

Türkiye's Asia Anew Initiative, Connectivity Projects in Eurasia and Türkiye-Mongolia Relations

Assoc. Prof. Dr. İdil Tunçer Kılavuz

Türkiye's Asia Anew Initiative



Türkiye has significantly strengthened its involvement in Asia



Economic relations



Energy cooperation



Fostering connectivity, roads, railroads, energy lines



Cooperation in education and cultural domains

Asia Anew

Establishing Türkiye as a connecting link between Asia and Europe

Increasing trade

Increasing diplomatic engagement

Expanding tourism

Technology transfers

Energy exports

Deep historical, cultural, ethnic ties with many countries in Asia, Asian heritage of Türkiye

Potential for collaboration with the countries in the region

Asia Anew

- Türkiye's active promotion of its "Middle Corridor" project
- Taking it within China's Belt and Road Initiative
- Aiming to establish Türkiye as a pivotal logistics and energy hub connecting Europe and Asia
- Enhanced cooperation with Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Türkiye, designated as a "dialogue partner" and assumed the presidency of the SCO Energy Club.
- Turkish businesses' growing interest in Asia as an attractive destination.
- Free trade agreements with Malaysia, Singapore.
- Within ASEAN, collaborating with business councils of Vietnam, The Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Cambodia and Singapore.
- Aims to strengthen connections across various sectors, energy, sustainable development, tourism, investment, e-commerce.

Connectivity

- Significant changes in global trade routes, energy corridors, methods of resource and goods transportation
- Not being involved would mean that they would miss out on opportunities to invest in infrastructure and draw capital to their regions
- Building ports, railways, roads, energy transportation lines
- These will attract significant investments when they pass through a particular country.
- Peace, stability and clearly defined borders



Connectivity

Projects designed to integrate with China's Belt and Road Initiative

Middle Corridor Project

Connecting Europe and Asia

It involves Turkiye, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Krgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan

The Middle Corridor



The Middle Corridor

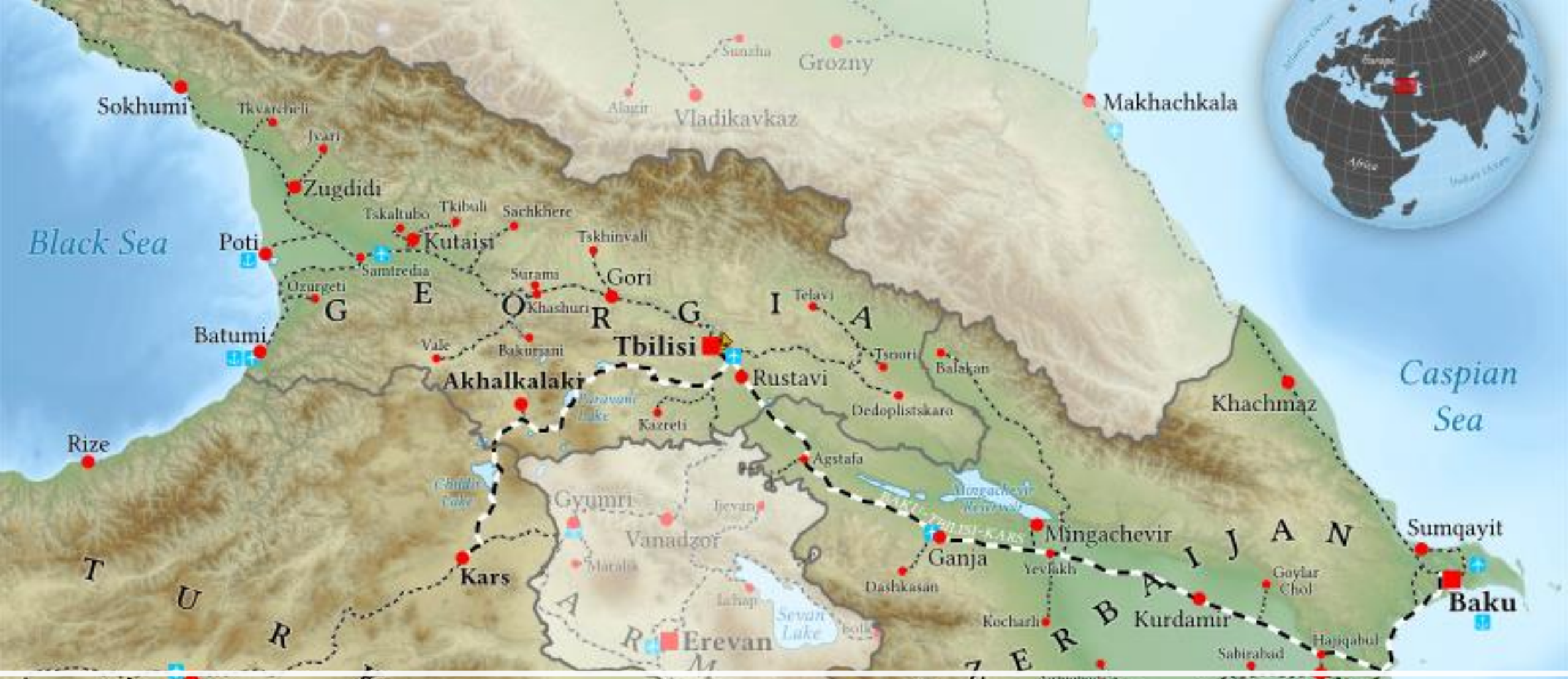
- Also known as Trans-Caspian International Transport Route (TITR)
- Annual capacity for transporting between 75.000 to 100.000 containers
- Drastically reduce transport time
- Türkiye initiated several major infrastructure and transport projects:
- Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge
- Osmangazi Bridge
- Eurasia Tunnel
- Marmaray commuter rail line
- BTK and Edirne-Kars railways
- Filyos, Çandarlı and Mersin container ports





