

# The Function of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus's Participation in Organization of Turkic States




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*\*Ersin Tatar was born in 1960 in Nicosia, the capital of Cyprus. He completed his primary and secondary education in Cyprus and his high school and university education in England. After graduating from Cambridge University in 1982, he worked in the UK Headquarters of Price Waterhouse, the most important auditing and financial consultancy company in the world, until 1986. He worked as the Finance Manager at Polly Peck Company in England between 1986-1990, at FMC-Nurol Defense Industry Inc. in Ankara between 1990-1992, and as Financial Affairs Coordinator at Show TV between 1992-2001. In 1996, he founded "Kanal T", the first private television channel of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. In the 2009 general elections, he was elected as a deputy from the UBP and entered the parliament. Ersin Tatar, who served as the Minister of Finance in 2009, was elected as the Chairman at the UBP Congress held in 2018. He became the Prime Minister of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus on May 22, 2019. He became the 5th President of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus by winning the first round on October 11 and the second round on October 18, 2020.*

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## ABSTRACT

A just, realistic, practical and sustainable solution in Cyprus can be achieved not through the virtual status granted to the Greek Cypriot leadership by the international community over the years, overstepping its authority, sovereignty and power, but through the current realities on the island, namely the establishment of a structured cooperative relationship between the two sovereign states. This “win-win” situation will not only bring many political and economic gains to the Greek and Turkish sides of the island, but will also serve as a catalyst for the resolution of the problems in the Eastern Mediterranean and beyond. Thanks to the Organization of Turkic States (OTS), it has become possible to reinforce cooperation in areas such as politics, security, trade and energy, which have been longed for and needed in the Turkic World for years. TRNC, with all its institutions and organizations, wishes to take part in all areas where the OTS operates and to develop relations. We think that the internationally renowned Famagusta Port, Gemikonağı Port, and Ercan Airport of the TRNC offer the OTS a number of advantages. Our ultimate objective in this domain is to establish the TRNC as a dependable transit nation for maritime transportation and as a regional center for civil aviation. With the membership of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus to the OTS, the connection between the Turkic world and the Mediterranean was established. It is also of great importance to us that the OTS takes an active role in the development of the Middle Corridor.

**Keywords:** Middle Corridor, Organization of Turkic States, Sister Ports Program, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Turkic World Vision - 2040.

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## Introduction

THE ISLAND OF CYPRUS, ON WHICH the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, the southernmost independent Turkish Republic of the Turkic World, is located, is the third largest island in the Mediterranean, situated at the intersection of three continents. The island has a unique strategic and geographical position and

importance in the Eastern Mediterranean.

The Turkish Cypriots took ownership of their own destiny by waging great struggles on the island, gained their freedom as a result of the 1974 Happy Peace Operation, and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, which we established in 1983, became the second Turkish state in the Turkic World, after the Republic of Türkiye, to gain its independence by waging a war of liberation.

## **The Path to a Solution: Two Sovereign States with Equal Rights on the Island**

The Turkish Cypriot people are one of the signatories of the 1960 treaties and have an inherent right to sovereign equality and equal status with the Greek Cypriot side. This is not a new or demanded right, but a fundamental right that the Greek Cypriot side has been trying to usurp and forget for years. The TRNC, a state with all its democratic institutions, is at least as legitimate a state as the so-called Republic of Cyprus, which has turned into a Greek Cypriot state.

A just, realistic, practical and sustainable solution in Cyprus can be reached not with the virtual status granted to the Greek Cypriot leadership by the international community for all these years by exceeding its authority, sovereignty and power, but with the current realities on the island, namely the establishment of a structured cooperative relationship between the two sovereign states. This “win-win” situation will not only bring many political and economic gains to both the Greek and Turkish sides of the island, but will also serve as a catalyst for the resolution of issues in the Eastern Mediterranean and beyond.

