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EURASIAN ENERGY SECURITY: A GENERAL PERSPECTIVE

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I- Introduction

It could be said that energy sector, energy production and energy distribution gained unprecedented importance for all us in the 21th century. This century has also demonstrated that the energy security is a precondition for economic stability and an indivisible part of a state's overall security. Especially growing demand on energy resources day by day means that the future energy security of Eurasia very much depends on diversification of sources of energy supplies and enhancing security of the energy network. This paper proposes that the major potential for Eurasian energy security in Afghanistan and its immediate neighbors lies in the revival of trade and transportation links like Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan and more distant Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. While counting the name of these countries we cannot underestimate Russia's weight and importance in Eurasia and thus the paper also purposes the relations between the European Union and Russia by taking into account the recent energy wars especially started after the invasion of Crimea by Russia. It is because the paper offers a general perspective to Eurasian energy security, we embark on our study with touching upon the radical Islam and drug trafficking in Afghanistan and Central Asian countries and try to put forward why Eurasian energy security is dependent on eradicating these security problems. By doing this, this paper will also assess the risks associated with utilization of Central Asia and the Caucasus as a logistical backyard to the war on terror in Afghanistan and lack of a longer term strategy to confront internal problems of each of the region's countries. At the end, before we put forward our general energy approach to the Eurasian energy security, we will touch upon the significance of Turkey for the Eurasian energy security and point out why this region does matter for Turkey.

The arising instability and lack of properly functioning political and economic structures in Afghanistan causes great security concerns for the Central Asian states. Progress in Afghanistan, on the other hand, has the potential to transform the entire region since the challenges facing Afghanistan such as issues of security, governance and economics are

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regional in character. Particularly, the reconstruction of Afghanistan is considered as a viable path of economic recovery in Central Asia. First, reconstruction of the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan- Pakistan pipeline, which was abandoned in the 1990s, would lead to a new market for Turkmen gas. Second, international funding could jumpstart Soviet-era hydroelectric stations in Kyrgyzstan (Kambarata) and Tajikistan (Rogun), and both countries could gain not only by selling electricity to Afghanistan but by creating more electricity for domestic markets.

Third, the transportation projects such as the so-called Northern Distribution Network (NDN) would help economic development in the region in many ways. For example, as supplier and transit states, Central Asian countries would generate considerable amount of activity in trade. In addition, the improvement of the transportation infrastructure will help develop the remote impoverished parts of the region by connecting them to major transnational trade routes. Finally, reconstruction of existing trade and transportation routes and building new ones would help Afghanistan to diversify its sources of income away from the drug trade. This paper will also assess the risks associated with utilization of Central Asia as a logistical backyard to the war on terror in Afghanistan and lack of a longer term strategy to confront internal problems of each of the region's countries. First, transnational supply routes carry the risk of becoming convenient targets for militant groups within Central Asia with the expansion of Afghan conflict to the north. Second, NDN is likely to deteriorate the already problematic democracy and human rights records of Central Asian countries because of the US and the West's needs to maintain good working relations with the governments in the region. Third, international investment on development projects may increase corrupt practices in Central Asia and replicate the same problem in Afghanistan.

After eight years of NATO engagement in Afghanistan the international community has yet to set in place political, economic or security structures that will ensure the long-term stability of that country. The lack of functioning structures in Afghanistan is a cause of great concern for the Central Asian states, especially the three (Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) that share its borders. Already problematic relationships between Central Asian states are further complicated by the situation in Afghanistan. Simply Afghanistan forms the link between regions and it has witnessed a great meddling from various sides in recent decades. The fall of the Taliban in the aftermath of September 11, has contributed to the importance of Afghanistan as a key transport routes for increased trade and security cooperation between Central Asian states and their neighbors to the south such as Pakistan and India. This paper attempts to summarize those challenges and opportunities that the

current geopolitical context provides to security and trade relationships between Afghanistan and states in Central Asia. Challenges can be broadly labeled as the influence of Islamic radicalism and drug trafficking from Afghanistan into Central Asia. Opportunities can be summarized as better security environment and economic development through projects such as Northern Distribution Network. Paper also discusses possibilities of destabilization as a result of US attempts to diversify supply routes to Afghanistan from Pakistan to Central Asia.

