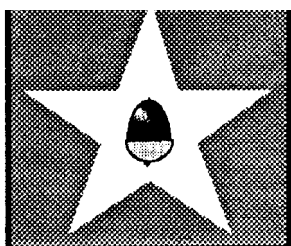


**Conflict Studies Research Centre**

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# Russia & Turkey

September 2002



**F80**

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*Relations are likely to remain cooperative, despite Russian suspicion of Turkish interests in Chechnya and Central Asia.*

The political and economic agreements of May 1992 can be seen as the foundation of post-Soviet Russo-Turkish ties.<sup>1</sup> In October 2000, Russian prime minister Mikhail Kasyanov visited Turkey and discussed more than twenty separate issues. He stated that "Russia and Turkey are not competitors. They are partners and our governments will develop bilateral relations on the basis of this principle".<sup>2</sup> Turkey and Russia are both members of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Agreement. Russia has also expressed interest in the Stability Pact for the Caucasus proposed by Turkish President Suleyman Demirel in Georgia in January 2000, which envisages a regional OSCE-type organisation including Russia and other major powers.<sup>3</sup>

There is however a suspicion in some Russian circles of Turkish attempts to create a sphere of influence in the former Soviet Union at the expense of Russia. An extremely alarmist commentary by Natal'ya Ayrapetova in *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* in May 2002 virtually accused Turkey of encircling Russia by "leaping" into the former Soviet space.<sup>4</sup> Ayrapetova accuses Turkish intelligence of operating in Abkhazia (Georgia) against Russian interests, of taking Gagauzia (Moldova) under her wing, away from a previous pro-Russian orientation. The training of Moldovan military officers in Turkey and development of cooperation between the Moldovan and Polish defence ministries and the Turkish General Staff is seen a sinister light. Ayrapetova further accuses Turkey of endeavouring to extend her influence into Crimea, the Moslem regions of the former USSR, and even into the Moslem peoples of the Russian Federation. Turkish economic activity in the Russian Federation, especially in the tourism and construction industries, is seen as a form of subversion.

This perception is probably shared (albeit in a less dramatic form) by many in the Russian security community. One of the deputy chairmen of the Duma, Vladimir Lukin, expressed concern in February 2002 about Turkey possibly acquiring military bases in Azerbaijan.<sup>5</sup> There has also been speculation that Turkey has been modernizing former Russian airbases in Georgia, which may be used by US forces for an attack on Iraq.<sup>6</sup> Turkey has also assisted in the development of the Georgian armed forces. Several Russian commentators see Turkey as forming a close link with both Georgia and Azerbaijan as the main platforms for spreading her influence in the southern regions of the former Soviet Union. The signing of an anti-terrorist cooperation agreement in Trabzon in April 2002 by the presidents of Turkey, Georgia and Azerbaijan is seen as an indication of Turkey's desire to enhance her strategic presence in Transcaucasia. Her role in the International Stabilisation Force in Afghanistan enhances her presence and interest in the former Soviet south, and she is seen as being interested in acquiring bases in the former Soviet Union.<sup>7</sup> She has also been accused of unofficially encouraging Chechen

separatism, whilst being officially supportive of the Russian Federation's territorial integrity.<sup>8</sup> Russian suspicions of Turkish policy towards Chechnya date back to the first Chechen war of 1994-96.<sup>9</sup> There is also a strong perception that Turkey is acting in Transcaucasia as a US surrogate.<sup>10</sup> The FSB has accused Turkey of engaging in intelligence activity in southern Russia.<sup>11</sup>

## **Terrorism**

There has been Russian irritation over what is seen as a Turkish soft-line approach to Chechen and Dagestani terrorism. In February 2000 the FSB warned about Chechen terrorists taking refuge in Turkey, and in April 2001 Russian law enforcement agencies criticised Turkey for making insufficient efforts in the fight against terrorism. Putin had called for greater Russo-Turkish cooperation in fighting terrorism and the then interior minister Vladimir Rushaylo visited Turkey in March 2001 this with the Turkish interior ministry. In May 2002, defence minister Sergey Ivanov made similar criticisms and claimed that Turkey had considered allowing Chechen rebel leader Movladi Udugov to enter Turkey. Earlier, Turkey had moved slowly in considering Russian requests to extradite Udugov, who was reported to be in Turkey in 2001. In 2000, former Chechen president Zelimkhan Yandarbiev visited Turkey and Moscow was annoyed by the release of a Dagestani Wahabbite leader by the Turkish authorities. These actions presumably fuel Russian perceptions that Turkey is covertly encouraging the undermining of Russian influence in the former Soviet Union. The visits to Turkey of Tatarstan President Mintimier Shaymiev and North Osetian president Alexander Dzasokhov in 2001 show that Turkey's relations with the Russian Federation are not just being conducted with the federal government, a development which is likely to be viewed with some suspicion in Russian security circles.

