



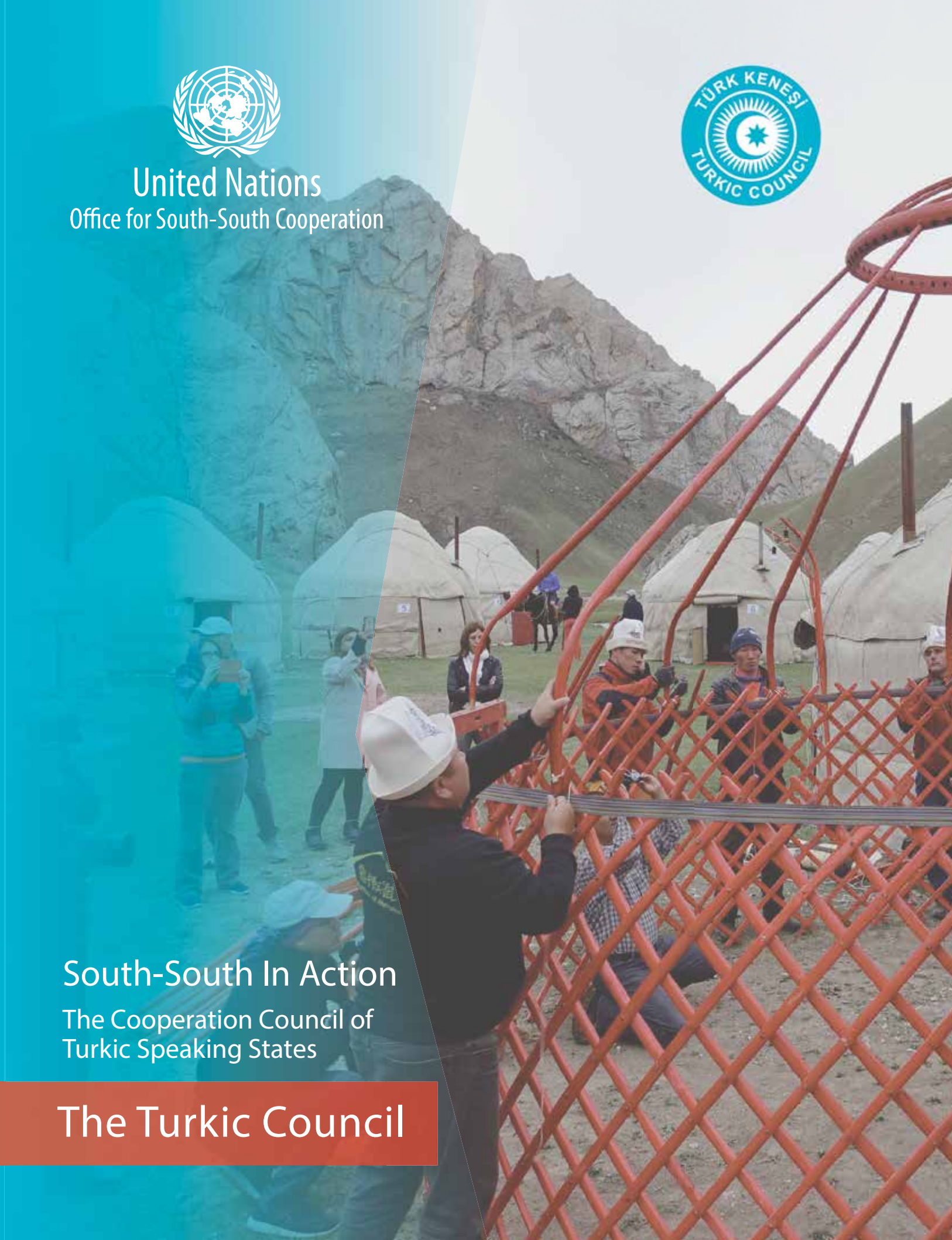
United Nations
Office for South-South Cooperation



South-South In Action

The Cooperation Council of
Turkic Speaking States

The Turkic Council



South-South in Action Series

The Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States (The Turkic Council)

HOW A REGIONAL ORGANIZATION USES SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION TO PROMOTE REGIONAL AND GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AIDA	Azerbaijan International Development Agency	NGO	Non-governmental organization
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations	ODA	Official development assistance
BSEC	Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization	OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
CSTO	Collective Security Treaty Organization	OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
CICA	Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia	OIC	Organisation of Islamic Cooperation
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States	SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (of the OECD)	SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
EAEU	Eurasian Economic Union	SESRIC	Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries
ECIS	Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States	TIKA	Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency
ECO	Economic Cooperation Organization	TUROFED	Turkish Hoteliers Federation
GDP	Gross domestic product	TURSAB	Association of Turkish Travel Agencies
HDI	Human Development Index	UN DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat
ICSS	International Centre for Sport Security	UNAOC	United Nations Alliance of Civilizations
ICT	Information and communications technology	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development	UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
IsDB	Islamic Development Bank	UNOSSC	United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency	UNRC	United Nations Resident Coordinator
KAP	Development Assistance Capacity Programme, Turkey	UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organizations
KOICA	Korea International Cooperation Agency	WTO	World Trade Organization
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding		

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Foreword

South-South cooperation presents a dynamic and innovative toolbox to surmount today's challenges in the development ecosystem and to serve as an important toolbox to address the needs of people. This toolbox that values partnership among equals based on the principles of solidarity and ownership constitutes a key instrument towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

As a regional inter-governmental organization and a responsible international actor with inclusive and comprehensive approach, the Turkic Council attributes utmost importance to South-South cooperation in its endeavors to foster collaboration among its member States and across the region. Thus, our member States – Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey – boldly uses the South-South spirit in their individual efforts in development cooperation.

The Turkic Council accumulates its efforts through the realization of result-oriented projects in different sectors to support the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with the idea of leaving no one behind. While doing so, we locate human and institutional capacity-building, experience-sharing and exchange of good practices in a wide range of areas that we operate at the core of our working mechanism.

Firmly believing in the strength of South-South cooperation for our region, we are honoured to take part in this new series of UNOSSC publications, as the first regional organization. Hence, we recognize that these series of publications present a remarkable initiative providing necessary ground to exchange home-grown solution models which

contribute to ensure sustainable development worldwide.

In this publication, we will share with you the ways and means regarding how the Turkic Council implements the South-South cooperation in promoting sustainable development at regional and global levels while we will focus on certain specific case studies in the cooperation areas such as tourism, customs and diplomacy. We will also concentrate on the close linkage of our activities in different cooperation fields with the SDGs.

As the Turkic Council, we are committed to carrying on our fruitful collaboration with the UNOSSC and our partners to expand South-South cooperation in our region taking into account the fact that we need to join our hands to leave a better world for our next generation.



Ambassador Ramil Hasanov
Secretary General of the Turkic Council

Foreword

Initiated in 2016, South-South in Action (SSiA) is UNOSSC's flagship publication series. It is designed to create a space for United Nations Member States, intergovernmental organizations, and other stakeholders to share the foundations of their successful South-South and triangular development activities, so that others can replicate these experiences.

Our Office is proud to present this publication together with the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States, also known as the Turkic Council. Comprised of countries of the South, linked through a shared history, culture, and language, the Turkic Council builds on a set of values and political commitments that have established a solid institutional basis for a systematic approach to mutually beneficial cooperation.

Regional organizations such as the Turkic Council see South-South and triangular cooperation as instrumental in promoting collaboration among their member States in order to solve common problems and attain common aspirations. This publication demonstrates how the Turkic Council has built a platform for South-South cooperation that facilitates fostering knowledge and exchanging experience among its members. With a strong focus on knowledge-sharing and capacity development, the Turkic Council is taking an active role in raising awareness on South-South and triangular cooperation, but in the region as well as globally.

This publication demonstrates that South-South cooperation can be used in different formats and various sectoral areas. The Turkic Council serves as a match-maker and supporter in the development of its member States. It also works to consolidate partnerships with

international organizations, academia, and the private sector incorporating the sustainable development priorities defined in the national agendas of its member States.

The experiences presented in this publication represent good samples of South-South cooperation among countries with a shared cultural and linguistic heritage. Moving forward, these experiences will serve to facilitate a smooth and low-cost exchange of expertise and knowledge. It is my hope that this publication will encourage other countries and regional organizations to effectively utilize South-South and triangular cooperation, as a complement to North-South cooperation, toward the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jorge Chediek'.

Jorge Chediek

Envoy of the Secretary-General
on South-South Cooperation
and Director, United Nations Office
for South-South Cooperation

Acknowledgements



Traditional Yurt Making Master Class, May 2017, Tash Rabat, Kyrgyzstan

The Turkic Council and UNOSSC would like to acknowledge the contribution of all parties involved in compiling the publication. The case studies would not have been possible without the inputs of trainers and training participants, whose willingness to participate in the interviews has been greatly appreciated. We furthermore extend our thanks to the staff of the Turkic Council Secretariat who constituted the publication committee: Ömer Kocaman, Pelin Musabay Baki, Dastan Almen and Jeyhun Shahverdiyev. Further thanks are extended to the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation staff members whose contributions included substantive advice, overseeing the production of the report, liaising with the publication committee and arranging final editing and layout of document: Edem Bakhshish, Michael Stewart, Sayyora Arifdjanova, and Alyssa Kilic.

Executive Summary

Regional organizations are important partners in South-South cooperation and for the global community in its efforts to reach the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Established in 2009, the Turkic Council is a regional organization that works towards fostering cooperation among Turkic-speaking States and across the region. It brings together four member States (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey) whilst engaging with several partner countries. This report aims at familiarizing the reader with the wide range of activities undertaken by Turkic Council, and the way that South-South cooperation mechanisms are used by the organization and its member States. The report describes the institutional set-up of the Turkic Council and its member States for South-South cooperation, with a particular focus on partnerships with other multilateral organizations. At the heart of the report, three concrete initiatives by the Turkic Council in the fields of tourism, customs and diplomacy are presented and analysed based on information provided by the Turkic Council as well as interviews with participants and trainers.