II- Regional Security: Radical Islam and Drug Trafficking

The Central Asian states have gone about military reform in piecemeal fashion, with each country taking advantage of “good deals” on equipment and training offered by foreign partners. Other than a few “model units”, the result is that most army units are unable to link effectively with either NATO or the Russian-dominated Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). NATO was fast off the mark after independence, offering all these countries membership in the Partnership for Peace (PfP). The aim was to help each take the shards of the USSR military that they inherited and turn it into a force capable of meeting their defensive needs. At US urging, NATO also sought to create “CentrAsBat” (Central Asian Battalion) with Kazakh, Kyrgyz and Uzbek brigades, but the three countries found it difficult to cooperate smoothly, and have preferred country by country engagement.

NATO funding for military reform in Central Asia increased after September 11, especially for Uzbekistan, but declined sharply in 2004, due to negative public pressure caused by Uzbekistan’s poor human rights record. Relations declined further still after the Andijian disturbances in May 2005, when the Uzbek authorities fired on a largely unarmed crowd in Andijian. The US urged an international enquiry and the Uzbek authorities, already troubled by their deteriorating relationship with Washington, asked the US to leave the military facility at Karsi Khanabad. The US began to partner more closely with Kazakhstan, which is the only country in Central Asia to have a country reform plan that has been accepted by NATO. US and NATO military engagement with the various Central Asian states increased again in 2008, and in 2009 the US began contingency planning for an increased role for the 3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne) in Central Asia.³

There two main sets of interrelated challenges that the situation in Afghanistan presents to the states in Central Asia; continued influence of Islamic radicalism in Central

³ Deirdre Tynan, “Central Asia: Pentagon Plans for Deployment of Special Forces to States outside Afghanistan”, Eurasia Insight, 17 September, 2009, <http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/insightb/articles/eav091709.shtml>, accessed 22 April 2013.

Asia⁴ and the booming drug trade that passes through Afghanistan and Central Asia into Europe and Russia.⁵ To start with the former, in the 1990s the Taliban have set the new agenda Islamic radicalism in the entire region. Four of the five Central Asian republics-Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in addition to Iran, Turkey, Russia and India have backed anti-Taliban Northern Alliance with arms and money to stop the Taliban's advance. To this day leaders in Central Asia rightfully remain concerned by the continued presence and influence of radical Islamism in their region. Latter challenge is about the flow of narcotics from Afghanistan via multiple routes in the region to foreign markets and the populations of these transit corridors who are increasingly becoming consumers themselves.

Radical Islam

Arriving in Central Asia in the mid-seventh century, Islam became the dominant religion in the region by the eighth century.⁶ Until the rise of the Soviet Union in the twentieth century Islam continued to be the major force shaping the culture and identity of Central Asian peoples. Two variants of Islam can be mentioned corresponding to an opposition between tribal zones and the urban city centers that were conquered by Muslim Arabs. This latter form is a product of the religious schools (madrassas) of Samarkand and Bukhara and is often fundamentalist Islam. The dominant figures are the clergy. Islam in tribal zones on the other hand was imposed and penetrated through the intermediary of Sufi brotherhoods such as the Yasawiyya, which incorporate elements deriving from the shamanistic traditions of Turkic nomads. Overall the Islam in Central Asia was quietist,⁷ following the liberal Hanafi Sunni School which is known because of its respect for individual freedoms as in Afghanistan and throughout the Indian subcontinent, only to be challenged by Wahhabism⁸ starting in the 1970s.

What does the future hold for Central Asia's radical Islamic groups? First, while some might argue that in the post 9/11 era Islamic militancy in Central Asia is in demise, the trajectory of groups like Hizb-ut Tahrir (HT) and Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) has laid the foundation for a trend that will likely persist.⁹ Especially given the fact that

⁴ Ahmed Rashid, "Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia" London: I.B Tauris and Co Ltd, 2002, ss. 143-156.

⁵ Rollie Lal, "Central Asia and its Neighbors: Security and Commerce at the Crossroads" Washington DC: RAND Corporation Press, 2006, ss. 19-22.

⁶ Mehrdad Haghayeghi, "Islam and Politics in Central Asia", New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996, s. 2

⁷ David Lewis, "Temptations of Tyranny in Central Asia", London: Hurst Publishers, 2008, s. 185

⁸ Wahhabism in the strict sense practice puritan religious doctrine preached in Saudi Arabia.