Baku-Tbilisi-Kars Railway

- Known as Turkish New Silk Road
- The first train successfully transported Turkish goods to China by December 2020.
- The Marmaray Tunnel in Istanbul is the first underwater railway in the world, linking Beijing and London via the Bosphorus Strait.



Baku-Tbilisi-Kars Railway

- LEGEND**
- International border
 - Highlighted main railway
 - Minor railway
 - Minor railway
 - Capital city
 - Major settlement
 - Minor settlement
 - International airport

Connectivity

Zangezur Corridor

A link between Turkiye and Azerbaijan, seamless transportation of goods between Nakhchivan and mainland of Azerbaijan

Uninterrupted trans-Caspian trade route, shortening existing trade routes.

Contributes significantly to regional economic connectivity, transcontinental integration, facilitating transportation between Europe and Asia

A positive environment conducive to regional peace and security

Türkiye- Azerbaijan route through Zangezur Corridor



Organization of Turkic States

Institutionalization of regional cooperation through the establishment of the Organization of Turkic States

Development of cultural, economic and political ties among its member states.

Foundational institutional framework for Turkiye and regional countries to fortify existing relations and bolster cooperative efforts

Growing Involvement

Transition towards a multipolar world

Shifts in economic and geopolitical power dynamics

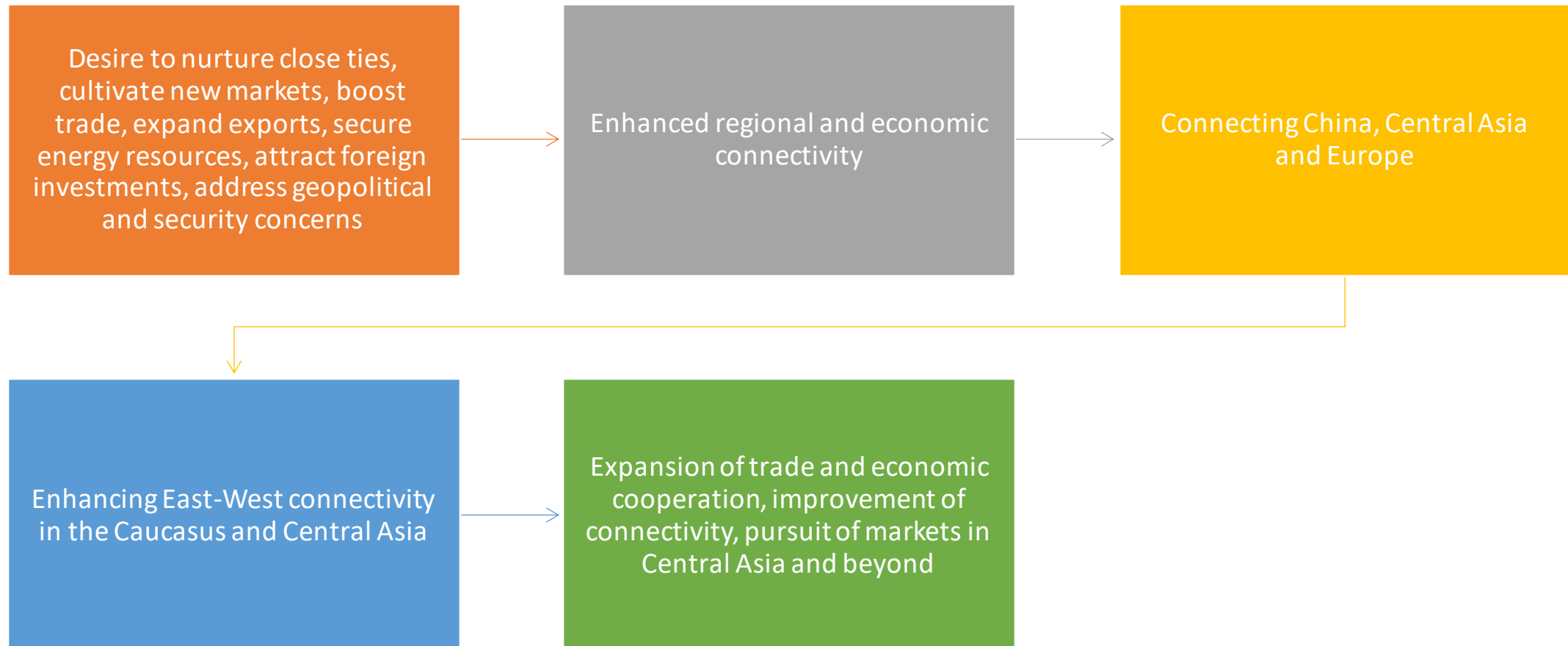
Strategic autonomy

Strategic aim to position Türkiye as a strategic nexus for logistics and energy, effectively bridging Europe and Asia

