

THE EURASIAN REGION IN THE AREA OF RUSSO-TURKISH RIVALRY

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Abstract: This study investigates the complexities and nuances of Russian-Turkish relations throughout the past century, particularly in the aftermath of the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The discrepancies in national interests between these two nations predominantly manifest in geopolitically sensitive regions, notably the South Caucasus and the Middle East, where their overlapping spheres of influence have escalated tensions. This article rigorously examines the principal dimensions of the geopolitical rivalry between Russia and Turkey, placing particular emphasis on the conflicts occurring in the South Caucasus region. Historically, both nations have adeptly exploited regional conflicts as a pivotal strategy for projecting power and expanding their spheres of influence. A comprehensive analysis of the Nagorno-Karabakh wars, alongside the Georgian-Abkhazian conflict and the Georgian-Ossetian ‘Five-Day War’, underscores the fundamentally divergent interests of Moscow and Ankara. The investigation of these conflicts holds significant importance in the context of Russian-Turkish geopolitical competition, as their proliferation has led to a marked realignment of influence within the region.

Keywords: Russia, Turkey, South Caucasus, the Syrian crisis, geopolitical competition, Karabakh conflict, Abkhazia, energy resources

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1. Introduction

Pronounced fluctuations characterize bilateral relations between Russia and Turkey, marked by an intricate interplay of cooperation and competition. This dynamic stems from both nations' specific foreign policy orientations and the clash of their interests in geopolitically complex regions, notably the South Caucasus and the Middle East. These regions of the Eurasian Center are identified as pivotal components of the 'Heartland' and serve as arenas where Turkey and Russia pursue their ambitions, often leading to collaborative engagements and geopolitical rivalries (Mackinder 1919).

The peculiarities of Russian-Turkish relations, which span over three centuries, are especially pronounced during geopolitical transformations. The most recent of these transformations commenced following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. In the early 90s, when Russia faced multifaceted challenges due to post-Soviet domestic political restructuring, Turkey viewed this as a favorable opportunity to expand its influence in the South Caucasus and Central Asia, thereby filling the vacuum left by the dissolution of the Soviet Union and turning these regions into its primary zones of influence (Torosyan 2009: 120-129). However, Turkey quickly recognized the complexities of this endeavor and deemed the realization of its ambitions unrealistic for various reasons. Consequently, Ankara recalibrated its stance, shifting towards strategies focused on soft power, economic cooperation, and cultural diplomacy to assert its presence in the region.

In the early 1990s, the United States and several European countries exhibited significant interest in the energy resources of Azerbaijan and the broader Caspian region. During this period, the Turkish government positioned itself as a crucial transit corridor for these energy resources, instituting new regulatory frameworks governing the transportation of energy through its maritime straits, thereby effectively discouraging routes that traversed Russian territory. This strategy of circumventing Russian territory was preferable to both the United States and European nations for geopolitical and energy security reasons. Consequently, the most viable routes for the construction of pipelines for transporting energy resources in the region emerged through the territories of Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey, bypassing Russia. Based on agreements signed in the mid-1990s, the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) oil pipeline was completed in 2006, along with the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum (BTE) gas pipeline. Genuine opportunities appeared to materialize for implementing the objectives outlined in the 1998 declaration signed by Turkey, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan, concerning the delivery of Caspian and Central Asian oil to global markets through the Baku-Ceyhan oil pipeline. Turkey anticipated that steadfast support from the United States and the European Union for these initiatives would ensure their success and enhance its strategic significance in the Eurasian domain. Furthermore, Turkey aimed to leverage not only its unique position as the sole transit country for the transportation of energy resources to Europe within a complex geopolitical landscape, but also its substantial role as a 'donor' country of energy resources under this program, particularly in relation to Azerbaijan. However,

subsequent geopolitical developments introduced complexities that significantly altered the trajectory of Ankara's ambitions.

Since the early 2000s, tensions have increasingly intensified in two of the most geopolitically significant regions of the Eurasian center – the South Caucasus and the Middle East – resulting from a convergence of structural and strategic developments.

Russia has adeptly navigated the internal political volatility emerging from the post-Soviet transition, successfully consolidating power and demonstrating a persistent aspiration to reclaim and augment its regional and geopolitical influence. In parallel, the United States continues its pursuit of establishing a unipolar world order, while the European Union actively seeks to enhance energy imports and diversify transportation routes and sources.

