



COMMISSION ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

SECOND MEETING

REPORT

PLACE AND ROLE OF TURKIC COUNCIL, TURKPA AND TURKSOY IN DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS AMONG TURKIC-SPEAKING STATES.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Emergence of newly independent Turkic speaking states in the world political map, following geopolitical changes that took place at the end of 20th century in the world, earned a significant place for the Turkic world in global political arena.
2. Beginning from the 90's of the last century, the Summits of the Presidents of Turkic-speaking states have played a significant role from the point of preservation and popularization of the common spiritual heritage. Cooperation in this format entered a new organizational phase following the establishment of Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States and Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic Speaking Countries.
3. Common culture, traditions, national-spiritual and religious values, historical roots, ethnic ties unite Turkic speaking peoples and these factors are the main basis for mutually beneficial activities. Cooperation among Turkic speaking states is expanding and deepening in all spheres. International Turkic Cultural Organization, TURKSOY, is performing a significant task in the preservation, development and popularization of national-spiritual heritage of Turkic world.
4. Turkic-speaking states are situated in a geographical- strategically important region of the world. Following TURKSOY, establishment of Turkic Council and TURKPA provides a valuable impetus to the comprehensive interaction of Turkic-speaking countries in the region, fight against threats to regional security and contribute to the consolidation of trade and investment opportunities.

II. ACTIVITIES OF THE TURKIC COUNCIL, TURKPA AND TURKSOY

Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States (CCTS)

5. The Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States (CCTS), known in short as the Turkic Council, was established by Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey in 2009 as an international intergovernmental organization, with the overarching aim of promoting comprehensive cooperation among Turkic Speaking States. Its statutory document, the Nakhchivan Agreement, was signed on 3 October 2009 by the presidents of four member states.

6. The highest decision-making organ in the organization is the Council of Heads of State, which normally meets once a year. Other principal organs include Council of Foreign Ministers, Council of Elders and the Chairman-in-Office.

7. The primary objective of the Turkic Council is to further deepen the comprehensive cooperation amongst Turkic states, thus developing the capacity to make joint contributions to peace and stability in the region and in the world as a whole. The commonalities such as developing economies, dynamic population structures and being active players in their respective regions provide strong incentives for enhanced cooperation amongst them.

8. The main purposes and tasks of CCTS can be briefly stated as follows:

- Strengthening mutual confidence amongst the Parties;
- Maintaining peace in the region and beyond;
- Search for common positions on foreign policy issues;
- Coordination of actions to combat international terrorism, separatism, extremism and trans-border crimes;
- Promotion of effective regional and bilateral cooperation in all areas of common interest;
- Creation of favourable conditions for trade and investment;
- Aiming for comprehensive and balanced economic growth, social and cultural development;
- Discussing questions of ensuring rule of law, good governance and protection of human rights;
- Expansion of interaction in the fields of science, technology, education and culture;
- Encouragement of interaction of the mass media and wider communication;
- Promoting exchange of legal information and enhancing legal cooperation.

9. The First Summit of the Turkic Council, which is the continuation of previous Summits in a new format, was held on 21 October 2011 in Almaty. It was the first summit convened with a specific agenda focusing on economic cooperation. The state leaders endorsed a joint programme of economic cooperation presented by the Ministers of Economy and instructed relevant authorities for its effective implementation. In accordance with this programme, working groups were established in concrete fields of economic cooperation – on “Improving the Investment Climate”, “Measures for Diversification of the Economy”, “Development of Transportation” and “Entrepreneurship as the Basis of Economic Relations”. To strengthen these efforts through the Public-Private Partnership model, a joint “Turkic Business Council” was also established at the Almaty Summit.

10. In the political field, with prior approval of the Council of Foreign Affairs at the informal meeting held in September 2011 on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, the Secretariat started the initiative to organize observer missions to elections held in member states after the Almaty Summit. The first such mission was organized at the presidential elections held on 30 October 2011 in the Kyrgyz Republic. The second observer mission was organized for the early parliamentary elections held in the country on 15 January 2012 in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

11. Secretariat has organized two meetings on technical/expert level and three meetings on Ministerial level; in addition to three regular meetings of the Senior Officials Committee and one meeting of the Council of Elders.

12. Second Summit of the Turkic Council held on 23 August 2012 in Bishkek was marked by significant decisions in the field of economic cooperation. Thus, it was decided to create Turkey-Georgia-Azerbaijan-Kazakhstan transport corridor. Issues on holding regular meetings of Ministers of Transport and Customs of CCTS member states in appropriate times were discussed in detail at the Summit. The topic of the Summit was announced as “Cooperation in Education, Science and Culture”. Among major earmarked projects were the establishment of a Turkic Academy in Astana and a Turkic Culture Heritage Fund in Baku.

Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic Speaking Countries (TURKPA)

13. Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic Speaking Countries, TURKPA, was established upon the Istanbul Agreement signed on 21 November 2008 by the chairmen of the parliaments of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey. Within its mandate, TURKPA intends to build a joint action in the framework of inter-parliamentary activities to overcome political, economic and cultural challenges faced by the member countries.