Central Asian governments to pursue a multi-factor foreign policy; resist dominance by any single power, diversify their foreign relations

Türkiye's deep cultural ties with the countries in the region, ethnic, religious, language

Objectives



Organization of Turkic States

Member states: Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkiye and Uzbekistan

Observer states: Hungary, Turkmenistan and TRNC

170 million inhabitants, gross domestic product (GDP) nearing 1.5 trillion US dollars, and trade volume reaches an estimated 16 billion dollars. Hungary, with a population of 9.7 million, holds a GDP of 176 billion US dollars, while Turkmenistan, with a population of 5.85 million, boasts a GDP of 54 billion US dollars.

Enhance trade, stimulate economic growth, expand transportation infrastructure

Economy

The Central Asian republics hold a significant share of the trade turnover with Türkiye, 4.7% in Kazakhstan and Tajikistan, 5.3% in Kyrgyzstan, and 6.4% in Uzbekistan.

In 2022, the trade volume between Kazakhstan and Türkiye reached \$6.35 billion, marking a substantial 54.5% increase compared to the previous year.

Notably, the trade turnover with Ankara experienced growth across all Central Asian republics, surging by 53.7% for Kyrgyzstan, 23.3% for Tajikistan, and 21.9% for Turkmenistan.

In 2022, Türkiye cemented its position as one of Dushanbe's top five trade partners.

Uzbekistan, however, saw a minor decline of 4.7% in trade, but the total turnover of \$3.2 billion remains the highest in the region, trailing only Kazakhstan.