In this geopolitical context, the transport of energy resources from the Caspian Basin and Central Asia has evolved into a mechanism of geopolitical competition and has become an instrument within the complex interplay of competing geopolitical interests. These tensions deeply influence the dynamics of the relationship between Russia and Turkey, which are characterized by a paradoxical combination of competition and cooperation that starkly illustrates these developments.

This intricate geopolitical landscape has been further complicated by the emergence of the Syrian conflict, which has devolved into a significant regional crisis. The scale of the conflict, the depth of internal fragmentation, and the substantial involvement of external actors – including the United States, Russia, and Turkey – have collectively redefined Syria as a critical epicenter of geopolitical rivalry. The unforeseen repercussions of the conflict have exacerbated existing tensions and temporarily overshadowed other substantial issues in the region, particularly those related to the South Caucasus.

2. Methods and materials

This research utilizes both comparative and empirical methodologies, supplemented by systems analysis techniques. It is vital to draw from original sources – such as monographs and scholarly articles in Russian, English, and Turkish – to uphold the study's analytical rigor and academic integrity. The notion that the South Caucasus has become a critical region within the emerging geopolitical landscape is backed by extensive scholarship. Thinkers like Kramer H., Thomas De Waal, and Grigor Arshakyan contend that Russian deterrence, particularly via CIS peacekeeping mechanisms, has significantly influenced Turkey's military restraint. Importantly, Kramer H. notes that Turkey's regional assertiveness began early in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, perceiving the post-Soviet void as an opportunity. However, these scholars express differing views, highlighting the pragmatism in Russia-Turkey relations while suggesting that Turkish policy was motivated by pan-Turkic aspirations that were ultimately restricted. Helvacıköylü G. posits that Turkey consistently pursued diplomatic negotiations but was met with rejection due to its clear support for Azerbaijan. Smith M. stresses the strategic significance of Abkhazia

for Russia, mainly concerning Black Sea access and geopolitical depth. Cem O. investigates the Confederation of Mountainous Peoples of the Caucasus, illustrating ethnic solidarity movements that mirrored state-level geopolitics. Cem's findings further the study by illuminating the influence both Russia and Turkey exerted over non-state actors. Çelikpala M. and Eissler E. R. focus on domestic factors in Turkey, notably the substantial Abkhaz diaspora, which constrained Turkish foreign policy options. These scholars portray Turkey as straddling its national interests (supporting Georgia) and ethnic solidarity (with Abkhazians), ultimately leaning toward state interests. Concurrently, Smith M. outlines Russia's strategic imperatives in Abkhazia, viewing it as a crucial foothold in the Black Sea. This realist perspective reflects Russian efforts to thwart Western or Turkish encroachment into its perceived buffer zone. B. Aras and P. Akpinar document Turkey's strategic evolution post-1994 as energy transit routes became essential to its interests. There is a shared comprehension among Kramer, De Waal, and Smith M. that the early 1990s marked Russia's strategic response to Turkish advances in the South Caucasus. Turkish scholars Çelikpala M. and Helvaciköylü G. depict Turkey as diplomatically assertive but structurally constrained, revealing a gulf between geopolitical ambitions and diplomatic capabilities. Davutoğlu's perspective aligns with Erşen and Weiss's conclusions, both regarding Turkish-Russian convergence as partially ideational (neo-Ottomanism and Eurasianism) and partially material (energy infrastructure). However, Sharples J. and Roberts J. M. highlight an inconsistency: Turkey sought both energy independence and greater transit influence, which clashed with Russia's aim to dominate regional energy routes. Demir notes Turkey's adept diplomacy, which included rhetorical backing for Ukraine's sovereignty while deliberately avoiding sanctions against Russia. Perrigo and Banerjee illustrate how Turkey's drone diplomacy, especially the delivery of Bayraktar TB2s to Ukraine, undermines its narrative of neutrality and signifies assertive middle-power behavior. A clear inconsistency emerges between Demir's portrayal of Turkish caution and Perrigo's characterization of drone sales as significant aid to Ukraine. This highlights Turkey's dual-track diplomacy, balancing Western expectations with Russian sensitivities. Shaheen, Walker, and Hunt underscore incidents such as the downing of the Su-24 and the assassination of the Russian ambassador in Istanbul as flashpoints but argue that these did not disrupt broader strategic cooperation. Furuncu and Kibaroglu highlight military and energy convergence (S-400 acquisition, TurkStream) as reinforcing this pragmatic axis. There is an analytical consensus that Syria serves as both a conflict zone and a collaborative testing ground for Russia-Turkey relations. However, Turkish scholars tend to emphasize Ankara's assertiveness, while Russian or Western analysts highlight Turkey's concessions to Moscow. Regarding the second Nagorno-Karabakh War, De Waal and Butler disclose the extent of Turkish involvement in the 2020 conflict, emphasizing mercenary deployments and military backing, marking a significant departure from its previous diplomatic-only stance. Dalay perceives Moscow's choice to negotiate instead of confronting Ankara as recognition of Turkey's increasing military and diplomatic influence. A significant shift is clear in the literature: unlike in the 1990s, Russia no longer perceives Turkish

