
AZERBAIJAN-TURKEY STRATEGIC ALLIANCE DEEPENS AMID RECENT CONFLICTS

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23.09.2020

Geopolitical monitor (22 September 2020)

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The relationship between Azerbaijan and Turkey has been on a developing course since the very beginning of the formers post-Soviet independence, and has now arguably reached its hitherto peak. The unequivocal support by Turkish leaders to Azerbaijan amidst the escalation of its conflict with Armenia, the subsequent joint exercises and drills between their armed forces, and frequent mutual visits of high-ranking officials regardless of the pandemic are some of the highlights in the bilateral relations of the two countries in recent months. While the ethnic kinship and cultural proximity constitute the cornerstone of these bonds, these are common interests and security threats that lead the two brotherly nations toward building a strategic alliance.

One nation, two states

The two Turkic states that often laud their bonds under the motto one nation, two states have to deal with common security threats posed by Armenias territorial claims and Russias military presence and security interests in the South Caucasus. Armenia hosts Russias military base in Gyumri, a city 10 kilometers away from the Turkish border, which is supposed to serve, among others, Russias aim to exert pressure on Turkey from its eastern borders. It is widely assumed that Armenia would have not been able to sustain its control over the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan and surrounding districts without Russian military support.

These threats were out there since the collapse of the Soviet Union, but they have recently gained momentum following reckless statements from Armenias leadership, the military attacks (July 12 – 15) by the armed forces of Armenia on the Tovuz district of Azerbaijan where all the transportation and energy routes (such as the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline, Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline, and Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway) connecting Azerbaijan and Turkey pass through, and Russias increasing arms supply to Armenia in the wake of Tovuz escalation.

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