There are several lessons to be learned for other regional organizations from the Turkic Council's experience with South-South cooperation to foster sustainable human development. First, South-South cooperation must be based on an agreed set of values and political commitment. In the case of the Turkic Council, the Nakhchivan Agreement –

the organization's founding document from 2009 - has firmly enshrined the principles of cooperation of the organization. Second, thematic areas for cooperation need to address concrete challenges and must emerge through consultative processes. The Turkic Council decides on one specific technical topic each year, which then is taken forward in collaboration with member States with a strong focus on knowledge-sharing and capacity development. Third, in today's interconnected world and to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, partnerships with other stakeholders both in and outside of the region are essential. To this end, the Turkic Council has successfully been building partnerships with international organizations, academia, and the private sector. The report concludes that the Turkic Council is in a unique position to take on an active role in raising awareness on South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation in its member States and beyond.

Introduction

Today's global challenges and the geopolitical shifts that have occurred make regional cooperation indispensable. Established in 2009, the Cooperation Council of the Turkic Speaking States (referred to as the "Turkic Council") is a regional organization that aims to foster comprehensive cooperation among Turkic-speaking States and beyond. Currently, the Turkic Council brings together Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkey. Despite its young age, the organization has established itself as a rising regional actor in Eurasia in a broad range of cooperation areas.

"Together, we have a greater capacity to contribute to regional stability and development."

Ambassador Ramil Hasanov, Secretary General, The Turkic Council (Turkic Council, 2015, p. 4)

The Turkic Council supports regional and global development through comprehensive cooperation among its member States as well as with partner States and organizations, with a strong focus on confidence-building, capacity development and the sharing of knowledge and experience. The work of the Turkic Council is characterized by a pragmatic and practical orientation, based on the needs of member States. Consequently, activities are wide-ranging in terms of thematic areas

and include economy, customs, transport, alternative energy, tourism, education, culture, science, foreign policy, media, information and communications technology (ICT), youth, sports, and diaspora. In order to implement decisions taken during its Heads of States Summits, Ministerial and working group meetings in the respective areas of cooperation, the Turkic Council carries out tailored activities ranging from organizing expert visits to customs stations of its member States, to providing targeted vocational training in tourism and organizing conferences on pressing global issues.¹ It is in this context that South-South cooperation, in particular the exchange of knowledge and experiences, has turned out to be a useful approach for the Turkic Council. The objective of this report is to examine to what extent and how the Turkic Council as a regional organization, as well as its member States, uses South-South cooperation to contribute to regional and global development.

The report is organized as follows: The introduction familiarizes the reader with the Turkic Council. It also sets the overarching analytical framework of South-South cooperation and its contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Chapter I discusses the institutional set-up of the Turkic Council and its member States for South-South cooperation, with a particular focus on partnerships with other multilateral organizations. Chapter II presents and analyses concrete examples of South-South cooperation activities undertaken by the Turkic Council in three selected areas:

¹ For a comprehensive overview of the activities of the Turkic Council, see the 2016 Annual Report of the Turkic Council, available at <http://www.turkkon.org/en-US/the-annual-report-2016-of-the-turkic-council-is-published-and-now-available-on-our-website/301/352/352/3836>.

tourism, customs, and diplomacy. In Chapter III, the relationship between the Turkic Council's activities and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is discussed. Finally, some lessons learned as well as suggestions are presented to the Turkic Council as a regional organization to take South-South cooperation to the next level. These may also be of relevance to other organizations working at the regional level.

The Turkic Council and the Region at a Glance

The establishment of the Turkic Council is closely linked to the fundamental political and economic shifts that came over Europe and Eurasia in the early 1990s. The fall of the Iron Curtain, the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the break-up of Yugoslavia had deep repercussions for the Eurasian continent.

These political shifts have been followed by the emergence of new organizations and groupings, pointing to new and/or revived alliances in the region.

In 1991, five Turkic-speaking republics that were former parts of the Soviet Union declared their independence and sovereignty: Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Turkey was among the first countries to recognize their independence. Building on common historical origins as well as an ethnic and linguistic affinity, the idea to create a forum for Turkic-speaking States was first conceived in the early-1990s. In 1992, the presidents of six Turkic-speaking States - Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan - met in Ankara for the First Summit of the Heads of Turkic Speaking States. Followed by series of subsequent summits,² the Turkic Council was

² Summits of the Heads of Turkic-Speaking States: Ankara Summit in 1992, Istanbul Summit in 1994, Bishkek Summit in 1995, Tashkent Summit in 1996, Astana Summit in 1998, Baku Summit in 2000, Istanbul Summit in 2001, Antalya Summit in 2006, Nakhchivan Summit in 2009 and Istanbul Summit in 2010. The ensuing declarations are available at <http://www.turkkon.org/en-US/1992-2010-summit-process/302/926>.

11th Summit of Turkic-Speaking States, Nakhchivan Summit, 2009, Azerbaijan



established in 2009 in the city of Nakhchivan, the capital of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan.³ The founding and current members of the organization are Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkey.

The vision of the Turkic Council is to contribute towards “building a stronger Eurasia in harmony and prosperity” (Turkic Council 2015, p. 4). The Turkic Council functions as an intergovernmental cooperation organization. It is guided by the common political will emerging from the Summits of the Heads of States of the Turkic Speaking States. In addition to focusing on specific themes, the Turkic Council fosters comprehensive cooperation among its member States and in the region via various programmes and projects both at regional and global levels.

Today, the Turkic-speaking states⁴ are confronted with particular development challenges and opportunities. For one, they include countries that are rich in hydrocarbon energy and minerals (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan). These economies have been hard-hit by falling oil prices⁵ and decreasing oil outputs⁶, they need to reinforce their efforts to lessen their dependence on hydrocarbons and diversify their economies. The Central Asian member States are land-locked countries, making effective transport connectivity a pressing issue for them. At the same time, it has been argued that the prospect of increasingly competitive land routes – in terms of cost, speed and security – provide them with distinct comparative advantages when it comes to facilitating intraregional and interregional trade with Europe and Asia (Akiner, 2013).

The Turkic-speaking states at a glance

The Turkic-speaking states - Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan - account for a population of around 150 million, cover an area of over 4.5 million square kilometers, and have a total GDP exceeding approximately US\$1.3 trillion, ranking 13th as a whole in the world (Turkic Council Annual Report 2016).

With regards to the demographic situation, the Turkic-speaking States experience population growth, exacerbating pressure on local and regional job markets.⁷ Challenges also remain in the field of institutional capacity development. This is why, notwithstanding the impressive development gains achieved, the latest regional Human Development Report for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) cautions that countries need to be on alert and adapt policies where needed to ensure further development. Among others, differences in income and wealth distribution are on the rise in several countries after years of improving equality. People who cannot participate in the formal labour market are particularly vulnerable, many of them being migrant workers and women. In addition, countries need to further strengthen their governance systems (UNDP 2016).

³ Nakhchivan Agreement on Establishment of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States, available at <http://www.turkkon.org/en-US/basic-documents/299/310>.

⁴ In the context of this report, the term “Turkic-speaking states” refers to independent countries which officially use one of the Turkic languages, a group of closely related languages that form a subfamily of the Altaic languages.

⁵ Since mid-2014, the oil price has fallen drastically from \$107.1 per barrel to just under \$30 per barrel at the beginning of 2016. As of 6 April 2017, the price per barrel stands at \$51.70 per barrel.

⁶ According to the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan (SOCAR), oil output decreased by 10% from 50.7 million tons in 2010 to 41.03 million tons in 2016.

⁷ This development is in stark contrast to many other ECIS countries which face population decline.

South-South and Triangular Cooperation: Setting the Stage

While South-South cooperation has been practiced widely in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, it is a relatively unknown concept in Europe and the CIS region. Yet, countries in the region have successfully been using the principles of South-South cooperation in their development efforts, often without being aware of it or referring to it as “East-East cooperation”. A recent report released by the United Nations notes that South-South and triangular cooperation has led to increased institutional and technical capacities at various levels of government, civil society and the private sector. It has also helped countries of the region to jointly tackle specific thematic priorities, such as child protection or mine action (UNDP/UNOSSC 2017).⁸ An illustrative example is the Child Protection Index,

which was introduced by a coalition of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). It has led to a regional learning platform on child issues and serves as an evidence-based policy tool for cooperation.

South-South cooperation is a partnership among equals, based on the principles of solidarity, respect for national sovereignty and ownership. It is not a substitute but a complement to North-South cooperation. For the purpose of this report, the following two definitions shall serve as the framework definitions for South-South and triangular cooperation.

- **South-South cooperation** is “(...) a process whereby two or more developing countries pursue their individual and/or shared national capacity development objectives through exchanges of



⁸ The said report is available at the following link: <https://www.unsouthsouth.org/2017/06/15/outh-south-and-triangular-cooperation-towards-sustainable-human-development-in-europe-and-the-commonwealth-of-independent-states/>.

knowledge, skills, resources and technical know-how, and through regional and interregional collective actions, including partnerships involving Governments, regional organizations, civil society, academia and the private sector, for their individual and/or mutual benefit within and across regions. South-South cooperation is not a substitute for, but rather a complement to, North-South cooperation” (United Nations 2016, SSC/19/3, para. 9).

- **Triangular cooperation** refers to development initiatives led and owned by Southern actors, supported by multilateral organizations and/or Northern partners. It “involves Southern-driven partnerships between two or more developing countries supported by a developed country(ies)/or multilateral organization(s) to implement development cooperation programmes and projects. Evidence shows that in many instances, Southern partners in development cooperation require the financial and technical support and expertise of multilateral and/or developed-country partners in the course of assisting other developing countries (see TCDC/9/3). Northern partners also benefit by being able to take advantage of increased institutional capacity in the South and to increase the impact of their aid disbursements by leveraging the sources of multiple Southern partners” (United Nations, 2016, SSC/19/3, para. 11).

As countries are seeking to make development cooperation more effective, South-South cooperation can be a useful tool. The United Nations General Assembly recognized in 2017 that “South-South cooperation is increasingly critical to bolstering the productive capacities of developing countries and has positive impacts on trade and financial flows,

technological capabilities and economic growth, and reiterating the importance of global partnerships” (UN General Assembly, 2017, A/Res/71/244). Table 1 provides an overview of potential benefits that countries in Europe and the CIS can reap when engaging in South-South cooperation.