### **Participation of TRNC in OTS**

On November 11, 2022, at the Samarkand Summit, the Turkish family assembly made a historic decision by unanimously granting observer member status to the TRNC. For the first time, TRNC became a member of an international organization under its constitutional name. I would like to take this oppor-

tunity to thank once again the President of the Republic of Türkiye, Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye, Mr. Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu,

**Thanks to the Organization of Turkic States (OTS), which has now turned into an international organization and at the same time laid the foundation for a unique and effective structure, it has become possible to strengthen cooperation in areas such as politics, security, trade and energy, which the Turkic World has longed for and needed for years.**

the Turkish diplomacy who worked hard to bring us this happiness, and the heads of state and government of all member states who supported us.

Thanks to the Organization of Turkic States (OTS), which has now turned into an international organization and at the same time laid the foundation for a unique and effective structure, it has become possible to strengthen cooperation in areas such as politics, security, trade and energy, which the Turkic World has longed for and needed for years. This union will not only reinforce the existing fraternal ties, but will also constitute the main part of the bridge from the Eastern Mediterranean to Central Asia as a collective defense mechanism to protect the Turkic World from common dangers. The OTS, which has the



potential to make the 21st century the Turkic century and at the same time to profoundly affect all political balances, has become even stronger with the accession of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

As the President of the Republic of Türkiye, Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan himself stated, with the participation of the TRNC, the family picture of the Turkic world has been completed. With the participation of the TRNC, the OTS has become much stronger.

### Unfair isolation on the TRNC

Unfortunately, after all these developments, the Greek Cypriot mentality, which has been going on for years, has been on alert and they have increased their efforts to continue the unjust and unlawful isolation imposed on the TRNC before all international organizations and countries they are members of in violation of international law, including the European Union.

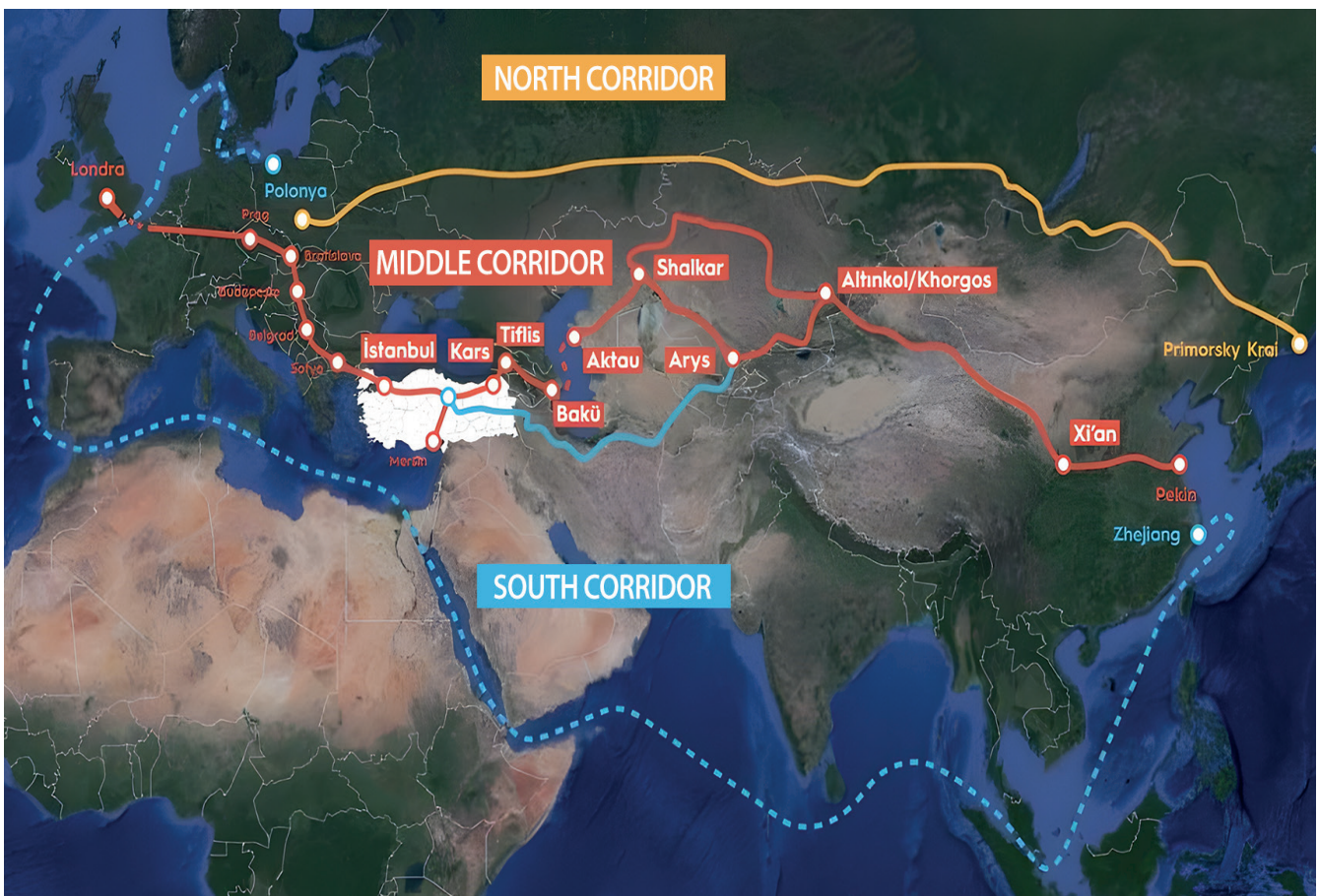
In response to these unjust and unlawful moves, it is imperative that we, as the Turkic World, act in unity. In this context, it is very important that the President of Azerbaijan, Mr. Ilham Aliyev, officially invited the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus to the informal Summit meeting of the OTS held in Shusha, Azerbaijan in July. Mr. Aliyev had previously made an official statement that “from now on, the flag of the TRNC will fly in Azerbaijan”. Following this statement, during my official visit to Baku, I was welcomed with an official sta-

