

**ANNUAL
REPORT
2015**



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MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL

Peace, security, stability and prosperity have been the assets most direly longed for in diverse corners of the world and particularly in Eurasia during 2015. The tragedy of trans-border migration fueled by protracted conflicts in the Middle East lingered. Worsening trajectories in the economies of the region stemmed largely from higher volatility in commodity and oil prices throughout the year. Alarming signs of further deterioration were observed in the power balances within both the regional and international equations. Yet, against this background, the determination and strong political will on the part of the Turkic world remained intact to face those challenges.

As a regional organization with global responsibilities, the Turkic Council takes its strength from the common history, culture and values that its Member States share. The Council's inclusive, comprehensive, cooperative and result-oriented approach to deal with the pressing issues of the day, proved once again as the much-needed remedy for rampant problems. This approach yielded tangible results in the pursuit of tapping into the rich potential in various areas and thus contributed to the development in the region and beyond.

Inspired by the UN Charter and its universal principles, the Turkic Council has intensified its efforts to share its vision and desire for cooperation in every field, through all means at hand, with regional and international partners. Within this framework, we hosted a reception in New York for the Permanent Representatives of UN member countries to explain reasons behind our bid for the observer status at UN General Assembly. Meetings with senior officials of UN bodies and agencies including ECOSOC, UN Development Programme (UNDP), the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) were held.

We co-organized two events with the UN bodies in Istanbul last year: I) the International Conference on Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) for Development together with the United Nations Development Programme Regional Bureau for Europe and the CIS (UNDP-RBEC) and II) a joint session with the UN Economic Commission for Europe-Eurasian Transport Links (UNECE-EATL) Group of Experts.

We had the chance to convey our commitment to world's peace, security and prosperity in the meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council held in Vienna. We attended another OSCE event; the 22nd OSCE Ministerial Council in Belgrade. We have also launched an interaction process with the EU following our official visit to Brussels to meet with senior officials of the European External Action Service.

These were all among the important opportunities in 2015 to exchange views with our partners. Additionally, further stages of cooperation have been achieved with respected international institutions. Three MoUs signed last year with international organizations, namely, the World Customs Organization (WCO); the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), and the International Centre for Sport Security (ICSS) to boost cooperation in respective fields.

While establishing new ties and strengthening the existing ones with the international community, the Council has also streamlined the flow of innovative ideas through its internal mechanisms. It is a pleasure to confidently say, in this context, that various working group meetings and subsequent ministerial meetings to discuss, develop and implement numerous projects were conducted during the year. Working groups on economy, customs, transport, education, information and media, tourism and diaspora was added last year by the working group on youth and sports.

We should underline the fact that, harmonious functioning of the Council of Foreign Ministers, the Council of Elders and Senior Officials Committee has added tremendously to the overall synergy. One further step to generate sound perspectives on various issues of common concern has been the MoU signed in May among the Foreign Policy Research Centers of the Member States. We believe that this step will be instrumental to furnish the Council with supplemental strategic visions.



Ambassador Ramil Hasanov
Secretary General

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Objectives and Structure of the

Cooperation Council of the Turkic Speaking States (the Turkic Council) is an intergovernmental organization, whose overarching aim is to promote comprehensive cooperation among Turkic Speaking States. The organization was established by *the Nakhchivan Agreement on Establishment of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States*, which was signed at the Summit of the Heads of Turkic Speaking States held in Nakhchivan in 2009. The founding and current members are Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkey.