Trade

TURANCEZ FREE TRADE
ZONE

TURKIC COMMON
MARKET

TURKIC DEVELOPMENT
AND INVESTMENT BANK

Energy

Trans-Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline (TANAP)

Dostluk Gas Field beneath the Caspian Sea

Trans-Caspian Pipeline

Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline

Redevelopment of the Turkmenbashi Caspian Seaport



ROMANYA

RUSYA

BULGARİSTAN

ŞAH DENİZ-II

GÜRCİSTAN

TİFLİS

TAP

TANAP

ERZURUM

YUNANİSTAN

ANKARA

ERMENİSTAN

AZERBAJCAN

NAHÇIVAN

TÜRKİYE

İRAN

SÜRİYE

IRAK

TRANS-CASPIAN PIPELINE





<https://www.denizbulten.com/kazakistan-petrolunun-azerbaycan-uzerinden-btc-boru-hatti-ile-sevkiyatina-baslandi-50660h.htm>

Russia and China

Turkiye has also fostered positive relations with other significant regional actors

TR and RU deepened their economic and political bonds, energy connections

TR and CN enhancement of bilateral relations, political, economic, security ties

Good Governance in the OTS

- Vision 2040 document
- pluralism, inclusiveness, accountability, transparency
- human rights, the rule of law, inclusive institutions, efficiency, fight against corruption
- supporting economic, social and institutional reforms in member states in order to create a more prosperous society in member states, encouraging democratic governance, for the socio-economic development and welfare of the citizens of member states
- improve the skills of public institutions in providing good governance and public services and to strengthen the rule of law, judicial systems, legal infrastructure and institutional capacities in member states

Mongolia

Landlocked

In the heart of Asia

Neighboring both Russia and China

Geopolitically connecting Northeast Asia to Central Asia and East Asia to Europe

Important crossroad for airlines, railways, transportation

Türkiye and Mongolia

Gain access to
Central Asia

To connect to Central
Asia and then to
European markets
via Türkiye

Reach larger
international
markets and
diversify its economy

Develop economic
relations

Economic and
commercial
cooperation

Increasing trade

Historical and Cultural Ties

- Great Hun Empire (Turks and Mongols under one flag for the first time)
- European Huns, Göktürk and Uyghur Khanates
- Mongol Empire
- The shared state tradition formed together by two allied nations
- Numerous Turkic tribes played a major role in the Mongol Empire
- Turks in the Mongol Empire as soldiers, in important state positions, clerks, judges, scholars, instructors, merchants, clergymen
- Common cultural characteristics
- (as a result of this closeness, Turks and Mongols are seen as the same nation by the Westerners. The state was also called Turkish-Mongol Empire)

Türkiye and Mongolia

Today as in the past they can form a strong group if they work together

Mongolia to join to the OTS

OSCE, NATO, UN

“third neighbor”