Efforts surrounding South-South cooperation gained additional momentum when, in September 2015, world leaders came together in New York to adopt the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This new global agenda – building on the successes achieved by the Millennium Development Goals and addressing remaining and additional challenges – takes a more holistic approach towards development. It applies to all countries, developed and developing alike, recognizing that today’s challenges can only be met in an interconnected and system-based manner. Therefore, the global community has committed itself to jointly working towards the agreed 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including issues such as inequality, unsustainable consumption and production patterns, and lack of decent jobs.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development clearly identifies South-South cooperation as a critical element in reaching the SDGs. Specifically, it calls for “enhanc[ing] North-South, South-South and triangular regional and international cooperation on and access to science, technology and innovation and enhanc[ing] knowledge sharing on mutually agreed terms, including through improved coordination among existing mechanisms, in particular at the United Nations level, and through a global technology facilitation mechanism” (United Nations 2015, para 17.6, A/Res/70/1). Other international forums have also reiterated the central role of South-South cooperation, most recently the Global

Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation in the Nairobi Outcome Document (OECD/ UNDP 2017). UN Member States have, more recently, acknowledged “the need to enhance the development effectiveness of South-South cooperation by continuing to increase its mutual accountability and transparency as well as coordinating its initiatives with other development projects and programmes on the ground, in accordance with national development plans and priorities” (UN General Assembly, 2017, A/Res/71/244).

Table 1. Benefits offered by South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC/UNDP 2017)

Challenges faced by ECIS countries	Benefits offered by South-South cooperation
Diminishing financial resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capitalizing on the expertise and experiences of countries in the region • Facilitating substantial results with limited financial resources • Tapping into dedicated funding sources to foster regional cooperation
Specific development needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of recent and concrete experiences with regard to diverse issues • Availability of experts that have first-hand experience from similar processes in their home countries • Use of local knowledge
Need for experience-based advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of concrete, relevant experiences to encourage horizontal learning processes • Availability of experts that have first-hand experience from similar processes in their home countries • Sharing of experiences at the same level • Understanding of transition processes
Need for rapid and timely support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less bureaucratized exchange of experiences and experts • Lower cost
Addressing common challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exchange on specific issues • Creation of non-contentious discussion spaces to foster dialogue • Stimulating innovation
Cross-border issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of joint policies and strategies • Implementation of joint projects • Encouraging thinking in terms of systems and regional learning processes

The United Nations’ Support to South-South Cooperation

In response to calls from its Member States starting in the mid-1970s, the United Nations has taken on the role as a convener, a knowledge broker, and a partnership builder for South-South cooperation. It also monitors and analyzes progress regarding global, regional and country performance in South-South and triangular cooperation.

The responsibility for policy-making on South-South cooperation lies with the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation. Among UN entities, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC; see dedicated box) is at the forefront to advance South-South cooperation. Other UN organizations provide tailored support to advance South-South cooperation in their areas of work and expertise.

The United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC)

Originally established in 1974 as a unit to support technical cooperation among developing countries, UNOSSC acts today as a global and United Nations system-wide advocate for South-South cooperation. It provides advisory services to governments and has devised practical tools, such as the online South-South Cooperation Portal providing real-time access to development solutions from around the world (southsouthworld.org). Hosted by UNDP, the Office also organizes the annual Global South-South Development Expo. For more information, go to: www.unsouthsouth.org.

Picture: The Sustainable Development Goals



The Turkic Council as an Example of a Regional Organization using South-South Cooperation

As a regional organization, the Turkic Council has found that South-South cooperation provides a useful tool to achieve its goals. Experience has shown that South-South cooperation in Europe and the CIS region has a strong focus on the sharing of knowledge and experiences. The same pattern can be observed in the work of the Turkic Council. In addition, member States of particular groupings provide platforms and space for countries to discuss common challenges, as well as to identify and target common and national interests; they establish relatively strong coordination mechanisms by areas of cooperation and are able to pool resources for regional projects (UNOSSC 2015).

The Turkic Council's role in South-South cooperation can be considered as an example of a model characterized by the presence and profound influence of intra- and interregional organizations (UNDP/UNOSSC 2017). These regional groupings tend to have well-established and coordinated structures and funding mechanisms in place through which they enable South-South cooperation. Economic development, trade and investment promotion are often priority areas for these organizations. This is also the case for the Turkic Council, which has defined economic cooperation as its backbone. In addition, member States of these particular groupings cooperate on a wide array of different issues. Again, this holds true for the Turkic Council and will be discussed in further detail in Section II. In the case of Turkic Council, there is a strong focus on annual themes, e.g. economy, tourism, transport, education or youth.



Turkic Council First International Youth Camp, August-September 2015, Trabzon and Samsun, Turkey



Chapter I

Policy Framework and Structure for Delivering South-South and Triangular Cooperation

Policy Framework and Structure for Delivering South-South and Triangular Cooperation

The Mission of the Turkic Council

With an overarching goal of enhancing comprehensive cooperation and partnership among the Turkic-speaking States, the Turkic Council wants to “jointly contribute to strengthening peace, ensuring security and stability, in the region and in the world as a whole, in terms of development of processes of political multipolarity, economic and informational globalization” (Turkic Council, 2009, Preamble). The last two decades have also seen the emergence and evolution of other regional cooperation processes in Eurasia, such as the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). The Turkic Council has its own mandate and niche among these

economic, political or security unions. As Ambassador Ramil Hasanov, Secretary General of the Turkic Council, expressed during his address to the Meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council held on 23 July 2015 in Vienna, “with all its affiliated and related institutions, the Turkic Council has centred its efforts to strengthen cooperation among its member States with a view to contributing in the development of regional collaboration as well as intensifying interaction with regional and international actors.”⁹

Organizational Set-up of the Turkic Council

The Council of Heads of States is the main decision-making body of the Turkic Council; it brings together the leaders of the four

⁹ The speech is available at the following link: <http://www.osce.org/pc/175236?download=true>.

Annual Informal Meeting of Council of Foreign Ministers of the Turkic Council on the margins of 71st Session of the UN General Assembly, 2016, New York



Ramil Hasanov, Ambassador, Secretary General of the Turkic Council
 Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Turkey
 Erlan Idrissov, then Foreign Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan
 Elmar Mammadyarov, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Azerbaijan
 Erlan Abdyldaev, Foreign Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic

member States on an annual basis. Each member State has the same voting power. In addition, the foreign ministers meet at regular intervals before the annual summits, as well as on the margins of the UN General Assembly in New York (known as the Council of Foreign Ministers). The Senior Officials Committee prepares the relevant issues to be submitted to the Council of Ministers for their consideration and approval to be taken. The Council of Elders is the advisory body of the Turkic Council system.



9th Meeting of Council of Elders of the Turkic Council, August 2015, Gabala, Azerbaijan

17th Meeting of Senior Officials of the Turkic Council, February 2015, Astana, Kazakhstan

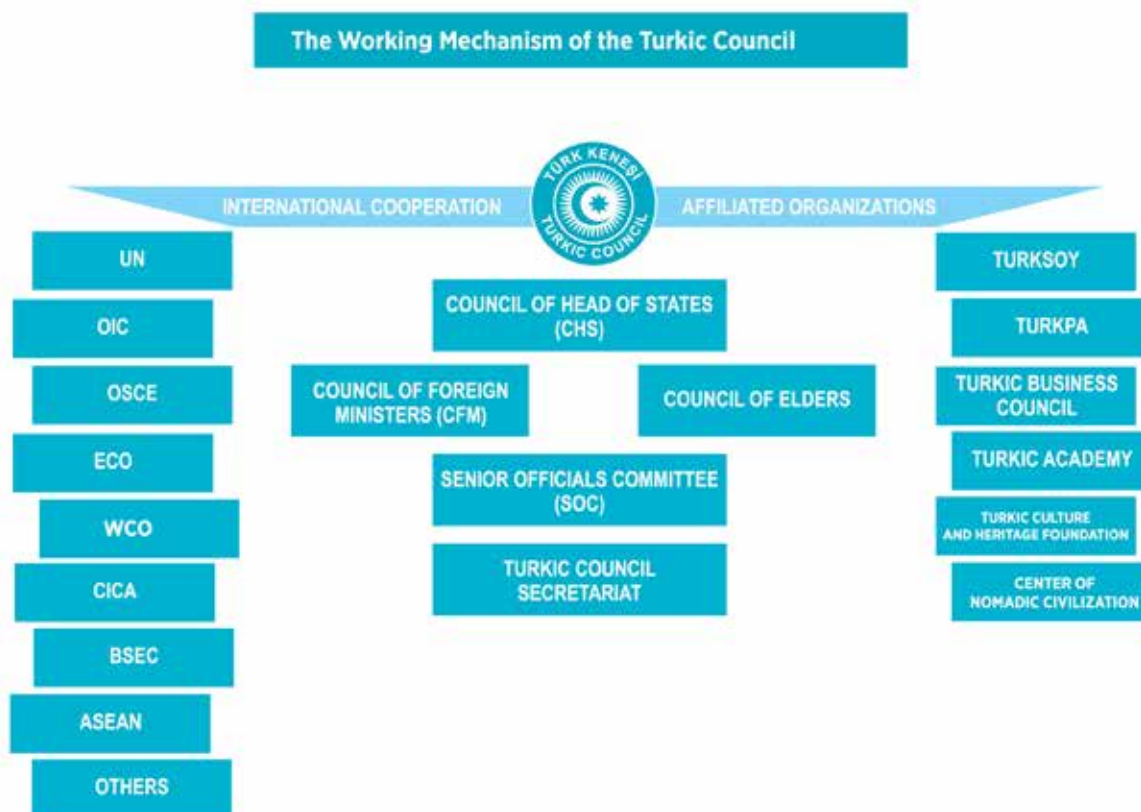


Moreover, the Turkic Council has several related institutions, all of which serve as platforms for cooperation in their respective areas (see box).