14. The main tasks and purposes of TURKPA basically coincide with the tasks and mission of the Turkic Council. At the same time, being the parliamentary dimension of the cooperation process of Turkic-speaking states, TURKPA focuses its activities on the possible harmonization of legislation of the member countries in cultural, social, scientific, educational, economic and legal fields.

15. Like the Turkic Council, TURKPA conducts elections observance in its member countries. The parliamentary and presidential elections held in four member countries since 2010 were monitored by the TURKPA International Observers Mission. TURKPA’s mandate to observe elections in the member countries has enhanced cooperation of the Assembly with public administrations and efforts to comprehensively monitor the national elections processes in the member countries.

16. In accordance with the Istanbul Agreement and with the view of enhancing inter-parliamentary cooperation, TURKPA has conducted experience-exchange programme among the member parliaments and this process continues bringing successful results.

17. Four specialized commissions of TURKPA have already started their work last year. First documents of the Commissions were adopted by the Assembly at its 3rd plenary session held in 2012 in Bishkek. Commission on cultural, social and humanitarian affairs touched upon the elaboration of the joint programme in the field of education based on study of the Turkic civilization and its cultural values. Commission on economic, financial and trade affairs considered such issues, as implementation of joint projects in the fields of energy, transport and tourism, establishment of Business Council within TURKPA and possible creation of free economic and trade areas in the member countries. Commission on legal affairs discussed the role of parliaments in the constitutional system of member countries.

18. In accordance with its objective to promote exchange of legal information, TURKPA launched an initiative to publish basic legal documents of the member countries. At the first stage, constitutions of Turkic countries, including Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, as well as the

legal documents of TURKPA, have been translated into official languages of organization and published by the TURKPA Secretariat.

International Organization of Turkic Culture (TURKSOY)

19. The ministers of culture of a newly independent five Turkic republics, namely, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan together with the Republic of Turkey, on 12 July 1993 in Almaty, signed the agreement on Principles of Activities and Establishment of TURKSOY.

20. The main goals and tasks of TURKSOY can be briefly stated as follows:

- To establish friendly relations among the Turkic speaking peoples and nations and to explore, disclose, develop, and protect the common Turkic culture, language, history, art, customs, and traditions as well as pass them down to future generations and let them live forever.
- To create the necessary atmosphere for enabling the use of a common language and alphabet in the lands of the Turkic World.
- To reinforce the scientific explorations that envisage the common past of the peoples of the Turkic World and their history, language, literature, culture and art as a whole.
- To prepare the setting for transferring the national history, mother tongue, literature, culture, art, customs, and traditions to future generations.

21. TURKSOY's mission is to clearly show and explain contributions to humanity and world civilizations as a whole; to put Turkic cultural heritage to the service of new artistic achievements and creativity on a universal level and to strengthen the common cultural ties between Turkic peoples. The main endeavor here is to show diversity and originality in all fields of culture and art from painting to music, from theatre to cinema, from architecture to intangible cultural heritage, from literature to fine arts to come together, get to know each other and promote this diversity and originality with a view to transmitting them to future generations and make them known to the world.

22. Since its establishment, TURKSOY carried out its activities in several directions. Firstly, this was an organization of events in concrete spheres of culture and art, such as exhibitions of painting artists, musical festivals, sculptors and photographers gatherings. These activities were complemented by scientific approach of TURKSOY towards study and research of Turkic culture and civilization. In this context, the most significant initiatives of TURKSOY were the organization of congresses on the Architecture and City Planning of the Turkic World, seminars on the Intangible Cultural Heritage and symposiums on Turkic legends. The very new initiative of TURKSOY is declaring one city of the Turkic World as its capital every year with the view of enhancing a process of cultural integration of Turkic peoples. Astana was the capital of the Turkic World in 2012, and in this framework, the capital of the Turkic World will be Eskisehir in 2013 followed by Kazan in 2014.

23. Second direction of TURKSOY is the promotion of its activities through mass media in order to increase its visibility. In this context, TURKSOY established a number of awards and prizes in the field of media, special prizes with the view to supporting ballet, fine arts, literature, theatre and cinema. Additionally, the Turkic Music Box channel was created with the support of TURKSOY.

24. Third direction of TURKSOY's activities is the cooperation with universities aiming at initiating exchange programmes between the academic communities of Turkic-speaking states. Presently, TURKSOY develops such exchange programmes with universities of Turkey and Turkic-speaking subjects of the Russian Federation.

III. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

25. In spite of fact that organizations bring together a particular group of countries, they do not take an exclusive approach. On the contrary, organizations seek to establish and develop relations with other states, national parliaments and international organizations in the region. By promoting deeper relations and solidarity amongst Turkic speaking countries, they aim to serve as a new regional instrument for advancing international cooperation in Central Asia, Caucasia and the Middle East. Close cooperation of the Turkic Council and TURKPA with leading international organizations contributes to strengthening of dialogue in economic, political and social fields.

