

Paradigm Shift in Turkish-Azerbaijani Relations? Results for Reconciliation Process between Turkey and Armenia

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ABSTRACT

Turkish-Azerbaijani relations have been almost unique since the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Turkey has sustained special relationships with the newly independent Azerbaijan since the 1990s. These relations are grounded in linguistic and cultural characteristics, as well as common interests. Despite mutually very close ties, Turkey and Azerbaijan have entered an extra ordinary period regarding Turkish Protocols with Armenia. Azerbaijan almost abandoned her traditional diplomacy that requires a balance between Turkey and Russia, and moved to a new foreign policy concept predominating towards Russia. This different kind of partnership became especially important when the Turkish government initiated policies on the normalization of relations with its neighbor, Armenia.

If we consider that the bilateral relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan have been unique until Protocols established, how should we analyze the paradigm shift in Azerbaijan? In this framework, some questions should be taken into consideration: Was Azerbaijan a real partner for Turkey and was Turkey a vital bodyguard for Azerbaijan? And were bilateral relations between these states as important as supposed for many years?

This paper examines the possible dimensions of the relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan. From the historical perspective to Turkish Reconciliation process with Armenia, Turkish-Azerbaijani relations are underlined. Could Azerbaijan, as a neo-patrimonialist rentier state, provide invaluable wealth for Turkey? On the other hand, could Turkey's capabilities mean indispensable power for Azerbaijan? Is this changing a new turbulence as occurred in the mid-1990s, when the elder Aliev was alive? In this paper, these complex questions and the pros and cons of their relations will be investigated in the light of Protocols and results.

Key words: Azarbaijani, Turkey, Armenia

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