Box: Affiliated Organizations of the Turkic Council (Turkic Council 2016; shortened)

Affiliated Organizations of the Turkic Council

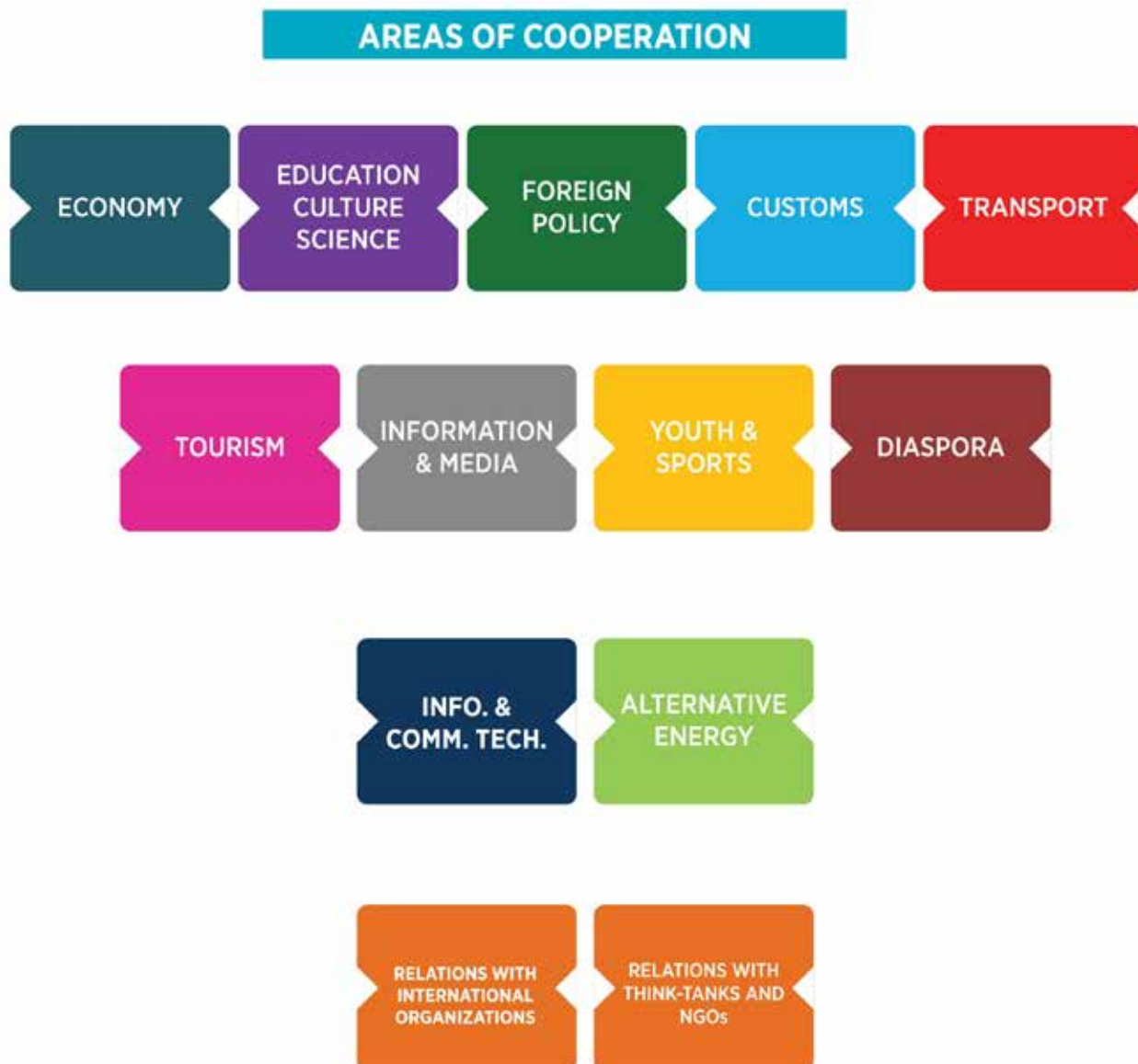
- TURKSOY (International Organization of Turkic Culture), established in 1993 in Ankara, aims at enhancing cooperation on the issues of education, science, culture and art.
- TURKPA (Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic-Speaking Countries), operational since 2008, headquartered in Baku, works towards inter-parliamentary cooperation among Turkic Speaking States.
- Turkic Business Council, established in 2011, aims at enhancing economic cooperation among Turkic countries through business events, forums and entities of Turkic Council member States.
- Turkic Academy, an international organization since 2012, based in Astana, conducts academic research in the field of history and culture of Turkic peoples.
- Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation, established in 2012, located in Baku, provides assistance for the protection, study and promotion of Turkic culture and heritage.
- Center of Nomadic Civilization, to be based in Bishkek, aims at creating an atmosphere of mutual trust and cooperation among the Turkic speaking peoples and other communities through organizing sport events and promoting the heritage of nomadic culture.



Areas of Cooperation and Modalities Used

The day-to-day work of the Turkic Council is run by a Secretariat based in Istanbul. The working languages of the Turkic Council are the official languages of its member States (Azerbaijani, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, and Turkish) as well as English. Member States jointly fund the Secretariat, while the participation of their representatives in events of the Turkic Council is financed by each member State itself. Working groups have been set up for each area of cooperation. The working groups meet on a regular basis, and their decisions are brought to the consideration of ministers at ministerial meetings (Turkic Council 2016).

The Turkic Council works on a wide array of cooperation areas, with a significant focus on South-South cooperation. Despite being a relatively new regional organization, the Turkic Council



attaches great importance to South-South cooperation and is active in the following fields: economic cooperation, customs, transport, alternative energy, tourism, education, culture, science, foreign policy, media, ICT, youth, sports, and diaspora.

In its projects, the Turkic Council puts a premium on capacity-building, technical assistance as well as the sharing of experience and the exchange of good practices. Taking a demand-driven and results-oriented approach, the Turkic Council first identifies bottlenecks in a specific area and then develops practical and systematic solutions to these issues.

A good illustration of this approach is the Turkic Council Modern Silk Road Joint Tour Project (Modern Silk Road Joint Tour). The goal of this ambitious project is to draw tourists to the region and enable them to discover the landmarks of the traditional Silk Road in Turkic Council member States through a ready-made tour package. At the same time, member States have identified the need to strengthen the capacities of tourism professionals through a large-scale vocational training programme to pass on knowledge from experienced Turkish tourism experts and practitioners.

Approach and Policy of the Turkic Council and its Member States to Development Cooperation, including South-South Cooperation and Triangular Cooperation

The Turkic Council supports its member States in participating in and promoting South-South cooperation, as articulated clearly by its leadership. The philosophy and principles of the Turkic Council – first conceived in the early 1990s and codified in 2009 - are in line with the spirit of South-South cooperation, making the Turkic Council a natural platform for promoting South-South cooperation among its member States.



"We certainly believe that South-South cooperation can and will help translate "possibilities in the development sphere into opportunities" and then "into benefits" by serving as the solid foundation of a new global and inclusive partnership."

Ambassador Ramil Hasanov, Secretary General of the Turkic Council, in his speech at the First Regional Networking Event for Arab States, Europe and the CIS, Dubai, 4 November 2016

The member States of the Turkic Council are at different stages in their development of South-South cooperation and international development activities in general. Turkey, and more recently, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan have started to establish themselves as providers of development cooperation. All three countries can draw on their established neighbourly relations as well as their own experience both as a developing nation and as a recipient of development cooperation. At the same time, they can also take into account lessons learned from decades of global development efforts. As established or emerging providers of development cooperation, they understand

the perspectives of developing countries and can share their own development experiences at same eye level, for example, through the exchange of knowledge and best practices.

It should be noted that some middle-income countries are eager to apply the standards and terminology of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD, while others choose to provide development cooperation under the framework of South-South cooperation (CAITEC/UNDP China 2013). At the same time, some countries are using terms pertaining to the traditional approaches of development cooperation, such as describing themselves as donors, while the substance and related processes of their cooperation portfolios reflect the spirit of South-South cooperation. At a recent UNDP conference, both the Azerbaijani and Turkish representatives noted that their countries consider all outgoing international development activities South-South cooperation.¹⁰ At a more fundamental level, it can be argued that the former divisions of South versus North have become less pronounced over the last few years (UNDP/UNOSSC 2017). This evolution is supported by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which commits all countries to action.

As mentioned earlier, the member States of the Turkic Council are at different stages in their development of South-South cooperation and international development activities in general. The following paragraphs will introduce the profiles and some of the activities of the member States related, but not limited, to South-South cooperation.

Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan has been a staunch supporter of South-South cooperation and its principles over the years. “Azerbaijan 2020: Look into the

future”, which represents the main strategic document guiding Azerbaijan’s development, underscores that “developing countries will be the main locomotive of global economic growth” (Government of Azerbaijan 2013, p. 7). This belief sets the tone for Azerbaijan’s increasing engagement with other developing countries, both in its immediate neighbourhood and in other regions of the world.

Today, Azerbaijan is both a recipient and provider of development cooperation efforts. In 2011, Azerbaijan consolidated its development cooperation efforts and established the Azerbaijan International Development Agency (AIDA) under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Azerbaijan has been focusing its support on humanitarian aid and targeted development cooperation activities. For example, Azerbaijan has used its highly-developed expertise in eye care to dispatch Azerbaijani eye doctors to Africa. While Azerbaijan uses the terminology of traditional forms of development cooperation, both the substance and approach of its international development activities are in the spirit of South-South cooperation; the country considers all its international development activities South-South cooperation. Azerbaijan has also been involved in triangular cooperation, for example, with the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) in Burkina Faso related to eye care.

In 2016, the Government of Azerbaijan supported a national stock-taking exercise on “Trends and opportunities in advancing South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Azerbaijan” conducted by the UN office in Azerbaijan and UNOSSC (UNOSSC/Office of UNRC 2016). The resulting report suggests that Azerbaijan has a comparative advantage in sharing its expertise in various fields of development: public service, education, labour and social protection, youth empowerment

¹⁰ UNDP “Financing for Development Days”, Istanbul, November 2017.

and mine action. Moreover, Azerbaijan can contribute its rich tradition in building a tolerant and multicultural society. Azerbaijan's flagship initiative to improve public service delivery, ASAN Service, has received particular attention in the region and beyond.¹¹ Through the ASAN Service Centres, Azerbaijani citizens have easy access to more than two hundred services of ten different government entities all in one place - from birth registration, to getting a passport and filing documents for customs clearance. As a successful practice of a technology-oriented, accessible, and corruption-free public service delivery mechanism, ASAN Service has been presented to other countries, including Afghanistan, Albania, Egypt, Iran, Italy, Serbia, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan has shown considerable interest in promoting the South-South cooperation dimension of its international work. To underline its commitment, Kazakhstan has appointed a national coordinator for South-South cooperation within the Ministry of National Economy. Kazakhstan can offer rich experience in civil service reform (e.g. e-governance), green economic growth (e.g. Green Bridge Partnership Programme), energy efficiency and sustainable city transport (e.g. pilot project "City of Almaty Sustainable Transport"/CAST). Kazakhstan has also been involved in small-scale knowledge exchanges on very specific topics. For example, it shared its experiences with Turkmenistan on how to tackle climate change risks to the farming system or on how to co-finance UNDP projects with government funds.