⁹ Keith Martin, "Whither Central Asia's Islamic Radicals? A comparative framework for examining political Islam in Central Asia" Central Asia and the Caucasus, Journal of Social and Political Studies, special issue titled Political Islam and Conflicts in Russia and Central Asia, October 1999.

dissatisfaction with and opposition to authoritarian regimes and corrupt ruling elite are growing, we will likely to see revitalization of radical groups. Second, external factors such as war on terror in Afghanistan and regional instability have been and will continue to be substantial for the dynamics of Islamist mobilization in Central Asia. These regional and international security threats provide excellent opportunities for Islamists to further mobilization of their constituents. Third, political extremism and organized crime will likely continue to feed the militant mindset in the region. Income from organized crime such as drug-trafficking and hostage taking help fund extremist groups. Political extremism and militancy in turn creates better conditions for these groups since it destabilizes society and exert pressure on governments. Finally it is clear that central authorities in the region, especially Uzbekistan, are convinced that the iron fist is the best way to protect the stability and security of their country. This repression and consequential exclusion of Islamic groups from legitimate governmental procedures will continue to cause them to seek out different ways to express their grievances.

Drug Trafficking

As a bastion of moderate Islamism and straddling key land routes between East Asia and Europe, Central Asia presents itself as a key strategic region from a security perspective. Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan form the frontline of this traffic with long, ill-protected borders with Afghanistan totaling 2387 km. According to United Nations, Office on Drugs and Crime (2007), in 2007, opium cultivation in Afghanistan rose to 193,000 hectares, a 17 percent increase over 2006. An unprecedented 8,200 tons of opium can be harvested, making Afghanistan virtually the sole supplier to the world's deadliest drug accounting for 93 percent of global opiates market. UN Office on Drugs and Crime (2009) also reports that the total volumes of opiates smuggled through the so called "Northern Route" through Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, soared with not less than 70% from 720mt in 2003 to 1,230mt in 2007. Today, 21 % of all heroin smuggled from Afghanistan transits the "Northern Route" to the Russian Federation and Europe in 2006 with undetermined amounts also trafficked to Western China (Xinjiang Province). With excess production in Afghanistan, going far beyond the world demand for opiates, an increasing amount of drugs are absorbed locally along the routes.¹⁰

Central Asia's borders present a unique opportunity for intercepting trade, foremost illicit drug trafficking but equally secondary activities such as the trafficking of precursor

¹⁰ Martha Brill, Olcott, "Central Asia: Living in Afghanistan's Shadow", Norwegian Peace Centre Brief, No. 1, November 2009.

chemicals and weapons. Currently, the risk of detection for smugglers is not high through most of the Central Asian-Afghan crossings. Furthermore, irregular crossings of the Afghan border are present various smuggling options. Strengthened border interdiction capacities in this area will bring additional benefits not just for drug control but also in regard to improved security against terrorism, smuggling of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), small arms, human beings, and various other illegal activities. Finally, Central Asia's borders with China and the Islamic Republic of Iran are also briefly examined as similar initiatives will have to be introduced with these countries if the interdiction capacities in Central Asia are to be maximized.

III- Opportunities

There is considerable interest in Afghanistan's role as a transit route for trade especially in energy sector from Central Asia to South Asia. Increasing the trade in energy sector is especially attractive because South Asia is forecast to be a major consumer of Central Asian energy on the one hand¹¹ and Afghanistan needs to diversify its sources of income away from drug trade. However, although Central Asian states have an interest in fostering trade and transport linkages both with and through Afghanistan, they face serious difficulties in maintaining security for the routes.

While problems such as political instability and insecurity persist in the region despite the US presence and assistance, the states in Central Asia would be even less capable of preventing the growth of illegal trade and extremist groups throughout the region in the absence of a U.S. role in Afghanistan. Therefore, it is likely that these states, the United States and others such as Iran and Russia who share an interest in promoting peace and security in Asia will have reasons to continue cooperation.

Northern Distribution Network

The so-called Northern Distribution Network (NDN) encompassing "a set of commercial agreements with each of the Central Asian states to allow the transit of cargo to supply U.S. forces in Afghanistan" was established by the U.S. military when the Obama administration announced its intention to escalate the U.S. military presence in Afghanistan.¹² The creation of this network of supply routes had become essential especially after series of

¹¹ One of the main proposals was the construction of trans-Afghan pipeline to supply gas from Turkmenistan to Pakistan via Afghanistan.