involvement in the South Caucasus as a red line. This transformation stems from geopolitical fatigue across multiple fronts in Ukraine, Syria, and Turkey's more robust regional engagement.

3. Russia-Turkey geopolitical competition in the context of the Nagorno-Karabakh and Abkhaz conflicts

New geopolitical realities have created strategic opportunities for establishing a new balance of power. From this perspective, the importance of the South Caucasus is paramount. As a crucial transport and communication hub, it has emerged as one of the most active regions for the development of geopolitical competition.

Ethno-political conflicts often shape the desired course of events during geopolitical competition. In this context, the First Nagorno-Karabakh War, which marked the initial stage of the Russia-Turkey rivalry, along with the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict, played a key role in the Russia-Turkey geopolitical competition in the South Caucasus. Moscow and Ankara held opposing interests in these conflicts; moreover, they viewed the conflicts as a crucial lever for establishing influence in the South Caucasus.

The onset of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict signaled Turkey's intentions to augment its influence within the South Caucasus region, a strategic move to occupy the geopolitical vacuum created by the disintegration of the Soviet Union (Kramer 1996: 2). In this context, Russia possessed the necessary resources to mitigate Turkish involvement in the disputes at hand. In May 1992, to redirect Armenia's focus from the escalating Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Azerbaijani forces in Nakhichevan instigated border clashes with Armenia. Turkey subsequently asserted that the 1921 Treaty of Kars conferred upon it the right to engage in the conflict (Arshakyan 2019: 47). Concurrently, Turkey endeavored to mobilize its military closer to the Armenian border, seeking to penalize Armenia for its incursions into the contested Nagorno-Karabakh region. However, G. Bourboulis, a representative of the Russian Federation's President, and the Commander-in-Chief of the CIS Collective Armed Forces, Marshal E. Shaposhnikov, communicated to Turkey that such actions risked triggering a third world war (Hale 1996, De Waal 2003). This warning effectively deterred the Turkish government, compelling it to abstain from punitive measures against Armenia.

Since the establishment of the OSCE Minsk Group in March 1992, Turkish diplomatic efforts have consistently sought to engage in the political resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Turkey aims to support Azerbaijan comprehensively and, consequently, enhance its influence in the South Caucasus (Helvaciköylü 2021: 171). However, from the 1990s until 2020, Turkey was largely unsuccessful in these endeavors as Armenian diplomatic efforts contended that Turkey could not serve as an impartial mediator due to its perceived tendency to advocate for Azerbaijani interests unilaterally.

During the initial phase of the First Nagorno-Karabakh War, a concurrent geopolitical struggle emerged between Russia and Turkey on the Abkhazian front, characterized by conflicting interests and concerns from both nations. Abkhazia's geographical position has historically endowed it with significant geopolitical and strategic value for Russia. Notably, Russian Defense Minister P. Grachev articulated that "Russia possesses specific strategic interests in Abkhazia and will undertake measures to safeguard the presence of Russian forces. Failure to do so would result in Russia's loss of influence in the Black Sea" (Smith 1993: 54). As the conflict escalated and the Georgian military garnered significant victories, President V. Ardzinba of Abkhazia reached out to all Abkhazians and North Caucasian peoples residing abroad. This initiative culminated in the establishment of the Confederation of Mountainous Peoples of the Caucasus (Cem 1999: 126-148), an effort that received backing from the leaders of the North Caucasian republics within Russia.

