this huge geopolitical macro space, which is connected with the Turkic world, understood by fundamental values and a common language. The fact that Uzbekistan's foreign economic activity is expanding day by day within the framework of membership of the organization shows that there is a great potential in this regard.



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