¹² Former Secretary Hillary Clinton stated that Afghanistan will be U.S. President Barack Obama's "highest priority" and the administration is considering "a multidimensional network" to enhance the NATO efforts in Afghanistan during her confirmation hearing. For full transcript of Clinton's confirmation hearing to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee see <<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=99290981>> Also Cooley, Alexander "The Afghanization of Central Asia" Eurasia Insight, 11 December 2009.

militant attacks disrupted the main US supply routes from Pakistan into Afghanistan in 2008. Since then, the US has almost doubled its military footprint in Afghanistan by sending thousands of more troops and more equipment, construction material, fuel and food.

According to Stephen Blank, Central Asian supply network is mutually inclusive with US policy and the Central Asian priorities in several ways.¹³ First the plan requires the acquisition of considerable amount of supplies locally from Central Asian countries. As suppliers and transit states, the region is potentially will generate considerable amounts of money. Second, other supplies such as heavy construction equipment and fuel would be sent either by airlifting or rail to Central Asia and then trucked into Afghanistan. Third it has been presumed that the prospects of new economic benefits to their states will give the Central Asian states a clear stake in the re-construction project of Afghanistan. Fourth, the NDN is expected both to improve the transportation infrastructure of Central Asia and to develop the remote impoverished parts of the region by connecting them to major transnational trade routes.

However, the US administration is risking the export of Afghanistan's security crisis to Central Asia by utilizing the region as a logistical backyard to war on terror in Afghanistan and by not formulating a longer term strategy to confront internal problems of each of the region's countries (Cooley, 2009). First, NDN supply routes carry the risk of becoming convenient targets for militant groups within Central Asia. Afghan arena of conflict threatens to expand to the north to countries like Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.¹⁴ Second, NDN is likely to deteriorate the already problematic democracy and human rights records of Central Asian countries because of the US and the West's needs to maintain good working relations with the governments in the region. Third NDN may increase corrupt practices in Central Asia and thus replicate the same problem in Afghanistan.

Transit

One success is the \$37 million Afghanistan-Tajikistan bridge across the Pyanj River which opened in August 2007, and is built to allow up to one thousand trucks a day. There are also plans for a new railroad link between Uzbekistan and Afghanistan, which will greatly facilitate the movement of goods into the latter country. Highways in many parts of Central Asia have been improving, as national efforts have aimed to end Soviet-era transportation interdependencies and to facilitate commerce within countries. Such efforts include the

¹³ Stephen Blank, "Afghanistan: Examining Implications of a Central Asian Supply Line for Afghanistan", Eurasia Insight, 22 January 2009.

¹⁴ For example Taliban hijacked two fuel tankers in Kunduz in September 2009 that had been shipped via Tajikistan route.

modernized roads linking principal cities in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, and partially realized projects to link up Kazakhstan's principal cities with its new national capital in Astana. However, according to Olcott,¹⁵ major transnational projects such as the EU-supported TRACECA (Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia), and more recent projects of the Asian Development Bank remain incomplete, partly because the relatively low volumes of trade across the region do not justify the kind of investments necessary to achieve them.

IV-Energy: a need for the EU, and a power for Russia

Interdependence of the EU and Russia in the areas of trade and energy compel the parties to cooperate with each other in many areas as the most consistent policies with the EU have been on energy. The relations between Russia, which has rich natural gas, oil and coal resources, and the EU, which is dependent on these resources in the social and economic aspects, gained a great momentum especially with the disintegration of the USSR. In fact, the **Medium-Term Strategy** document issued in 2000 highlighted that Russia would take the responsibility for meeting the long-term and reliable energy and raw material needs of the EU, and aimed to develop the partnership in the energy sector. Since the EU does not have the energy resources, the Union is dependent for the foreign sources in this regard. Russia has the world's largest natural gas reserves and has the second largest coal reserves, in addition to this, Russia is an indispensable partner for EU now due to the oil it has.¹⁶ 6.5% of the EU's energy consumption is met by renewable energy, and 14.7% by nuclear power, 15.1% by coal, 26.1% by natural gas and 37.4% by oil resources. In other words, 65% of the Union's energy consumption comes from oil and natural gas¹⁷ and this will increase over the years as shown in the following table.