Regarding Turkey, at the outset of the conflict, Ankara opted for a position of neutrality, despite the significant role Georgia played in Turkey's South Caucasus policy. This stance was influenced by the presence of over 500,000 ethnic Abkhazians residing within Turkey (Eissler 2015: 125-135), which contributed to heightened tensions in Turkish-Georgian relations (Çelikpala 2016: 423-446). However, as Russia began successfully reestablishing its influence in the region, Turkey reassessed its approach towards Georgia during the years 1993–1994, subsequently endorsing Georgia's territorial integrity. This shift was also motivated by Turkey's involvement in various projects with Georgia concerning energy resource transportation routes from the Caspian Basin (Aras, Akpınar 2011: 53-68). Meanwhile, Moscow actively participated in the conflict resolution process, facilitating the signing of a ceasefire agreement between Georgia and Abkhazia in 1994, set against the backdrop of the Abkhazian victory.

Consequently, despite the resistance and pronounced discontent exhibited by Tbilisi, Moscow reinforced its presence in Georgia, particularly through the augmentation of Russian forces in Abkhazia under the auspices of the CIS peacekeeping operations. This strategic maneuver effectively curtailed Ankara's capacity for active political and military engagement in the region.

4. Russian-Turkish relations amidst evolving geopolitical landscapes

Following the collapse of the USSR, the next stage of geopolitical realignments in the South Caucasus occurred in 2008, with the key event being the Georgian-Ossetian August War. This war marked the beginning of intense Russian-American competition in the post-Soviet space. Consequently, Moscow achieved some success in asserting its dominance in the region. During the five-day conflict, Moscow seized the opportunity to recognize the independence of the Republics of Abkhazia and South Ossetia (Statement by President of Russia Dmitry Medvedev 2008) and enhanced its military presence in these territories. At the same time, it effectively lost Georgia temporarily.

In 2008, Turkey's involvement in the geopolitical dynamics of the South Caucasus was relatively limited; however, Ankara sought to leverage the emerging circumstances to its advantage. It posited that a multilateral foreign policy was essential and that a more balanced diplomatic posture was necessary, as opposed to an unqualified allegiance to the United States (Davutoğlu 2008: 77-96). This perspective aligned with the 'Strategic Depth' doctrine, which underpinned Turkey's foreign policy framework (Davutoğlu 2001), rooted in the ideology of 'neo-Ottomanism' (Sözen 2010: 103-123). Consequently, significant shifts occurred in Russian-Turkish relations following the Russo-Georgian war. Furthermore, Turkey exhibited several pro-Russian inclinations (Weiss, Zabanova 2016: 2-3, Devrim, Schulz 2009: 177-193).

Following the previously discussed events, the relations between Moscow and Ankara have experienced a notable enhancement. The increased frequency of high-level meetings indicates a deepening of bilateral relations, complemented by the signing of over forty agreements pertaining to trade and economic interactions (Özbay 2011: 77, Kolobov, Kornilov 2011: 30). Furthermore, this phase marks a significant advancement in cooperation within the energy sector. Notably, the agreements concerning the collaborative development of Turkey's first nuclear power plant, the Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant (NPP), the Samsun-Ceyhan oil pipeline, and the crucial South Stream gas pipeline (Erşen 2011: 263-282) hold particular importance.

Despite a rapprochement in diplomatic relations, numerous challenges persisted between Russia and Turkey. During this period, significant contradictions emerged within the energy sector. Moscow aimed to augment Turkey's reliance on Russian gas and thwart energy pipeline initiatives that would circumvent Russian territory. Conversely, Ankara leveraged the tensions between Russia and the European Union to diversify its energy sources and establish itself as a transit hub for energy resources (Roberts 2006: 207-223, Sharples 2015: 41-55).

The subsequent pivotal event in the bilateral relations between Russia and Turkey was the Ukrainian crisis, culminating in the annexation of Crimea by Russia in 2014. The armed confrontations in the Donbas and Luhansk regions, instigated by Moscow, resulted in the United States imposing stringent sanctions on Russia, a stance that was subsequently adopted by the European Union (Nelson 2017: 1). The annexation of Crimea fortified Russia's strategic position in the Black Sea, a region also deemed significant to Turkish interests. While Ankara publicly asserted its support for the territorial integrity of Ukraine, it refrained from articulating any vehement criticism of Moscow (Demir 2016). Given the critical nature of its relations with Moscow, Ankara opted not to participate in the Western sanctions imposed on Russia.