Russia is also concerned that Turkey is attempting to undermine Russia's role in the export of Caspian Sea oil by its championing of the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline as an alternative to the Tengiz-Novorossiysk pipeline. Turkey has argued that the Tengiz-Novorossiysk pipeline has resulted in an increase in tanker traffic in the Bosphorus, and contends that the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline would therefore ease this problem. Turkey has offered Russia the use of the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline, which is scheduled to commence operating in 2005. The management of the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline construction project have expressed interest in Lukoil's and Yukos' participating in the project, but these companies have not so far committed themselves.

However, alongside these irritants and Russian suspicion of Turkey's objectives in the southern regions of the former Soviet Union and the Caucasus, there are significant areas of cooperation between the two states.

## **Energy Relations**

Russia is becoming an important supplier of gas to Turkey.<sup>12</sup> In 2001, Russia supplied Turkey with 11.12 billion cubic metres (bcm) of gas (10.2 bcm in 2000).<sup>13</sup> Turkey consumed 520 billion cubic feet (Bcf) of natural gas (nearly all imported) in 2000, accounting for around 17% of Turkey's total energy consumption (Turkish gas consumption in 2002 is estimated at around 700 Bcf). Turkey has signed deals for around 2 Tcf per year of natural gas imports beginning in 2005, around three times greater than current Turkish gas consumption. Of this total, over 20% is

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already coming from Russia via Bulgaria (studies on expanding the Russia-Bulgaria-Turkey "Main Line" are underway). In the future, around one quarter of Turkey's gas imports are to be supplied from Russia via the Black Sea Blue Stream pipeline. Turkey's reliance on Russia for gas imports could reach 70% or higher.

**Blue Stream:** In December 1997, Russia and Turkey signed a 25-year deal under which Gazprom, would construct a new natural gas export pipeline (called "Blue Stream") to Turkey for delivery capacity of around 565 Bcf annually, with initial deliveries possibly starting in 2002. The \$3 billion, 758-mile dual pipeline will run from Izobilnoye in southern Russia, to Dzhugba on the Black Sea, then under the Black Sea for about 247 miles to the Turkish port of Samsun, and on to Ankara. In March 2002, the first line of "Blue Stream" was completed, with work on the deep-sea portion of the second line begun in June. Construction of the Turkish onshore section of the pipeline is already complete, while the 222-mile Russian section of the pipeline, which includes compressor stations and underground storage facilities, was scheduled to be finished by September 2002. Natural gas supplies through the Blue Stream pipeline were intended to begin in October 2002, with Russia scheduled to deliver 70.6 Bcf of natural gas to Turkey via the pipeline in 2002. By 2009, Blue Stream is expected to reach peak capacity of 565 Bcf per year. Over the course of the 25-year agreement, Turkey will import 14.1 Tcf of natural gas from Russia via Blue Stream. It was also agreed in October 2000 that Turkey would purchase electricity from Russia via Georgia.

## Military Cooperation

Military cooperation between the two countries has increased in the last two years. In February 2000, deputy prime minister Ilya Klebanov visited Turkey and it was agreed to create a military cooperation commission, which is to implement joint projects, including the development and sale of arms to third countries. Turkey was offered participation in the production of the Ka-50-2 attack helicopter, which is being jointly developed by Kamov and Israel Aircraft Industries. Russia also proposed cooperation in the production of tanks, artillery, rifles and missiles.

In January 2002 the military relationship developed further, when Russian Chief of Staff Anatoly Kvashnin visited Turkey and signed a bilateral military cooperation agreement with his Turkish counterpart, Huseyin Kivrikoglu. In August 2002 talks were still continuing on whether Turkey would purchase 130 Ka-50-2 helicopter gunships. The USA is also competing for the tender, but its Bell King Cobra helicopters are about twice as expensive as the Kamov helicopter.

An agreement was also reached on naval cooperation between the members of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Zone in April 2002. The agreement will enter into force on 1 January 2003. It stipulates cooperation between the navies, visits to naval bases, exchange of naval information and annual naval exercises of confidence.

There has been some friction over the CFE Treaty, as Turkey has been concerned that Russia has exceeded CFE limits in southern Russia due to military operations in Chechnya.

## Trade Ties

Trade turnover stood at around \$10 billion in the mid-1990s, but declined drastically after the Russian financial crisis of August 1998. In October 2000, prime minister Mikhail Kasyanov stated that the trade turnover was around \$3 billion, but he hoped that it could increase to around \$10 billion.

Year	Exports to Turkey	Imports from Turkey
1997	1,983	794
1998	1,923	512
1999	1,617	312
2000	3,098	348
2001	2,980	509

Figures are in millions of US dollars.  
Source: IMF Direction of Trade Statistics.