Petroleum and Natural Gas Import Rates for EU-27

¹⁵ Martha Brill, Olcott, "Central Asia: Living in Afghanistan's Shadow", 2009.

¹⁶ Mark Smith, "Russia's Energy Diplomacy", 19.05.2004 <http://www.da.mod.uk/CSRC/documents/Russian/F75>, Access Date, 04.01.2013.

¹⁷ Murat Ercan, Importance of Turkey in the Energy Policy of Europe (Avrupa Birliği'nin Enerji Politikasında Türkiye'nin Önemi), *AKADEMİK BAKIŞ* Journal, Issue: 25 July - August 2011, p.5.

	2005	2020	2030
Oil	82%	90%	93%
Natural gas	57%	70%	84%

Source: European Commission, Green Paper on "An Energy, Policy for Europe", {COM (2007) 1 final}, Brussels, 10.1.2007.

Energy import dependence of the 12 new member countries that were included with the recent expansion is at the highest level, and this increases the EU's dependence on Russia in the energy field. For example, before the 2004 expansion, 20% of the natural gas imports and 17% of the oil demands of the EU were met by Russia. Yet after the expansion, the EU started to meet its demands of 40% of natural gas, 34% of oil and 25% of coal from Russia. And in total, the European Union that supplies 81% of petroleum, 54% of natural gas consumption and 38% of solid fuels from the foreign sources, is in the first position in imports in the global energy market.¹⁸ By saying this it should also be emphasized that it's a false impression to assume that only the EU needs Russia, indeed the European market is a huge income for Russia, and EU's investments on oil, natural gas and electricity areas in Russia are very high.¹⁹

However, things have changed rapidly after the invasion of Crimea by Russia. Though the final outcome of the Ukrainian crisis is uncertain, two things are already clear. Especially after the election of Putin, Russian Federation has revealed itself as non-Western, and would not play by the rules of the West as it does not see the world as the West does. Russia was quite aware of the importance of Ukraine and knew that Ukraine into the Western camp would complete NATO's inadmissible encirclement of Russia. Putin is not overly concerned, taking into account that he acts according to his head, about the economic damage the sanctions will cause. As for the EU, which realized deeply the dimensions of its energy dependence on Russia with the 2006 Russian-Ukraine energy crisis, taking a serious step enacting project as an attempt to create (alternative or new) opportunities in energy supply. Yet, Russia was swift to prevent this attempt by making bilateral agreements with countries to isolate the EU and deepen its energy dependency to Russia. However, now the EU does not remain indifferent to alternatives projects and the members have begun acting with one voice, especially after what happened in Ukraine which is now under the protecting umbrella of the

¹⁸ European Commission, "Annex to the Green Paper: A European Strategy for Sustainable, Competitive and Secure Energy - What is at stake - Background document", {COM(2006) 105 final}, Brussels, SEC(2006) 317/2.

¹⁹ Charles Grant and Katinka Barysch, "The EU-Russia Energy Dialogue", 19.05.2004, http://www.cer.org.uk/pdf/briefing_eu_russia.pdf, Access Date, 04.01.2013.

EU. It may not allow Russia to exercise his power on the whole territory of Ukraine at any cost. The EU also is not alone in this case as the USA is now a part of the game. That is where the Great Game²⁰ comes back in.²¹

After the USA and EU leaders approved punishing new sanctions on Moscow, we argue that short-term oriented, state-centric and partly oil and gas focused energy policies in the near future may be compromising Central Asian countries' ability to secure sufficient and sustainable energy supplies for both economic and population needs for the foreseeable future. We are saying this because the relation with the EU and Russia is about implementing mutual sanctions and threatening one another at the moment. Here is some examples: "If there are sanctions related to energy, further limits for our financial sector we will have to respond asymmetrically," Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said, adding that Russia may target flights over Russia. "We proceed from the fact that we have friendly relations with our partners and that is why the sky over Russia is open for flights. But if they put limits on us we will have to respond."²²

V- New Era in Turkish Foreign Policy? Assumptions or Expectations?