In 2022, the interests of Russia and Turkey were in conflict due to Russia's actions in Ukraine that began in February. In recent years, Turkey has increased its provision of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) to Ukraine, alongside offering various forms of assistance (Perrigo 2022). While Turkey has denounced Russia's actions in Ukraine, it has refrained from participating in the global sanctions imposed by Western nations (Banerjee 2022).

An additional significant challenge within Russian-Turkish relations is the ongoing Syrian conflict. Turkey has expressed concerns regarding the exacerbation of the Kurdish issue stemming from the Syrian crisis, which Ankara perceives as a considerable threat both domestically and internationally. Consequently, Ankara endeavors to prevent any form of Kurdish self-determination. In the context of the Syrian conflict, Turkey adopted an anti-Assad stance, providing substantial support to factions opposing Assad (Erdogan: Turkey, FSA close to capturing Syria's Al-Bab 2017). Moreover, Turkey has engaged in a diplomatic and propaganda campaign aimed at undermining the legitimacy of the official Damascus government (Brooker 2015).

Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Syria represents the inaugural instance in which Russia has actively engaged in a geopolitically significant process beyond its immediate borders, utilizing military force. Within the context of the Syrian conflict, Russia has provided support to President Bashar al-Assad, affirming his prerogative to determine the political trajectory of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Nonetheless, it is essential to acknowledge that Russia, Turkey, and the Islamic Republic of Iran have exhibited a convergence of strategies in combating the terrorist organization known as the 'Islamic State'. This alignment has laid the groundwork for the establishment of a trilateral framework, designated the Russia-Turkey-Iran format, at the presidential level, aimed at addressing the Syrian conflict. Notably, the armed forces of Russia and Turkey have largely refrained from direct confrontations, with the exceptions being the downing of a Russian military aircraft by Turkey (Shaheen, Walker 2015) and the assassination of the Russian ambassador to Turkey (Hunt 2016). These incidents, however, did not precipitate a significant deterioration in bilateral relations. In fact, diplomatic relations experienced a revitalization during this period, characterized by an upswing in bilateral trade and enhanced cooperation across economic, energy, industrial, and military-technical domains. Substantial advancements were made regarding the construction of the TurkStream pipeline and the Akkuyu nuclear power plant (Furuncu 2020: 1). Furthermore, pursuant to an agreement reached between Moscow and Ankara in December 2017, Turkey committed to purchasing four S-400 anti-aircraft missile systems, thereby becoming the first NATO member state to engage in such a notable military procurement from Russia (Kibaroğlu 2019: 3).

Despite the primarily transactional nature of Russian-Turkish cooperation, Ankara perceives the enhancement of Russia's influence in the Black Sea and the Middle East as a significant concern. This perception contradicts Turkey's national interests, as the expansion of Russian dominance in adjacent regions threatens Turkey's aspirations to assert itself as a regional leader. Consequently, in 2020, Turkey, likely recognizing the imminent opportunity for establishing a geopolitical balance, made a renewed effort to reassess its influence in the South Caucasus. This included instigating and directly engaging in the military aggression initiated by Azerbaijan against Artsakh in September 2020.

5. Russian-Turkish geopolitical competition during the Second Nagorno-Karabakh War

The victory of the Armenian side in the First Karabakh War and the subsequent ceasefire, which was mediated by Moscow, significantly augmented Russia's geopolitical influence in the South Caucasus region, effectively curtailing Turkey's attempts at active engagement in this area. In contrast, the geopolitical landscape following the Second Karabakh War has undergone a substantial transformation.

In 2020, Turkey recognized the impending establishment of a new world order and made a concerted effort to address the Karabakh conflict, an issue of significant importance to its national interests (Torosyan, Vardanyan 2015: 559-582). The resolution of this conflict is anticipated to have substantial implications for the geopolitical landscape in the South Caucasus. Unlike during the First Karabakh War, Turkey's involvement in the military operations initiated by Azerbaijan against Artsakh was unprecedented. Turkey played a critical role in the planning and execution of the conflict, transferring mercenaries from Syria to the conflict zone (Butler 2021), and extending political and military-technical support to Azerbaijan (De Waal 2021: 2), which included the provision of both domestically produced weaponry and American F-16 fighter jets. This robust support from Ankara was instrumental in altering the balance of power on the Karabakh front in favor of the Turkish-Azerbaijani alliance. Notably, for the first time since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Turkey enhanced its military and security influence in the region, marking a significant geopolitical achievement for Ankara.