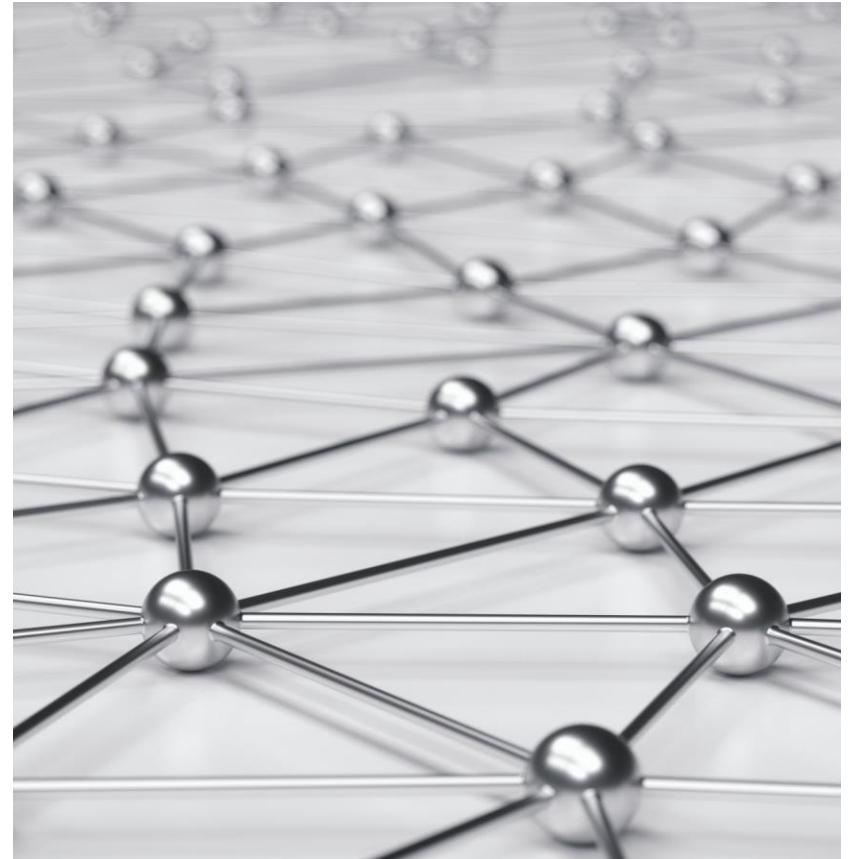
A democratic system

SCO

Balanced foreign policy

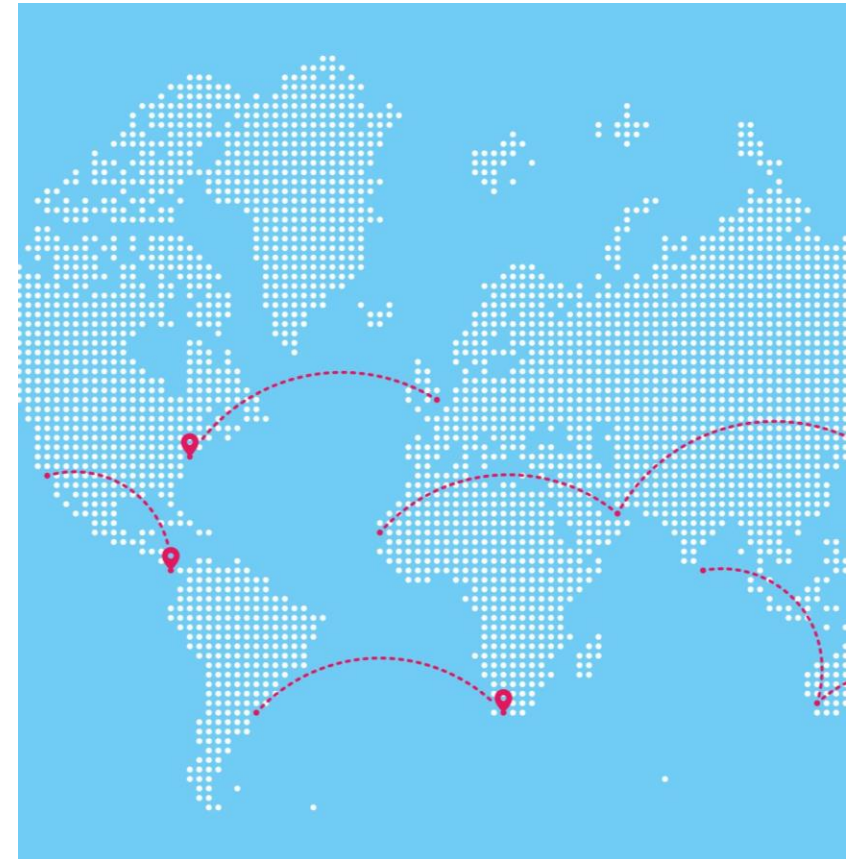
Key points to follow

- Ankara's regional strategy will maintain its focus on enhancing connectivity, energy projects and the Organization of the Turkic States.
- Key developments to monitor in the new future: Turkmenistan's potential involvement in the Southern Gas Corridor and China's Belt and Road Initiative projects, Middle Corridor and the Organization of the Turkic States



Connectivity, economic relations, energy cooperation

- Enhanced regional connectivity
- Economic collaboration
- Positioning itself as a vital link between Asia, Europe
- Pursue autonomous foreign policy objectives
- The quest for increased strategic autonomy by Türkiye, Asian states' preference for a multi-vector foreign policy, serves as a long-term factor drawing Türkiye and region's states into closer cooperation
- Enhancing Asian connectivity, commitment to promoting peace and prosperity in the region, improving commercial access to the region, bolstering supply chain resilience, diversifying energy resources
- Enhanced connectivity, economic relations, energy cooperation presents an opportunity for collaborative efforts aimed at promoting peace, stability and development in the region



The World today

- Increase cooperation on connectivity projects, develop economic and commercial relations, ensuring peace and security.
- A transforming international system
- Multi-polar world
- Russia-Ukraine war
- Israel-Palestinian conflict
- Global food and energy crisis and the economic problems they create
- The US-China competition
- The order established after the II.WW cannot support the current international system
- Cooperation and solidarity between friendly countries should be further developed