While Kazakhstan has only recently started to build its official development assistance (ODA) framework, it has come a long way in its preparatory work. In April 2013, the President approved the ODA concept for Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan has also become the first country

in the CIS to adopt a legislative framework of ODA. The ODA law of December 2014 mandates the establishment of a specialized national agency under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to manage the operational side of Kazakhstan's ODA portfolio. At the same time, Kazakhstan is seeking closer cooperation with the OECD DAC. Moreover, Kazakhstan has identified triangular cooperation as a useful approach to take its global engagement in development cooperation to the next level. In 2015, the Africa-Kazakhstan Partnership for the SDGs was launched. Through a partnership with UNDP, the initiative provides technical support to African ministries of foreign affairs and other relevant institutions on the implementation of the SDGs. This will also boost the exchange of information among African countries and with other countries outside of Africa and strengthen their participation in global debates. More recently, in 2016, Kazakhstan became a partner in a joint initiative with UNDP and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) on women's empowerment in Afghanistan.

Given its focus on civil service reform, the Government of Kazakhstan decided to establish a related centre of excellence in 2013. The Regional Hub of Civil Service in Astana is led by the Government of Kazakhstan with UNDP as its implementing partner. As a knowledge-sharing platform, the Hub connects 36 countries around the world to promote capacity development and the dissemination of innovative approaches for civil services in the Europe and CIS region and beyond. The Hub offers peer-to-peer learning, research and state-of-the-art virtual services on topics ranging from anti-corruption and civil service reform to diplomacy and public service delivery.

Kyrgyzstan

As a former Soviet republic, Kyrgyzstan has long-standing experience in engaging in cooperation for development with other countries. The National Sustainable

¹¹ "Asan" means "easy" in Azerbaijani.

Development Strategy for the Kyrgyz Republic from 2013 to 2017 (National Council for Sustainable Development of the Kyrgyz Republic 2012) provides for a fundamental reset of relations with its neighbours (Kazakhstan, China, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan) and a new level of strategic cooperation with the Russian Federation. In doing so, all neighbourly relations shall be based on the principles of mutual understanding, mutual benefit and partnership. Cooperation with other external partners shall be grounded in equality, respect of mutual interests and strict adherence to international law.

Kyrgyzstan has appointed a national coordinator for South-South cooperation within the Ministry of Economy. In 2015, Kyrgyzstan undertook a national stocktaking exercise on trends and opportunities for South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation for Kyrgyzstan (UNOSSC/Office of UNRC 2015). According to this stocktaking, a significant challenge to the further promotion of South-South cooperation is that the term itself is not known well, despite the fact that the concept and its spirit has been in use for decades. Therefore, the term needs to be (re-) introduced at different levels of government and civil society. As a result of the national stocktaking, an initial action plan is being implemented. Among other activities aimed at advancing the notion of South-South and triangular cooperation in the country, the plan includes the elaboration of a national strategy for South-South cooperation. Kyrgyzstan has also actively contributed to the development of the first regional report on South-South cooperation in Europe and the CIS (UNDP/UNOSSC 2017).

Kyrgyzstan has collected valuable development experiences that can be shared with other countries in the pursuit of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In particular, Kyrgyzstan can offer good practices in the development of democratic institutions, civil

society, sustainability (e.g. green indicators) and accountability of public institutions. In 2011, for example, Kyrgyzstan created public councils to improve the interaction between public administration and civil society. These councils are composed mainly of civil society volunteers; they monitor the work of public bodies, request information and make recommendations to them. As a result, public institutions have become more transparent. Moreover, ideas put forward to public councils have improved and modernized the work of public bodies. Furthermore, Kyrgyzstan has launched “Taza Koom”, a project on digital technology and e-governance to improve the interaction between the government, public administration authorities and citizens. Kyrgyzstan is also involved in knowledge exchange with eight peers from the Arab States, Europe and Central Asia related to agricultural development. This process is facilitated through the South-South and Triangular Cooperation for Agricultural Development and Enhanced Food Security (ADFS) partnership initiative, supported by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), IsDB and UNOSSC.

Turkey

Turkey has been engaging actively in South-South cooperation for decades. It considers the entirety of its development cooperation portfolio to be South-South cooperation. With a total development cooperation portfolio of almost \$6.2 billion in 2016, Turkey has become an important actor in global development. In 1992, Turkey established the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) as a dedicated government institution to implement Turkey’s international development activities with a particular view to Turkish engagement in other Turkic-speaking States in Central Asia. Turkey focused its initial support on countries in its immediate neighbourhood or

others with close historical or linguistic ties (Balkans, Caucasus, and Central Asia).¹² TIKA has since expanded its activities to Africa, Latin America, Asia and the Arab States, with a total of 58 coordination offices in 56 countries. TIKA also produces an annual report on the totality of Turkish development cooperation activities and reports to the OECD DAC¹³ on a voluntary basis.

In order to promote research and knowledge-sharing, Turkey has launched several centres of excellence. Established in 1996, the International Agricultural Research and Training Center (IARTC) works towards the sustainable use of ecological resources and the production of high-quality agricultural produce at the national and international levels. Three years prior, the OECD Ankara Multilateral Tax Centre was established to encourage non-OECD economies to adopt taxation practices that promote economic growth. In order to have a better overview over its pool of eligible experts, Turkey has set up a Development Assistance Capacity Programme (KAP) database. This database provides an overview of the training programmes and advisory services offered by public institutions. Turkey has, for example, provided knowledge to Viet Nam on social security administration reform; shared its own experience with Tajikistan on post-World Trade Organization (WTO) accession programming; and exchanged with Turkmenistan on energy efficiency and renewable energy for

sustainable water management.

Turkey attributes special importance to least developed countries (LDCs). This commitment was boldly expressed at the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC-IV) hosted by Turkey in Istanbul on 9-13 May 2011 and concretized by consecutive meetings and result-oriented projects. In this regard, in 2015, Turkey's assistance to LDCs increased by 109.5 per cent year-on-year, from \$211 to \$442 million, in other words, more than twice the original commitment. The establishment of an International Science, Technology and Innovation Center dedicated to LDCs, which will also serve as a "technology bank" in Turkey, has been another important step in this direction.¹⁴

Finally, Turkey is actively engaged in triangular cooperation (Hausmann, 2014; personal communication with TIKA Headquarters). Examples include work with JICA in the field of geosciences and industrial automation technologies, the IsDB with Burkina Faso on irrigation, with Bangladesh on the development of cotton varieties, with the Gambia on health, with Uganda on vocational training, with Pakistan on seismology, with the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) to support countries in combating human trafficking and with the Singapore Cooperation Programme on water resource management and sustainable food security.

¹² The first programme coordination offices of TIKA were established in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

¹³ Turkey is a founding member of the OECD; it is not a member of the OECD DAC.

¹⁴ For further information, please see TIKA's report "Turkey's Cooperation with Least Developed Countries" from 2016, available at <http://www.tika.gov.tr/upload/publication/LDC.pdf>.

Table 2: Overview of the Turkic Council Member States related to South-South Cooperation

	Azerbaijan	Kazakhstan	Kyrgyzstan	Turkey
Size ¹⁵	86,600 km ²	2,724,902 km ²	199,949 km ²	783,562 km ²
Population (2016, proj.) ¹⁶	9.9 million	17.9 million	6.0 million	79.6 million
Population growth rate (average annual; 2010-2015) ¹⁷	1.4%	1.6%	1.7%	1.7%
GDP/capita (current US\$, 2016) ¹⁸	\$3,876.90	\$7,510.10	\$1,077.00	\$ 10,787.60
Human Development Index (HDI; value of 2015)	0.759 (HDI rank: 77)	0.794 (HDI rank: 56)	0.664 (HDI rank: 120)	0.767 (HDI rank: 71)
Start of out-going development cooperation and institutional set-up	2011 AIDA (under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs)	2013 KazAID (in the process of being established)		Mid-1980s TIKA (under the Prime Minister's Office)
National South-South cooperation focal point	Yes (in the process of official appointment)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Participating in triangular cooperation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Partnerships with Regional and International Organizations

Over the last eight years, the Turkic Council has successfully built a network of partners in the international community. So far, the Turkic Council has established relations with 19 international organizations, first and foremost with the United Nations and its institutions centred around the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.¹⁹

¹⁵ UN (data.un.org), last checked 20 April 2017.

¹⁶ UN (data.un.org), last checked 20 April 2017.

¹⁷ UN (data.un.org), last checked 20 April 2017.

¹⁸ World Bank data, available from <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD>, last checked 19 August 2017.

¹⁹ These include the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Economic Cooperation for Europe (UNECE), the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), and the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

The Turkic Council has also developed ties with the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the European Union (EU), the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC), the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia (CICA), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the World Customs Organization (WCO), and the International Centre for Sport Security (ICSS). Moreover, the Turkic Council is supporting regional platforms and processes, such as the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process on Regional Security and Cooperation for a Secure and Stable Afghanistan.

The number of Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) signed with international organizations and offices currently stands at nine. The Turkic Council also became an observer member of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) in 2012, and has a pending observer status process at the United Nations General Assembly and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC).

Table 3: Overview of MoUs with international Organizations

Partner organization with MoU	Year
Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO)	2015
International Center for Sports Security (ICSS)	2015
UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)	2015
World Customs Organisation (WCO)	2015
Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)	2016
Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC)	2016
UN Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)	2016
UN Development Programme (UNDP)	2016
UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC)	2016



Cihan Sultanoğlu, Director of the UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, and Ambassador Ramil Hasanov, Secretary General of the Turkic Council, introducing the MoU between the two organizations in Istanbul, May 2016

Through the implementation of its MoU with UNDP, the Turkic Council contributes specifically to the promotion of the SDGs in its member States and in the region. The two organizations have agreed to carry out joint projects in specific areas such as tourism, ICT, renewable energy and preventing and countering violent extremism through the use of means for sustainable development. As a concrete result of their increasingly close collaboration, the Turkic Council and UNDP co-hosted an international conference on the role of ICT for Development in October 2015.