Within the context of this new strategy, the Eurasian region stands out as a potential sphere of influence, in which Turkey seeks an active role. In a sense, Central Asia expanded the borders of the Middle East northward, introducing a new sense of depth for southern Asia, and connected the peoples of both West Asia and East Asia to the Eurasian region. Turkey's policy toward Central Asia reflects the new characteristics of a foreign policy line. Turkey pays serious attention to preserving good neighborhood policies with Iran and Russia, while attempting to prevent their policies that may harm the peace and stability in the region. Turkey's other priority in its Central Asian policy is to make sure that these new states acquire the necessary abilities to establish stability and security at home.²³ Businessmen and civil society organizations are seen as essential for Turkey's commitment to the stability and

²⁰ After passing the bloodiest 20th century we may discuss that the Great Game has begun again with the invasion of Crimea. In the 19th century, the Great Game was the rivalry between the British and Russian empires for Central Asia. It seemed as though the Russian bear and the British lion were destined to meet head-on. England was anxious that Russia's relentless expansion would sooner or later threaten the jewel in the imperial crown, India. Britain sought influence or control in much of Central Asia, to buffer the "crown jewel" of its empire – British India.

²¹ Serdar Yılmaz, Never Say Never, Who Will Share the Same Fate as Ukraine?, 13.05.2014. Eurasian Research Institute, Ahmet Yesevi University, Kazakhstan, access Date\ 01/09/2014
<http://eurasianri.org/main/never-say-never-who-will-share-the-same-fate-as-ukraine/>

²² Mircea Birca, Russia threatens to close airspace amid Western sanctions, Eurasia Press and News, <http://eurasia.ro/?p=55123> Access Date. 09.09.2014

²³ "Turkish Policy Toward Central Asia", http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?load=detay&link=141729. Accessed on 30.06.2011.

welfare of the region. These connections have helped Turkey to gain self-confidence to develop a more durable and constructive policy toward Central Asia. Turkish policy makers see this new policy line in a wider framework, that of following balanced relations with regional countries like Russia, Iran, Pakistan, India and China. The collapse of the Soviet Union removed the old Soviet threat, while at the same time creating a power vacuum on Turkey's borders²⁴. In this environment, Turkey became an important actor in the region as a result of its strong historical connections. While Turkey had traditionally avoided involvement in regional politics, it has since been drawn into the volatile new politics of the region.

Turkey is a connection point as well as a bridge located at the centre of Eurasia which is one of the world's three most productive regions in terms of oil and gas. Brzezinski thus points out that "Eurasia is the chessboard on which the struggle for global primacy continues to be played"²⁵. Turkey as a 'geopolitical pivot' must keep playing an active role in this region by providing emergency assistance, conceding a number of bilateral agreements, covering trade, people to people exchange programs together with business cooperation, education, communication and public administration.²⁶ Turkey must be taken into consideration by the Turkic republics in order to diversify oil and gas transit routes, provide the security of the significant pipelines and pacify the ethnic confrontations in the region. Turkey's proximity to the region, the historical and cultural ties, the linguistic advantages and sharing the same motto (peace at home peace in the world) will always help the Turkic republics build mutual trust. To claim further, if Turkey and the Turkic republics act together as one in all spheres they may even constitute a major financial and political force, taking into consideration of their population of more than 120 million, Turkic republics including Turkey can make use of the advantages posed by their lying in a significant productive area and by their sharing the same religious, language and cultural heritage.²⁷

VI-Why Matters?

This region plays an important role as the main transit route between Europe and China. Caspian Sea provides diversification of Turkey's energy import for domestic consumption and it might make Turkey as a substantial transit hub in Eurasia with Nabucco

²⁴ Ahmet Davutoğlu, *Stratejik Derinlik, Türkiye'nin Uluslararası Konumu*, Küre Yayınları, İstanbul, 2011.

²⁵ Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Chessboard*, New York, Basic Books, 1997.

²⁶ İdris Bal, *Turkey's Relations With the West and the Turkic Republics; the Rise and the Fall of Turkish Model*, London, Ashgate, 2000.

