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ANALYSING THE TURKIC VECTOR OF AZERBAIJAN'S FOREIGN POLICY - TGP- 14.04.2024

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The Organisation of Turkic States (OTS) is one of the main foreign policy initiatives of Azerbaijan. In his swearing-in ceremony in February 2024 Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev described the OTS as the main international organisation for Azerbaijan and announced that Bakus future foreign policy goal would be focused on making the OTS one of the main international organisations in the world. Engagement with the Central Asian Turkic states is strategically significant in Azerbaijans foreign policy. First and foremost, the ongoing geopolitical turmoil in the neighbourhood leaves Azerbaijan as a vital link on a geographical route for Central Asian states bypassing both Russia and China in their engagement with the external world.

The issue of economic diversification, particularly in the form of the diversification of energy routes, makes Azerbaijan a strategic route for Kazakhstan to export its oil to Western and world markets without using the existing traditional route through Russia. Kazakhstan and Azerbaijans state oil companies, KazMunayGas and SOCAR, signed an agreement in March 2024 on a gradual increase in the transit of Kazakh oil via Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan expressed willingness to increase receipt of Kazakh oil to 2.2 million tonnes annually. The usage of Azerbaijani energy pipelines, in particular the Baku-Supsa and Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipelines, has become a strategic necessity for Kazakhstan to export its oil to world markets. Oil shipment via Azerbaijan will gradually grow to 16.5

million barrels a year, double the 2023 figure. Azerbaijans recent participation in Central Asian summits as well as the joint summits and meetings of Central Asian states and the Gulf countries GCC is also a new trend in its foreign policy and highlights the strategic importance of Baku for Turkic states. The areas of cooperation are huge and cover strategically important topics such as logistics, trade, energy routes, and economic and security aspects. Considering that the US, Germany and UK have rapidly increased their engagement with the Central Asian Turkic states since the Russia-Ukraine war, and that the US and Germany have institutionalised their engagements in the format of 5+1, Azerbaijans strategic role for these countries is also growing.

To read the rest of the article, please click: https://thegeopolitics.com/analysing-the-turkic-vector-of-azerbaijans-foreign-policy/

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