The Russian Federation could not resist Ankara's entry into the region. It ultimately engaged in dialogue with the latter and acknowledged its interests in the South Caucasus (Dalay 2021: 19-21).

In this context, it is essential to recognize that on December 8, 2014, the long-standing Assad regime in Syria was overthrown, resulting in a transfer of power to the Islamist group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham. This shift initiated notable developments and a reconfiguration of influence within the region (Radford 2024). The overthrow of Assad's regime considerably augmented Turkey's influence in Syria. Notably, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham established its headquarters in the Idlib province, which shares a border with Turkey, facilitating uninterrupted support from Turkish authorities. Consequently, the ascendancy of Hayat Tahrir al-Sham is interpreted as a strategic victory for Turkey (Ciddi, Epley 2025, Zelin, Cagaptay 2025). Furthermore, the opposition's success in Syria had significant implications for domestic Turkish politics, as it enabled President Erdogan to demonstrate his achievements to the Turkish public within the framework of a neo-Ottoman ideological narrative (Çevik 2024). Conversely, Russia faced challenges in delivering adequate military support to Assad's forces, preventing them from successfully repelling the opposition. This shortfall has resulted in a marked decline in Russia's influence in Syria.

Despite the divergent interests of Russia and Turkey in various conflict zones, a state of open confrontation has been notably absent between the two nations. This phenomenon can be attributed to the contextual nature of Russian-Turkish

relations, which are significantly influenced by their respective standings within the international arena. Considering the substantial challenges both countries encounter in the realm of international relations, their bilateral connections remain vital for each nation, notwithstanding the presence of considerable disagreements. This complexity arises from the dualistic nature of bilateral relations, characterized by a dynamic interplay of competition and cooperation.

6. Conclusion

The outcome of the First Nagorno-Karabakh War, which culminated in a ceasefire mediated by Moscow, significantly bolstered Russia's influence within the region, concurrently leading to the cessation of Turkey's active involvement in the South Caucasus. In contrast, the geopolitical landscape post-Second Nagorno-Karabakh War has transformed markedly. In 2020, as the formation of a new world order appeared imminent, Turkey endeavored vigorously to address the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict – an issue of paramount importance to its national interests. The resolution of this conflict holds profound implications for the emerging configuration of geopolitical dynamics in the South Caucasus.

In contrast to the first Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Turkey's involvement in Azerbaijan's military operations against Artsakh represents a notable shift. This significant support from Ankara has altered the power dynamics on the Karabakh front, favoring the Turkish-Azerbaijani alliance. For the first time since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Turkey has augmented its influence in the region from both a military and security standpoint, marking a significant geopolitical achievement for Ankara.

As was the case in the second Karabakh war, in the Syrian conflict, Turkey has successfully enhanced its influence and role in the region at the expense of Russia.

Furthermore, Turkey's ascendancy in Syria signifies a substantial shift in the regional order. This assertion aligns with Erdogan's declaration that Turkey is reshaping historical narratives. Additionally, Turkey aims to bolster its geopolitical standing, predominantly by undermining the influence of Russia and Iran.

Turkey's capacity appears inadequate to manage the complexities of its multi-vector foreign relations established in the 2000s, which can sometimes be mutually contradictory. This inadequacy is compounded by significant internal political challenges, including an attempted coup, subsequent widespread violence, and anti-democratic constitutional amendments, making the situation increasingly intricate. The historical parallel, wherein Russia and Turkey found solace in each other during times of global rejection, raises the prospect of repetition of such dynamics. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that while similarities persist, the contexts separated by a century are not without their differences.

The Middle East and the South Caucasus are no longer confronted with the same critical circumstances that historically presented boundless opportunities for Russian-Turkish commerce a century ago. Nevertheless, the successful resolution

of the intricate challenges in these two most troubled areas of the Eurasian center is contingent upon the establishment of a new world order and the creation of a geopolitical equilibrium.

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