²⁷ Towards a Turkish Economic Union, can be found at www.economics.inislam.net/6.html, Accessed Date, 09.07.2013.

and TANAP.²⁸ According to Balcer,²⁹ this region is a key arena of competition and constitutes Russia's underbelly, Iran's backyard and gate to Afghanistan where Turkey seeks military and economic engagement together with regional and global security. Turkey is accompanied by the Turkic republics within the framework of NATO's Partnership for Peace as Kazakh and Kirghiz officers have participated in training exercises so far. Another importance of the region for Turkey is the similarity of culture and identity that "it is home to millions of Muslims and Turkic people". Turkey as a country is regarded as the main promoter of the idea of collaboration, science and education between Turkic states and peoples. In a sense, these republics are a kind of laboratory to discern many different tastes, and safeguard cultural, ethnic and religious diversity. Today, they are being monitored by other countries including Turkey for their economic modernization and attempt to be open to foreign countries in order to attract foreign capital investments in their studies such as construction, telecommunication and infrastructure and energy sector being in the first place. In addition to that, Turkish investors have put huge amounts of investments in the region that Turkey in a way should pursue a long-term politics towards the region. The transportation to the region is not at the required level, the information about Turkic republics are generally obtained from English or Russian resources and the fail in the development of satellite and other publishing politics affect Turkish investors.³⁰

Turkey had declared that making foreign trade, customs taxes, decreasing or, if possible, eliminating taxes, and implementing a common external tariff trade as a process of liberalization with Iran - Pakistan – Bangladesh – Azerbaijan – Turkmenistan – Uzbekistan – Kazakhstan – Kyrgyzstan - Tajikistan and Afghanistan would make no harm to the Customs Union with the EU. In other words, what the EU was expecting from Turkey was to be able to export duty-free/quota-free industrial goods with lower taxes to the Central Asian countries and import cheap natural gas and oil sources and other raw materials from Central Asian countries through Turkey. Furthermore, what we assume is that effective and efficient use of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), located in Istanbul, will

²⁸ TANAP is a gas pipeline project, which would transport gas from the Shah Deniz gas field and signed in June 2012 with an estimation of 7 billion dollar cost. In this project, 16 billion cubic meters of gas per year from Azerbaijan of which about 6 billion cubic meters will be allocated to Turkey and set to be completed in 2018. The project, regarded as a promising one, has been emerged with the cooperation of Turkey and Azerbaijan. It has a capacity to supply the gas needs of Europe and Turkey. SOCAR 80%, BOTAS 15% and TPAO 5% are the founding members of the consortium whereas BP, Statoil and Total S.A. have been invited to become minority shareholders. More information about TANAP can be found at <http://www.tanap.com/en/>

²⁹ Adam Balcer, *Between Energy and Soft Pan-Turkizm: Turkey and The Turkic Republics*, Turkish Policy Quarterly, Volume 11, Number 2, 2012, p. 152.

³⁰ Sedat Laçiner, *Kazakhstan Turkey Relations (Kazakistan Türkiye İlişkileri)*, 18 Mayıs 2007. <http://www.usak.org.tr/makale.asp?id=592>, Accessed Date, 03.03.2013.

settle the continuous economic commitment of the countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus to Turkey. It will also resolve the EU's "Energy Security" problem and will make it possible for the EU to easily enter new markets. Thus, the EU will be forced to accept Turkey's EU membership and Turkey will become the leader country in the Balkans, the Black Sea basin, the Eastern Mediterranean, the Middle East and the Caucasus Region.³¹

VII- What to do?

First of all, in trying to engage more effectively in Central Asia, western leaders and financiers would do well to recognize the relative limits to western influence in the region, and to recognize that our track record of engagement with these countries gives us limited leverage. While the current financial climate makes it unlikely that major regional projects will be funded, more attention could be given to providing loans and grants that would stimulate cross-border links between small and medium-sized businesses. Second, While many of the region's leaders are willing to participate in international negotiation, none of them has an original understanding of how to restore peace in Afghanistan. This includes Kazakhstan's president Nursultan Nazarbayev, whose country chaired the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe in 2010. From NATO's point of view, however, it might be more effective to take advantage of the support being offered by regional leaders to broaden the arena of negotiation. Third, Relations with Russia need to be treated carefully. Moscow wants NATO to succeed but not to stay too long in Moscow's backyard and, ideally, to leave Moscow's power enhanced in the process. Increased cooperation might lead to manipulation by Russia to further its advantage. NATO must be vigilant that the Northern Distribution Network does not lead to Russian domination of Central Asian borders because many convoys will originate in Baltic ports.