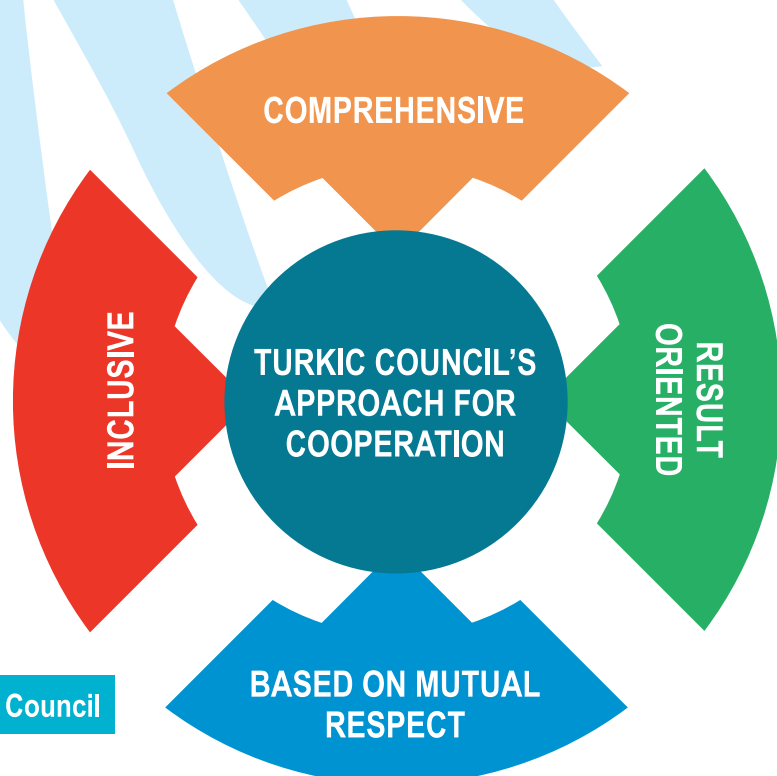
The Turkic Council reflects the common political will that emanates from the Process of Summits of the Heads of States of the Turkic Speaking States.



The process began at the very first Summit of the Heads of Turkic Speaking States held in Ankara in 1992, which brought together the leaders of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Turkey. Subsequent summits were: Istanbul Summit in 1994; Bishkek Summit in 1995; Tashkent Summit in 1996; Astana Summit in 1998; Baku Summit in 2000; Istanbul Summit in 2001; Antalya Summit in 2006; Nakhchivan Summit in 2009 and Istanbul Summit in 2010.

The Nakhchivan Agreement entered into force in November 2010. At the Istanbul Summit of 2010, the Turkic Council began its activities with a Secretariat headquartered in Istanbul.

These Summits, after the establishment of the Turkic Council were renamed as “Summits of Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States”. Five Summits have been held in Almaty, Bishkek, Gabala, Bodrum and Astana since the establishment of the Council and the next one will be hosted by Kyrgyzstan in 2016. These major annual events are convened with the participation of the Presidents of Member States, Foreign Ministers and other Ministers as appropriate.



The Working Principles of Turkic Council

Nakhchivan Agreement sets out the main purposes and tasks of the

Organization as follows:

- Strengthening mutual confidence among the Parties;
- Maintaining peace in the region and beyond;
- Promoting common positions on foreign policy issues;
- Coordinating actions to combat international terrorism, separatism, extremism and trans-border crimes;
- Promoting effective regional and bilateral cooperation in all areas of common interest;
- Creating favorable conditions for trade and investment;
- Aiming for comprehensive and balanced economic growth, social and cultural development;
- Discussing questions of ensuring rule of law, good governance and protection of human rights;
- Expanding interaction in the fields of science, technology, education and culture;
- Encouraging interaction of the mass media and wider communication;
- Promoting exchange of legal information and enhancing legal cooperation.

In order to fulfill the objectives and tasks of the Turkic Council, following structures were established:

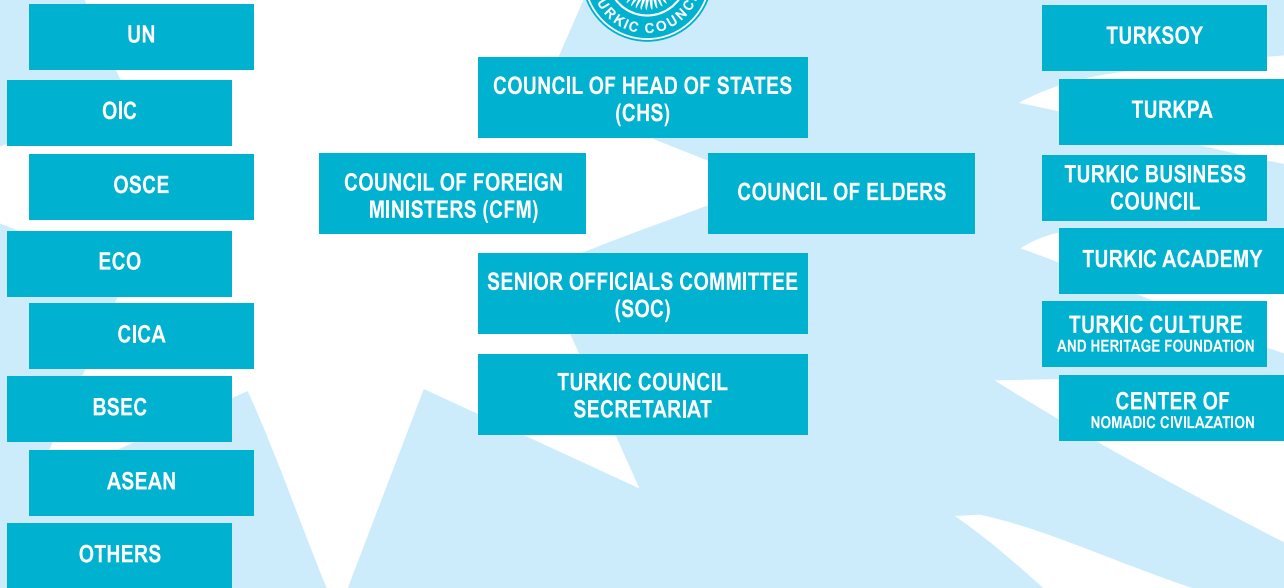
- Council of Heads of States;
- Council of Foreign Ministers;
- Council of Elders;
- Senior Officials Committee;
- Secretariat.

The state that hosts the regular meeting of the Council of Heads of States assumes the chairmanship of the Turkic Council until the next meeting.



INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS



The Working Mechanism of the Turkic Council

Council of Heads of States

The main mechanism of the political cooperation among Turkic Speaking States is the annual *Summits* where the *Council of Heads of States (CHS)* convenes. The CHS embodies the highest political will behind the Turkic Council and is the utmost organ guiding its primary motivations and activities. The CHS, through adopting Summit Declaration, reviews the past work and brings in new instructions for the following year.

Council of Foreign Ministers

Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) considers the issues of current activities of the Council, defines more actual international issues for discussion in the frame of the CHS meetings, and approves the staff matrix and financial report of the Secretariat. The CFM meets on a regular basis on the sidelines of the Summits. To discuss issues relating to the work of the Council and of common concern, Foreign Ministers also meet at informal CFM meetings each year in New York on the margins of the UN General Assembly meetings.



Council of Elders

In addition to the conventional structures of contemporary international organizations, the Turkic Council has a distinct and unique entity, the Council of Elders (CoE), which equips it with the guidance of esteemed notables from the Turkic communities. Bearing in mind that wisdom, knowledge and experience of statesmen, academics and intellectuals constitute a significant source in dealing with rampant problems faced in the region, this unique entity represents a major innovative approach in addressing today's regional and global challenges. As the permanent advisory body to the Council, the CoE convenes semi-annually and submits its opinions, proposals and practical recommendations to the CFM and the CHS.

In 2015, its 9th Meeting of the CoE was held on 6-7 August in Gabala, Azerbaijan and 10th Meeting was held on 25 December in Istanbul. The Meetings were attended by Mr. Fattah Heydarov, Elder from Azerbaijan, Ambassador Adil Ahmetov, Elder from Kazakhstan, Mr. Beksultan Zhakiev, Elder from Kyrgyzstan, and Mr. Mustafa İsen, Elder from Turkey.

During the mentioned meetings activities to be organized in 2016 according to the theme of the next Summit of the Turkic Council "Youth and National Sports", issues such as expanding current economic, cultural, political, educational cooperation and future activities of the Council were discussed.

Senior Officials Committee

The Senior Officials Committee (SOC) considers and endorses draft documents worked up by the Secretariat before their adoption by the CFM and approval by the CHS.

In 2015, 14th, 15th, 16th and 17th meetings of the Committee of Senior Officials (SOC) were held on 20 February in Istanbul, 11-12 June in Istanbul, 13-14 August in Istanbul and 8-10 September in Astana, respectively. During the meetings, relevant documents of the Turkic Academy, Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation and Center of Nomad Civilization and other issues were discussed and finalized for the adoption by the CFM and approval by the CHS.