Turkey's main trading partners:

	Export Destination	Import Destination
<b>2001</b>	Germany accounted for 17.2% of Turkish exports	Germany accounted for 12.9% of Turkish imports
	US 10.0%	Italy 8.4%
	Italy 7.5%	Russia 8.3%
	UK 6.9%	US 7.9%
	France 6.0%	France 5.5%
	Russia 2.9%	UK 4.6%
	EU 51.4%	EU 44.2%
<b>2000</b>	Germany accounted for 18.8% of Turkish exports	Germany accounted for 13.2% of Turkish imports
	US 11.2%	Italy 8.0%
	UK 7.4%	US 7.2%
	Italy 6.4%	Russia 7.2%
	France 6.0%	France 6.5%
	Netherlands 3.2%	UK 5.0%
	EU 52.2%	EU 48.9%
<b>1999</b>	Germany accounted for 20.6% of Turkish exports	Germany accounted for 14.5% of Turkish imports
	US 9.2%	Italy 7.8%
	UK 6.9%	France 7.7%
	Italy 6.3%	US 7.6%
	France 5.9%	Russia 5.8%
	Netherlands 3.5%	UK 5.4%
	EU 53.9%	EU 52.6%

Source: EIU Country Reports.

## Cyprus

Cyprus had been a sore point in Russo-Turkish relations in the late 1990s, as Russia had intended to supply S-300 anti aircraft missiles to Cyprus but reversed this decision in 1999. In 1999 the UN recommenced Cyprus settlement talks. The Russian president's special envoy Vladimir Prygin has along with the USA and UN encouraged both communities to reach a settlement and has criticised both for being inflexible. The Russian Foreign Ministry January 1998 criticised Turkey for developing too close a relationship with northern Cyprus.

## Conclusion

The inter-state relationship between Russia and Turkey is likely to remain cooperative. Both sides have an interest in expanding economic and military-technical cooperation and in promoting stability in the Black Sea and Caucasus regions. The development of military cooperation following the visit of Anatoly Kvashnin to Turkey in January 2002 has to a certain extent reduced Turco-Russian differences over Chechnya. During Kvashnin's visit in January 2002, Moscow also agreed that it would not permit anti-Turkish terrorist organisations (ie Kurdish organisations) to operate against Turkey from Russian territory. The war on terrorism may induce greater cooperation between the two states, although Moscow is probably of the opinion that Turkey could cooperate more enthusiastically in this field.

In the Yeltsin period there was considerable Russian concern that Turkey would create a significant sphere of influence in former Soviet Central Asia, which would undermine Russian interests. These concerns probably remain and may even have become stronger in some circles following the events of 11 September 2001, as the enhanced US presence in Central Asia may give opportunities to Turkey to enhance her influence in this region. The development of the Baku-Ceyhan oil pipeline leads to fears that Russian influence in Transcaucasia will be diminished.

On the other hand, Turkey has no desire to antagonise Russia. The Black Sea Economic Cooperation agreement, and the proposed Caucasus Stability Pact indicate a strong interest in cooperation. Turkey's increasing reliance on Russian gas supplies should serve to strengthen partnership between the two states. If the USA achieves its objective of regime change in Iraq by military means in the coming months, Turkey may well play a key role in helping the establishment and consolidation of a post-Saddam Iraqi regime due to her position as one of Iraq's neighbours. Russia may also play an important role due to her importance as an Iraqi economic partner, and a common interest in stabilising Iraq may possibly constitute a further reason for the development of future Russo-Turkish cooperation.

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> See the listing of Russo-Turkish agreements at the website of the Turkish Embassy in the USA, <http://www.turkey.org>.
- <sup>2</sup> *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, 25 October 2000.
- <sup>3</sup> S Chernyavsky, 'The Caucasian Track of Russian Foreign Policy', *International Affairs*, January 2000.
- <sup>4</sup> Natalya Ayrapetova, *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* (NG), Dipkurer section, 13 May 2002.
- <sup>5</sup> Interfax, 11 February 2002.
- <sup>6</sup> Armen Khanbabayan, 'The former union is divided up horizontally', NG, 11 March 2002.
- <sup>7</sup> S Chernyavsky, 'Otstaivaya national'niye interesy: Politika Rossii v Tsentral'noy Azii I Zavkavkaz'ye', *Svobodnaya Mysl*, July 2002.
- <sup>8</sup> D Malysheva, 'Rossikaya karta v Kaspiskom pasyance', *MEMO*, July 2002 - see Turkish Daily News, 20 January 2002.
- <sup>9</sup> See Charles Blandy, 'Chechen Caravan Trails', P21, RMA Sandhurst, Conflict Studies Research Centre, April 1996.
- <sup>10</sup> Karen Brutents, 'Vneshnaya Politikia Rossii: novy etap?', *Svobodnaya Mysl*, January 2001.
- <sup>11</sup> Summary of World Broadcasts (SWB), 19 December 2001; *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, 25 April 2001.
- <sup>12</sup> <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/turkey.html>.
- <sup>13</sup> Note the figures 11.12 and 10.2 billion are British billions, that is 1 followed by twelve zeros. The figures given in feet are US billions, that is 1 followed by nine zeros. A US trillion is 1 followed by twelve zeros. When Americans say 520 billion cubic feet, the British say 520 thousand million. When the Americans say 2 trillion cubic feet, the British say 2 billion.  
1 cubic metre = 35.31 cubic feet. 1 cubic foot = 0.028 cubic metres.

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UK Ministry of Defence

ISBN 1-904423-06-X



**Published By:**

**Defence Academy of the**  
**United Kingdom**

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**ISBN 1-904423-06-X**