As for Turkey, she should never miss the chance to become one of the most important crossroads in the frenzy flow of energy in the Eurasia as can be stated that countries are using their control of energy as a political coercion and influence over the other countries as Russia constitute the primary example of this. Turkey's position in Central Asia will depend, to a certain degree, on its ability to condense economic and political relations with the Turkic republics. Close relations, historical ties and approximation with these republics could be of great benefit to Ankara in counterbalancing Moscow. It is known that Russia has used its historical and political ties to sign agreements with Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan,

³¹ Uğur Özgöker & Serdar Yılmaz, Does the Central Asia Really Matter for the TFP?, 1st International Conference, Strategizing Turkey: The Davutoğlu Era in Turkish Foreign Policy, Istanbul Kültür University, 26-27 October 2013, Istanbul.

Iran and Azerbaijan and increased the prices for the gas supplied from these countries so as to leave the EU desperate to purchase gas/oil from herself. As we argue that as long as the EU member countries speak with one voice it will not be an issue to find and create alternatives energy routes, however, the member states tend to defend their national interests the EU may have hard times regarding the diversification of energy routes. Especially after the invasion of Crimea sanctions war has started between the EU and Russia as the EU and the USA have imposed restrictive measures³² against the Russian Federation in response to the illegal annexation of Crimea and deliberate destabilisation of a neighbouring sovereign country. Just before that, during the NATO Wales Summit the press release from NATO on 4th of September put forward that “we, the Heads of State and Government of the NATO-Ukraine Commission, stand united in our support of Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders”.³³ NATO is concerned regarding Russian stances undermine the security of Ukraine and have serious implications for the stability and security of the entire Euro-Atlantic area.

We cannot conclude this study by referring the declaration of the new European Energy Security Strategy³⁴ in May 2014 for the EU that sets out a list of short-, medium- and long-term actions to reduce dependence on Russian gas. The Strategy begins with key facts about the EU’s gas dependence on Russia. According to the paper, Europe imports 53% of its energy and this has increase for the last decade. The EU is produced domestically only a third of the gas it consumes. Although the EU has a better security of gas supply today than it did in 2006 or 2009, six countries remain 100% dependent on Russian gas. The paper also elucidates that 18 other members import some Russian gas to some extent . Only Ireland, the UK, Portugal and Spain import no gas from Russia at all. In total, Russia supplies 39% of Europe’s imported gas. Then the strategy paper purposes some strong messages like, the Ukraine crisis has brought energy efficiency back up the political agenda, emergency plans and back-up mechanisms will be developed for increasing gas stocks and reducing energy demand, the Commission says infrastructure investments by dominant suppliers must adhere to all internal market and competition rules and this is clear message to Gazprom. In a nutshell, the strategy paper is providing ways with how Europe can become less dependent on

³² For more informations regarding the EU sanctions against Russia over Ukraine crisis, and Statement by the President of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy on further EU restrictive measures against Russia, pls see (11/09/2014), pdf http://europa.eu/newsroom/highlights/special-coverage/eu_sanctions/index_en.htm, Access Date, 12.09.2014.

³³ Joint Statement of the NATO-Ukraine Commission, Press Release (2014) 124, Issued on 04 Sep. 2014. http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_112695.htm, Accessed Date, 12.09.2014

³⁴ European Commission, European Energy Security Strategy, Brussels, 28.5.2014, COM(2014) 330 final http://ec.europa.eu/energy/doc/20140528_energy_security_communication.pdf, Accessed Date, 12.09.2014

Russia and questioning whether this is feasible for Europe. We assume that seeing if it is feasible or not is dependant on the Commission calls for Europe to speak with one voice.

In conclusion, our general approach to the Eurasian energy security is the following:

- ⇒ It is extremely important that the energy dialogue continues and all parties are able to have their voices heard.
- ⇒ Consumers and producers have to adhere to the "fair rules of game" as the interests of all players of energy game have to be considered properly and equally.
- ⇒ Producer countries have to stop putting political pressure to the consumers of energy resources.
- ⇒ Consumers and producers must reach an acceptable level of balance of interests. In other words, demands of consumers have to be met by the suppliers and vice versa.
- ⇒ One of the most significant key elements in the energy game is the diversification of supply sources and the routs of transportation.
- ⇒ Enhanced dialogues on growing energy interdependence, security of supply and demand issues are essential for sustainable development.

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