te ceremony and had an official meeting with Mr. Aliyev at the presidential palace.

**TRNC is ready to contribute to the Middle Corridor**

In my speech at the Susha Summit, I underlined the following points:

Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, which is an integral part of the Turkic world and the guardian of the Turkish presence in the Eastern Mediterranean, wishes to take part



It is also of great importance for TRNC that Organization of Turkic States plays an active role in the development of the Middle Corridor (Figure: UAB, 2021).

and develop relations with all its institutions and organizations in all areas where the OTS operates. We think that the internationally renowned Famagusta Port, Gemikonağı Port, and Ercan Airport of the TRNC offer the OTS a number of advantages. Our ultimate objective in this domain is to establish the TRNC as a dependable transit nation for maritime transportation and as a regional center for civil aviation. An application has been made to the Secretariat of the OTS by our relevant Ministry for the inclusion of the Famagusta Port in the 'Sister Ports' Program of the OTS. The expectation of the Turkish Cypriot people is that the request of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus to be included in the Sister Ports Memorandum of Understanding will be met positively. The inclusion of the Famagusta Port in the Sister Ports project of the OTS will be a very important support and message against the unjust and unlawful isolation and oppression imposed on the Turkish Cypriot people. With the membership of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus to the OTS, the connection between the Turkic world and the Mediterranean was established. It is of great importance for us that the OTS also takes an active role in the development of the Middle Corridor. It is also of great importance to us that the OTS takes an active role in the development of the Middle Corridor. In the document of Organization's "Turkic World 2040 Vision", special importance is given to the development of economic relations between our family councils, and within this framework, it is emphasized that cooperation in the fields of transportation and logistics should be strengthened. In the Vision Document, I salute our determination to strengthen cooperation in

transportation, especially in the International East-West Middle Transportation Corridor Crossing the Caspian Sea and the Zangezur Corridor, and I would like to express that we are ready to make every contribution that falls upon us.

### TRNC is ready to Increase Relations with OTS

All these historical steps are examples of what the member states of the OTS should do against the TRNC as children of the same nation. As the TRNC, we are ready to increase our relations with the brother countries that are members of the OTS. I hope that we can bring our relations with other member states of the OTS to the same level we brought with Azerbaijan in the near future.

With the acceptance of the TRNC to the OTS, the message that the Turkish Cypriots are not alone has been given to the whole world once again. The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is slowly and gradually gaining acceptance from the international community. This year, as we celebrate the 41st anniversary of our Republic, we will continue our honorable struggle without slowing down, taking even more courage from these positive developments that carry our status forward. 🌸

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