26. Turkic Council's intention is to engage in mutually beneficial collaboration with all organizations having a similar scope in a transparent manner. Council established excellent dialogue with Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). TURKPA gives particular importance to strengthening a common inter-parliamentary platform for dialogue at a global level. As a result, the Assembly was granted an observer status by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Parliamentary Union of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA).

27. Although Turkic Council and TURKPA focus primarily on economic, social and cultural cooperation, they can be defined as sub-regional organizations aiming to contribute to the promotion of security across the Eurasian region. In this regard, both organizations pay particular attention to cooperation with the OSCE and its institutions.

28. Representatives of the Turkic Council and TURKPA have stated that their respective organizations are ready to make their unique contribution to the achievement of the OSCE tasks and objectives. It was stressed that on the basis of established principles of equality, inclusiveness and transparency, organizations will support a flexible approach towards establishing a mutually reinforcing relationship with the OSCE. Both organizations already participate in the OSCE activities. Secretary Generals of the Turkic Council and TURKPA attended the last meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council in 2011 and several OSCE events, including participation in the meetings of the OSCE Permanent Council in order to inform the members of the Permanent Council on the tasks, objectives and mission of their organizations. During the last two years TURKPA has participated, as a guest, in the OSCE PA annual and winter sessions.

29. TURKPA develops its relationships also with a number of other inter-governmental and inter-parliamentary organizations, such as the European Parliament, OIC, GUAM, CIS PA, Baltic Assembly and PABSEC.

30. TURKPA's initiative in organizing several conferences and forums has contributed to the enhancement of relationships with other countries, regional institutions and non-governmental sector. Until now, Assembly has organized two conferences on the role of parliamentary diplomacy and international conference on the role of women politicians in the 21st century. The latest initiative of TURKPA was the organization of international forum on "Role of youth leadership in development process of interstate cooperation" held on 15-16 October 2012 in Istanbul. Forum was attended by the representatives of 20 countries, including Russia, Ukraine, Lithuania, Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, India, Pakistan, Morocco and Egypt.

31. In the framework of its international cooperation, TURKSOY develops its relations primarily with UNESCO by initiating joint activities on the preservation of intangible cultural heritage. In this framework, an internet site was created and declared as Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of TURKSOY. For the first time, a meeting of UNESCO National Committees was held to allow a closer cooperation between TURKSOY and UNESCO National Committees. Inspired by the UNESCO, TURKSOY started to dedicate each year to one of Turkic eminent personalities of the cultural and artistic world.

32. Other events organized by TURKSOY are the Nevruz celebrations in the UNESCO headquarters and USA, and painting exhibitions in the headquarters of the Council of Europe, in Germany, Luxemburg, Lithuania and Italy along with other events to celebrate and promote Turkic culture.

IV. INTERACTION BETWEEN THREE ORGANIZATIONS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

33. In order to shape a joint pattern for economic, political and cultural cooperation among Turkic-speaking states three organizations cooperate with each other. Presently, such relationships are maintained through mutual participation in events and creation of basis for the coordination activities. The Turkic Council and TURKPA in their adopted documents reiterate their support to the each other activities. Thus, TURKPA in its Astana Declaration adopted at the 2nd Plenary Session in 2011 expresses its readiness to continue implementation of summit declarations by contributing to effective interaction with the Turkic Council and TURKSOY.

34. Summit Declarations of the Turkic Council emphasize the importance of inter-parliamentary dimension in strengthening political dialogue amongst Turkic states. Heads of states repeatedly commended contribution of TURKPA to the development of cooperation among the parliaments of member countries. Apart from common support, the Council called upon TURKPA to organize parallel theme debates in the member parliaments on the aims of the Turkic Council with a view to giving impetus to its work, as well as instructed the ministers of foreign affairs to accelerate joint efforts within the OSCE to increase the visibility of the Turkic Council and TURKPA. Both these aspects are reflected in the Bishkek Declaration adopted during the 2nd Summit on 23 August 2012.

35. With regard to TURKSOY, the Turkic Council emphasizes its role in performing an important task in identification, enrichment, expansion and promotion of the common values and in deepening cultural relations among Turkic speaking states and peoples. Moreover, the Turkic Council supported a number of TURKSOY's initiatives, such as declaring one city as a capital of the Turkic World, and joint initiative to propose new Turkic heritage items to UNESCO.

36. At the same time, interaction between three organizations may be strengthened by implementation of joint projects and institutionalization of common activities. Such interaction will contribute to consolidation of efforts and undertakings for enforcing the relations with international community.

37. Close interaction between Turkic Council and TURKPA represents particular importance due to the fact that interaction between parliamentary and traditional diplomacy becomes another reality in the framework of multilateral cooperation process. In this context, enhanced relationships between two organizations contribute to promotion of political dialogue and exchange of views among Turkic-speaking states at the various levels.

38. Institutionalized cooperation between three organizations will give impetus to the development of mutual relations in the field of trade and economy, and in particular, in the fields of industry, agriculture, transport and communication. Increasing geographic and strategic importance of the regions where Turkic people live, revealed the importance of cooperation and close association in the front of new challenges. The strengthening of multilateral relations and a regular character in the process of integration among Turkic nations is conditioned by close coordination activities of three organizations.