The Turkic Council is committed to establishing itself as a trusted partner at the global level. In addition to seeking partnerships, it has also organized high-level conferences, forums, workshops and round-tables with international partners. In 2016, for example, the Turkic Council together with the UN Alliance of Civilizations organized a conference on the role of youth in preventing and countering violent extremism. UNDP, UNOSSC and ICSS were partners in the conference. More than 300 young leaders and experts coming from 40 countries from Africa to Central Asia took part in the conference. During the conference,



Family Photo of the Turkic Council-UNAOC International Conference on the Role of Youth in Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism, 20-21 October 2016, Istanbul, Turkey

the Turkic Council also contributed to the “United Against Violent Extremism Campaign of the OSCE”. A concrete outcome of the event was the agreement among participants on the need to carry out “train-the-trainers” programmes in Turkic-speaking States to take action against extremism in the region. Therefore, the Turkic Council, in partnership with relevant international and regional actors, will design a capacity-building training to prevent and counter violent extremism through the empowerment of youth and women.

Increased Engagement with UNOSSC

UNOSSC takes on a special role with regards to South-South and triangular cooperation within the UN system. It is tasked with promoting South-South and triangular cooperation both

globally and within the UN system. Reflecting its interest and engagement in South-South cooperation, the Turkic Council has intensified its collaboration with UNOSSC.

In 2016, the Secretary General of the Turkic Council participated for the first time in the Global South-South Development Expo. The Secretariat also participated in a training course on “UN Catalytic Support to South-South & Triangular Cooperation in Implementing the Agenda 2030”, organized by the United Nations System Staff College Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development in cooperation with UNOSSC in December 2016 in Bonn. Furthermore, the Secretariat attended the UNOSSC Capacity Building Workshop in March 2016 in New York, where a presentation on the activities of the Turkic Council for the benefit of the global South was made.



Moreover, the Secretariat contributed to the preparation of the “Regional Report on South-South and Triangular Cooperation: Towards Sustainable Human Development in Europe

and the Commonwealth of Independent States”, a joint publication by UNDP and UNOSSC. The report notes the role of the Turkic Council as one of the key regional actors contributing to the expansion of South-South and triangular cooperation in the Europe and CIS region. The Turkic Council also took active part in the Global South-South Development Expo 2016. The same year, the Turkic Council also signed Memorandum of Understanding with UNDP and UNOSSC. Finally, the Global South-South Development Expo 2017 will be hosted by the Government of the Republic of Turkey in partnership with the Turkic Council and other relevant organizations on 27-30 November 2017 in Antalya, Turkey.



Jorge Chediek, Envoy of Secretary-General on South-South Cooperation and Director of UNOSSC, and Ambassador Ramil Hasanov, Secretary General of the Turkic Council, signing the MoU between the Turkic Council and UNOSSC in Istanbul, April 2016



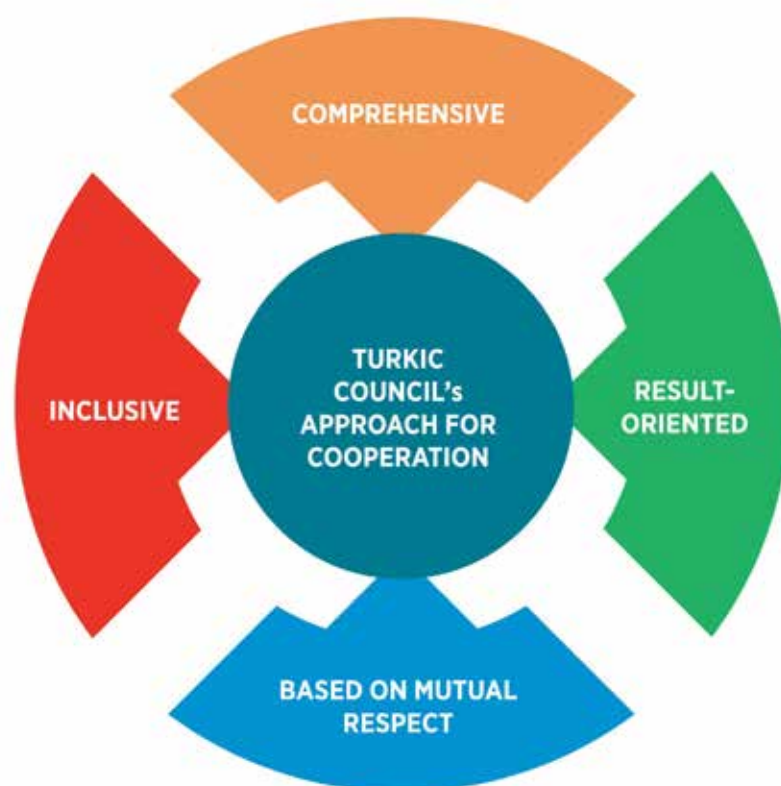
Chapter II

How South-South Cooperation is Applied by
the Turkic Council

How South-South Cooperation is Applied by the Turkic Council

Working Principles of the Turkic Council

The fundamental principle of the work of the Turkic Council is mutual respect among its member States. Concretely, this principle calls for equitable cooperation, respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, the inviolability of internationally recognized borders and non-interference in the internal affairs of member States and the development of good neighbourly relations. The Turkic Council also strives towards an inclusive, comprehensive and results-oriented approach to cooperation. These principles are largely in line with the principles established for South-South cooperation.



In its day-to-work, the Turkic Council identifies bilateral hurdles and then sets out to solve them through multilateral activities involving all its member States and, if appropriate, other countries and organizations. With regards to vocational training seminars and similar programmes, the Turkic Council pays attention to organizing activities in a cost-effective manner and to ensuring that the financial costs are shared fairly by all parties involved. In practice, this means that the host country where the training sessions are carried out covers the accommodation expenses and the sending institutions cover the travel expenses.

Annual Themes

Each Turkic Council Summit at the level of Heads of State is dedicated to a specific theme. As mentioned earlier, the Turkic Council has established working groups on each of its areas of cooperation. These working groups consist of experts of the relevant ministries and representatives of private sector. The working groups report to the Ministerial meetings that convene each year.

Table 4: Themes of Turkic Council Summits (2011-2017)

Summits of Heads of State of the Turkic Council	Place and date	Thematic area of the year
First Summit of the Turkic Council	Almaty, Kazakhstan, 20-21 October 2011	Economic cooperation
Second Summit of the Turkic Council	Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, 22-23 August 2012	Educational, Scientific and Cultural Cooperation
Third Summit of the Turkic Council	Gabala, Azerbaijan, 15-16 August 2013	Cooperation in transport and connectivity
Fourth Summit of the Turkic Council	Bodrum, Turkey, 4-5 June 2014	Cooperation in tourism
Fifth Summit of the Turkic Council	Astana, Kazakhstan, 10-11 September 2015	Cooperation in information and media
Sixth Summit of the Turkic Council	Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, 2017, TBD	Cooperation in youth and sports

Interactions with Member State Institutions, Academia, and the Private Sector as Players in South-South Cooperation

The Turkic Council is actively engaged with institutions, academia, and the private sector from its member States. As mentioned earlier, the cooperation areas of the Turkic Council are supported by so-called “Working Groups”. The membership of these working groups is diverse, reflecting the needs of the specific area of cooperation. The organization of international conferences is another indicator of the Turkic Council’s commitment to inclusive discussions to address development challenges both at regional and global levels.

For example, the international conference on ICT for development that the Turkic Council and UNDP jointly organized in 2015, served to spur discussions between senior representatives from governments, academia and the private sector and to foster regional cooperation on the

Example for Turkic Council Summits: IV. Turkic Council Summit on theme of Tourism Cooperation, Bodrum, Turkey, 2014





Brainstorming Session of the Turkic Council-UNDP International Conference, 28 October 2015, Istanbul, Turkey

topic. The conference brought together 150 participants from 15 countries, who exchanged their views and ideas on how to use ICT for development.

Furthermore, the Turkic Council is in close touch with universities in its member States, with which it organizes joint thematic conferences. In this regard, the International Turkic University Union of the Turkic Council²⁰ and its Student Council constitute the major bodies of the Council to foster relations with the universities in its member States.

The Turkic Council firmly supports the projects of its functioning affiliated organizations

such as TURKSOY, TURKPA, the Turkic Business Council and the International Turkic Academy, and submits the demands and needs of these organizations to the agenda of the Heads of States Summits. For example, the Turkic Council cooperates closely with the Turkic Academy in the area of education. A central project is the preparation of the "Common History Book", which member States wish to include in their curricula.

The private sector is an important partner of the Turkic Council regarding thematic cooperation. In the field of economy, customs, transport, tourism, alternative energy and ICT, the Turkic

²⁰ The Turkic University Union consists of 16 universities from the member States of the Turkic Council. It aims to further cooperation among Turkic-speaking states and in the region in the field of higher education. The current Chair University of the Union is Kyrgyzstan-Turkey Manas University. Further information can be found at <http://www.turkunib.org/en/>.

Council joins its efforts with relevant private sector organizations from its member States. The annual Business Forums of the Turkic Council present fruitful platforms where private companies of the Turkic Council member and partner States find ample opportunities to increase cooperation in various economic fields.

Choice of Substantive Areas and Experiences to be Shared

Each annual Turkic Council Summit is devoted to one specific theme. The topic is decided by the Heads of State in the previous summit, based on the realities and actual needs of the region. In line with the instruction given the Heads of States at the Summit, a working group is created to develop the relevant activities, programmes and projects. The working group discusses the thematic area in detail, assesses the needs in the region and drafts a working plan for the ministers. Members of the private sector can also be invited as needed to working group meetings. Based on the

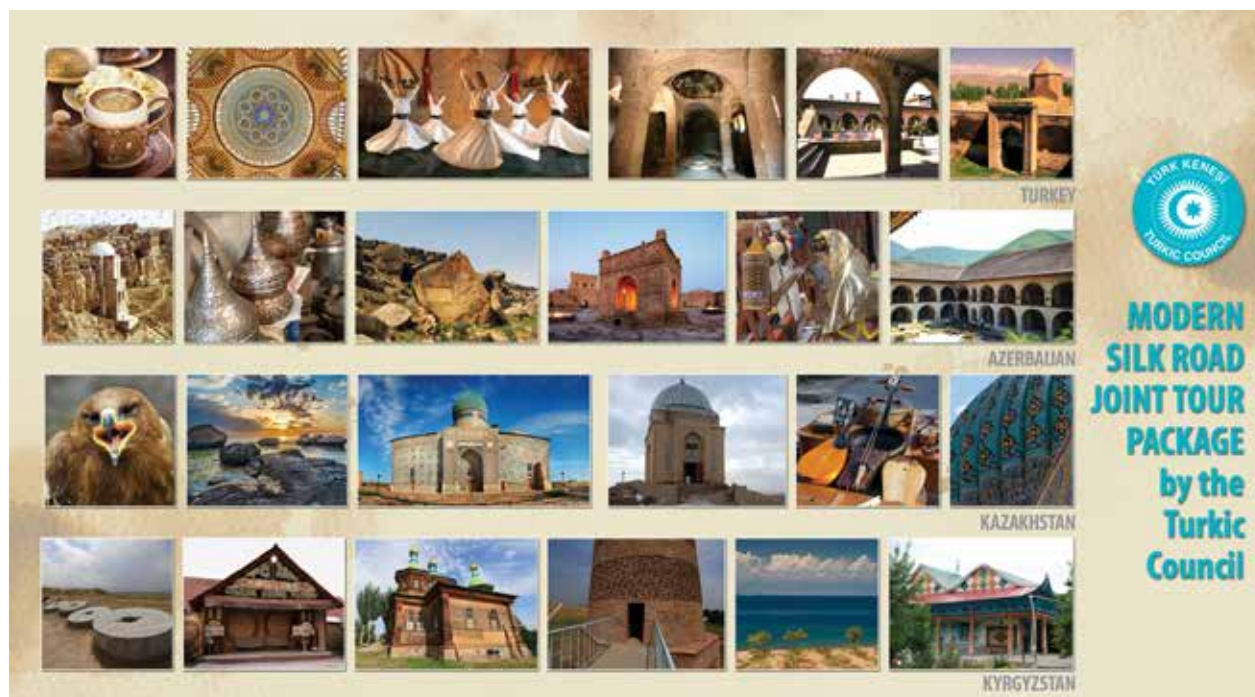
recommendations of the working group, the ministers give relevant instructions for the implementation of the programmes and projects.

To analyse the South-South cooperation activities of the Turkic Council in more depth, three concrete initiatives will be presented on the following pages. In addition to reviewing documentation on the initiatives, interviews with participants and trainers were conducted for this report to gain further insight into the workings of the programmes. While the activities are in different areas (tourism, customs, diplomacy), certain patterns and similar features can be observed. First, all initiatives are based on identified and very specific needs. Second, they are grounded in the exchange of practical solutions and come with a strong focus on capacity development. Third, all three initiatives have a strong human element with the goal to build trust among participants and to increase the networks of both participants and trainers.

Turkic Council-UNDP International Conference on ICT for Development, 27-28 October 2015, Istanbul, Turkey



Case Study: Tourism Vocational Training Programme



Turkic Council member States have considerable potential for cross-border tourism, but it has largely been untapped. At the 2014 Annual Summit in Bodrum, which was dedicated to tourism, it was decided to launch a joint project to stimulate regional tourism development. Subsequent discussions led to the idea of designing a fourteen-day tour package combining historical landmarks along the ancient Silk Road in member States. This package will become operational in 2018.

In the planning phase, it became clear that there was also a significant need for capacity development in the tourism sector at the country level. Turkey, with its high expertise in tourism, was in an ideal position to share its knowledge.

In 2014, the Turkic Council began to facilitate the organization of training programmes by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkey. These programmes aimed to transfer Turkey's rich know-how in the service sector to other member States. The vocational training programmes for tourism employees have targeted



Participants in action at a vocational training session, March 2015, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan



Turkic Council Modern Silk Road Joint Tour Package Familiarization Trips, April-May 2017, Kazakhstan

relevant ministries, tourism associations and educational institutions of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, helping to enhance cooperation and coordination amongst them.

As of June 2017, more than 1,000 tourism professionals, of whom 50 per cent were women, participated in the training sessions, developing skills for high-quality hospitality services. Where possible, the training sessions involved working with actual hotel guests and addressing concrete requests. Several participants have begun to collaborate and exchange ideas outside of the formal training programme, for example, to train their staff together and to organize exchange of their personnel. Others have been inspired to start their own businesses in the future. Based on the success of the vocational training programme in the service sector, it is planned that similar training programmes will be carried out for tour guides, especially for those who will take on a leading role in the tour package.

Identified Issue: Need to increase cooperation among member States in the field of tourism; promote the historical Silk Road as a tourism destination; ensure high-quality hospitality services

SDGs: 4 (quality education), 5 (gender equality), 8 (decent work and economic growth)

Components: Training workshops carried out by experts from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkey, the Association of Turkish Travel Agencies (TURSAB), the Turkish Hoteliers Federation (TUOFED), relevant ministries and institutions of member States

Impact: Better work opportunities for more than 1,000 tourism employees who have been trained since 2014 and of which half of them were women; self-initiated trainings and staff exchanges.

What I liked best about the training seminar were the experience and the good and practical examples of the trainer. ... My goal for the future is to be one of the best hoteliers of my country.

Aiman Ablayeva, Hospitality/Executive Housekeeper at a 5-star hotel in Shymkent, Kazakhstan; participant at the Front Office Trainings, November 2016, Shymkent, Kazakhstan

A concrete benefit from the training seminar is that the curriculum of our department "Gastronomy and the Culinary Art" now corresponds to international standards. Also, one of our students could do an internship in Baku as a result of the contacts made at the training course.

Sapargül Turdubekova, Lecturer, Instructor of Culinary; participant, March 2015, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

The most memorable moment from the training programme for me was the fact that we could also work with real guests staying at the hotel. Seeing the immediate solutions to the problems and requests of guests made the learning experience more effective for participants. Besides this, I was very happy to come back to Kazakhstan where I had given training sessions five years earlier and also to meet one of my former students again, who in the meantime had risen from a front office clerk to front office manager. My former student said that our trainings with their practical orientation were a major contribution to his career.

Cezzim Özdemir, Front Office Instructor, Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Turkey; trainer at vocational training on service sector, November 2016, Shymkent, Kazakhstan

Turkic Council Modern Silk Road Joint Tour Package Familiarization Trips, April-May 2017, Kazakhstan



Case Study: Customs Training Programme

Cross-border transport routes can be severely hampered by cumbersome customs procedures, which increase both transport time and cost. Efficient customs operations are therefore a prerequisite to expand trade flows and also unleash the region's potential as a vital transport hub. This is why the Turkic Council has introduced a high-level mechanism to improve cooperation in the area of customs and support its member States in installing state-of-the-art custom systems. To foster cooperation among member States, the Turkic Council has launched joint actions and tailored projects. These initiatives will be particularly vital for Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, both of which are landlocked countries and therefore extremely dependent on effective land infrastructure to connect their economies to the world, and to take advantage of their considerable comparative advantages with regards to land routes between Asia and Europe.

An important component of the customs training programme are joint visits to key customs points. A concrete example is the joint visit to the Kyrgyz-Chinese Torugart and Kazakh-Chinese Altynkol border crossing points in September 2016. Experts from member States took the opportunity to visit the Khorgoz Free Trade Zone located in Kazakh-Chinese border, a massive centre for manufacturing and warehousing. One month later, the delegation visited the Kapikule border-crossing point in Edirne Province, Turkey, to get a better understanding of the Built-Operate-Transfer system that is used to modernize border-crossing points in Turkey. Moreover, the Ministry of Customs and Trade of Turkey organised two training seminars in 2015 and 2016, respectively. Thirty-six experts - of which 16 were women - from all member States and Georgia attended the seminars.

Turkic Council Delegation's Field Visit to Kyrgyz-Chinese and Kazak-Chinese Border Crossing Points, September 2016



Identified Issue: Increase regional and inter-regional trade by modernizing customs procedures

SDGs: 5 (gender equality), 8 (decent work and economic growth), 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure)

Components: Joint visits to vital border crossing points, training seminars on technical issues

Impact: Increased technical capacities in government institutions handling customs issues; concrete technical changes leading to more effective customs services (e.g. modernization of Kazakhstan's five border control points).

The program provided a forum for customs officers coming from different backgrounds to understand and to learn the perspective and the way of doing things from each other. The enthusiasm and motivation of the participants were worth seeing. By the virtue of the program, I understood that the Turkic Council carries out a very important task in familiarizing people from different countries with each other's professional lifestyles. The Turkic Council is an essential mechanism to make regional cooperation stronger.

I particularly valued the openness and sincere attitude of the Turkish colleagues and their efforts to share as much as possible in two days. I was also pleased to learn about the experiences from Central Asian countries, as well as our neighbor Georgia. It was also pleasant to meet new colleagues from neighboring countries and to stay in touch with them. I particularly liked the decision management scheme for risk profiles used by Turkish colleagues, which I then suggested to my management. A concrete result of my participation was that I adapted the structure of the preparation of the risk profile that we currently use.

Rashad Salmanov, State Customs Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan; participant at the two-day training on Risk Analysis, October 2016, Ankara, Turkey



Işıl Emine Avcı, Ministry of Customs and Trade of the Republic of Turkey; trainer at the three-day training course on Authorized Economic Operator System, Post Clearance Controls and Risk Analysis, March 2015, Ankara, Turkey

Third Turkic Council Junior Diplomats Training Programme, May 2016, Kazakhstan



Case Study: Junior Diplomats Training Programme

Diplomats are at the forefront of promoting their nation’s interests and forging bilateral and multilateral relationships. The effective engagement of diplomats is also essential for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, given that ministries of foreign affairs serve as direct links between the multilateral, regional and national levels. In order to support the evolution of cooperation among young diplomats, the Turkic Council has devised a tailored training initiative. This annual programme brings together aspiring young diplomats from all four member States. Since the inception of the programme in 2014, 90 junior diplomats have benefitted from the training programme; 42 of them were women. The programme has recently also been opened to junior diplomats from other countries, for example, Hungary.

The two-week programme takes place in a different member State each year. It consists of a combination of lectures, language training, and trips. Lecturers from all over the world share their knowledge on various areas of international cooperation, and ambassadors offer their wisdom from decades of diplomatic experience.

A noteworthy feature of the Junior Diplomat Training Programme are the visits to important historical and tourist sites, familiarizing participants not only with the history and culture but also with the developmental challenges of the host country.

At the end of the two weeks, young diplomats have not only met colleagues from other member States but they have also learned from each other and passed through a common capacity-building process that will further ease their cooperation in the future.

Identified Issue: Foster understanding and cooperation among young diplomats

SDGs: 5 (gender equality), 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions), 17 (partnerships for the goals)

Components: Lectures by experienced diplomats; lectures by academics both from and beyond the region; language training; joint trips in the host country

Impact: Trust created through shared experiences; strengthened technical capacities of the young diplomats; increased understanding and cooperation in bilateral, regional and multilateral fora.



Chapter III

**How South-South Cooperation Initiatives of
the Turkic Council Link to Major Regional and
Global Development Agendas**

How South-South Cooperation Initiatives of the Turkic Council Link to Major Regional and Global Development Agendas

The mandate given by its member States, combined with its practical approach to South-South cooperation, puts the Turkic Council in a unique position to strengthen regional development in support of the global development agenda. Through concerted efforts, regional organizations such as the Turkic Council can make significant contributions to promote sustainable human development in their respective regions and beyond to contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Thus, the 2030 Agenda presents the overarching global development agenda to work towards a better world for all, "leaving no one behind". The 2030 Agenda is framed and complemented by other key international agreements, such as the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Creating Jobs and Economic Growth

The promotion of good jobs and economic growth (SDG 8) presents the backbone of the Turkic Council's approach to regional development. It was, therefore, no coincidence that the Turkic Council chose economic cooperation as its first annual theme. The Turkic Council intends to further boost its engagement in economic cooperation across the region, as the potential for economic cooperation is still largely untapped. Therefore, the design of concrete initiatives to bolster economic cooperation is given highest priority at meetings of the ministers of economy of the member States as well as within relevant working groups.

The establishment of the Turkic Business Council, which brings together the heads

of umbrella business associations of the member States, is another important institutional step in this direction. Through the Business Forums organized by the Turkic Council, together with the annual meetings of the Turkic Business Councils, business associations are given the opportunity to increase cooperation in different sectors of the economy amongst the member States, ultimately benefiting their member companies.

Another noteworthy initiative is the Turkic Business Web Portal,²¹ which provides a significant platform for member and partner States in the region to facilitate business-to-business matching. Another relevant project is the preparation of a joint report with SESRIC to assess investment opportunities and business complementarities among Turkic-speaking States. Furthermore, the Council has been facilitating the mapping of resource centres in Azerbaijan (the specific sectors are still to be determined), which will be carried out by IsDB and the Azerbaijani authorities.



Turkic Council Fourth Business Forum, April 2016, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

²¹ The web portal can be found at <http://www.turkicbusiness.com/>.

Preventing and Combatting Violent Extremism

Violent extremism and terrorism are severe risks to security, and therefore, growth and prosperity. SDG 16 on “Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions” provides a framework to address these profound challenges and their root causes. The Turkic Council recognizes the related challenges in its region and is set to provide a forum for discussion. The annual consultation on security between the foreign ministries of member States also discusses these pertinent topics.

Moreover, the Turkic Council organizes events to take up the issue of preventing and countering violent extremism. For instance, the Turkic Council, together with UNAOC, co-organized an international conference on the role of youth in preventing and countering violent extremism on 20-21 October 2016 in Istanbul, bringing together 300 young leaders and experts from 40 countries from Africa to Central Asia. One of the brainstorming sessions of the



Turkic Council-UNAOC International Conference Sessions, October 2016, Istanbul, Turkey

conference concentrated specifically on the role of South-South cooperation in efforts to tackle extremism. There was broad agreement that dynamic cooperation for tailor-made capacity-building of youth



Turkic Council-UNAOC International Conference Sessions, October 2016, Istanbul, Turkey



and women is needed as a means to prevent and counter violent extremism in the region through the implementation of projects with a South-South cooperation approach.

Empowering the Youth

As is the case for the global development agenda, engaging the youth has taken an increasingly central role in the portfolio of the Turkic Council.

The Turkic Council has initiated several projects that target young people and their needs at various stages in their lives. In addition to the establishment of the Student Council within the Turkic University Union, youth camps and festivals are organized to help create shared experiences for young people from the region and strengthen mutual understanding. Camp activities include local trips, cultural and sports activities, as well as thematic debates on issues relating to the common history, culture and language, as well as social problems facing today's youth. Since the launch of the camps in 2015, 600 young people have participated in these camps, drawn from Turkic Council member States as well as other countries in the region such as Georgia, Hungary, Qatar, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan.



Turkic Council First International Youth Camp, August-September 2015, Trabzon and Samsun, Turkey

The first youth festival of the Turkic Council was held on 27-30 September 2016 in Ganja, Azerbaijan, with attendance of more than 100 young people. The establishment of a Youth Platform and the organization of the annual Youth Leaders Forum are also on the agenda of the Turkic Council.

Sports

Sports can play a vital role in empowering young people and bringing them together in a friendly and peaceful environment. One of the major events in this area organized by the Turkic Council is the World Nomad Games, hosted in 2014 and 2016 by the Government of Kyrgyzstan in partnership with the Turkic Council. The second World Nomad

Opening Ceremony of the Second World Nomad Games, September 2016, Issyk Kul, Kyrgyzstan



Cultural Festival During the Second World Nomad Games, September 2016, Issyk Kul, Kyrgyzstan

Games were attended by 1,600 athletes from 62 countries and were a celebration of diversity, culture and intercultural dialogue.

In addition, the First Sport Games of the Turkic University Union hosted by Kyrgyzstan-Turkey Manas University in Bishkek in May 2017 welcomed 200 young sports people. Additionally, the First Turkic University Sports Games (Turkic Universiade) will be organized in Azerbaijan in 2018 with participation from across Turkic-speaking countries.

Education

Education, in particular vocational training and life-long learning, has become another priority area for the Turkic Council (SDG 4 on “Quality Education”). Through the Student Council of the Turkic University Union, the Turkic Council works to strengthen the cooperation among university students of the Turkic world, whilst establishing close ties with similar regional and international youth networks. Moreover, the annual exchange programme at the high school level among the Turkic Council member States is an exemplary project that brings young people in the region closer together and enables knowledge-sharing. The “Sister School Project” of the Turkic Council constitutes

another initiative that aims to further cooperation and collaboration at the high school level in the region. Moreover, the Turkic Council supports the Turkic Academy in the preparation of a “Common History Book” and a “Common Geography and Literature Book” of Turkic-speaking States. Furthermore, in the framework of the cooperation in higher education, a pilot exchange programme for university students and academics named “Orkhoun Process”, similar to the model of Bologna Process and Erasmus+ in Europe, was launched among the member universities within the Turkic University Union.



First Exchange Programme Among the High School Students of the Turkic Council, April 2016, Turkey



First Sports Games of the Turkic University Union, May 2017, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

ICT and Renewable Energy

In an effort to help reach SDG 9 on “Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure” and SDG 7 on “Affordable and Clean Energy”, the Turkic Council works on the topics of ICT and alternative energy through its working group and ministerial meeting mechanisms. The Turkic Council plans to carry out relevant projects with its international partners on these themes in the near future. For example, the Turkic Council actively participated in the EXPO 2017 Astana which focused on the future of energy.



Given the interconnected nature of the SDGs, the Turkic Council is determined to accelerate its efforts to contribute to global development through targeted initiatives at the regional level, based on its comparative

advantages. Yet, sustainable development is not possible without peace, justice and strong institutions. This is why the Turkic Council – also in compliance with its mandate stemming from the 2009 Nakhchivan agreement – has been working at various levels to deepen dialogue and confidence-building among Turkic-speaking States and cooperation States. These activities are integral to achieving SDG 16 on “Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions”. In all its efforts, the Turkic Council has also attached great importance to establishing partnerships with cooperation countries as well as regional and international organizations. In the coming years, it will be critical to leverage these partnerships with a view to SDG 17 on “Partnerships for the Goals”.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Conclusion and Way Forward

Since its establishment in 2009, the Turkic Council has become an active and committed player in regional cooperation. South-South cooperation has proved to be a valuable mechanism for the Turkic Council to foster cooperation among Turkic-speaking states and increasingly with other countries. The growing need for inter- and intraregional solutions to development challenges provides stimulus for intensified peer learning and knowledge-sharing in the region. The Turkic Council has stressed its commitment and ambition to boost South-South cooperation in its region and beyond, underlined also by its proactive engagement with key multilateral players.

There are several lessons to be learnt for other regional organizations from the Turkic Council's experience with South-South cooperation to foster sustainable human development.

First, South-South cooperation must be based on an agreed set of values and political commitment. In the case of the Turkic Council, the Nakhchivan Agreement has firmly enshrined the principles of cooperation of the organization. Second, thematic areas for cooperation need to address concrete challenges, and must emerge through consultative processes. The Turkic Council decides on one specific technical topic each year, which then is taken forward in collaboration with member States with a strong focus on knowledge-sharing and capacity development. Third, in today's interconnected world, and in order to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, partnerships with other stakeholders both in and outside of the region are essential. To this end, the

Turkic Council has successfully been building partnerships with international organizations, academia, and the private sector.

The Turkic Council should continue its practical approach to South-South cooperation, which is firmly grounded in concrete demands and needs from its member States. In doing so, the Turkic Council needs to draw on the comparative advantages of its member States and bring together partners for the SDGs. It has served the Turkic Council and its member States well to work on a wide array of issues. Looking to the future, the Turkic Council should be prepared to ensure the sustainability of well-functioning initiatives, and to maintain its attention to newly arising development challenges.

Collaboration in the spirit of South-South cooperation has been used widely in Eurasia for decades. Still, these efforts often go unnoticed, and there is sometimes not enough clarity at the conceptual level. The Turkic Council is in a unique position to take on an active role in raising awareness on South-South and triangular cooperation in its member States and beyond. The Turkic Council can further optimize the use of South-South cooperation by providing successful examples of regional cooperation, both at the level of the individual member States and at the global level. In the same vein, the Turkic Council can enhance its role in promoting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the potential of South-South cooperation as an effective complementary tool for development geared towards reaching the SDGs.

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