Affiliated Organizations

The Turkic Council is designed as an umbrella organization for the cooperation mechanisms among the Turkic Speaking States. The affiliated Organizations of the Turkic Council are as follows:

TURKSOY (International Organization of Turkic Culture), established in 1993 in Ankara, aims at enhancing cooperation on the issues of education, science, culture and art; introduction and promotion of the common values of the Turkic World on the international level; as well as deepening of the cultural relations among Turkic Speaking States and peoples.

TURKPA (Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic Speaking Countries), became operational in 2008, headquartered in Baku, operates with the purpose of deepening inter-parliamentary cooperation among Turkic Speaking States.

Turkic Business Council, established in 2011, aims at enhancing economic cooperation among Turkic Speaking States through business events, forums and entities of Turkic Council Member States.

Turkic Academy became an international organization in 2012, based in Astana, conducts research in the field of Turkic languages, literature, culture, history, ethnography and cultural and spiritual heritage of Turkic peoples.

Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation, established in 2012, located in Baku, aims at providing assistance in the protection, study and promotion of Turkic culture and heritage through supporting and funding various activities, projects and programs.

Center of Nomadic Civilization to be established in Bishkek envisages to preserve and promote the cultural heritage of the nomadic civilizations as well as to strengthen the ties of friendship among the nations of the World.



As an umbrella organization to a number of bodies functioning in different fields, the Council attaches great importance to overseeing the activities of and the coordination among the affiliated institutions. In this context, Second Coordination Meeting of TURKPA, TURKSOY and Turkic Academy under the auspices of Turkic Council was held on 22 May 2015 in Astana.

Secretary General Hasanov, Jandos Asanov, Secretary General of TURKPA, Dusen Kaseinov, Secretary General of TURKSOY, President of the Turkic Academy Darkhan Kydyrali, Adil Akhmedov, Elder of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Koishibayev Gabit, Deputy Director of Asia Cooperation Department from Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan participated in the Meeting.

During the meeting, views on the ways and means of developing cooperation mechanisms among the Turkic Council, TURKPA, TURKSOY, Turkic Academy and Turkic Culture and Heritage Fund, Joint Action Plan, organization of Second Meeting entitled *Role of Young Leaders on Intergovernmental Development Process*, establishment of cooperation among Diaspora Centers and sister organizations and the guide to be prepared by the Turkic Academy entitled *principles to guide the integration of the Turkic World* were discussed.

Additionally, the Secretariat attended 6th Plenary Session of TURKPA on 4 December 2015 in Astana. Chairman of Mazhilis of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan Mr. Kabibulla Jakupov, Chairman of the Milli Mejlis of the Republic of Azerbaijan Mr. Ogtay Asadov, Chairman of the Jogorku Kenesh of the Kyrgyz Republic Mr. Asilbek Jeenbekov and Vice Chairman of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey Mr. Ismail Kahraman took part at the Session. Furthermore, the Secretariat participated in several other activities of Turkic Academy and TURKSOY in the course of 2015.



B. Fifth Turkic Council Summit

At the Fifth Summit, organized under the theme of “Media and Information Cooperation” where the Ministers in charge of Media and Information of the Members States were also present, the Heads of States, through *the Summit Declaration*, welcomed the *Joint Cooperation Protocol on Media and Information among the Member States* and the *Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation among Official News Agencies and National TV Channels of the Member States*. The Heads of States encouraged the establishment of the International Turkic News Channel and appreciated activities performed in the field of economy, including organization of business forums during the year.

Regarding the tourism cooperation, the Heads of States instructed the relevant institutions of the Member States to work towards realization of the Turkic Council Modern Silk Road Joint Tour Package, which was presented by Secretary General Hasanov during the Summit with a CD and brochure.



Secretary General Hasanov presented a comprehensive report on the activities of the Council to the CFM and to the CHS. At the Summit, appointments of Dr. Ömer Kocaman as the Deputy Secretary General of the Council and Ms. Günay Afandiyeva as the President of the Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation were approved by the Heads of States.

The will of the Heads of States for furthering cooperation in transport and customs among the Member States was also reflected in the Summit Declaration. Moreover, the Heads of States mentioned the necessity to finalize the work on the common history book prepared by the Turkic Academy as well as to accelerate the preparation of books on common geography and literature. They welcomed the activities carried out on youth and sports and emphasized the importance of opening of the Turkic Council Regional Diaspora Center in Kiev.

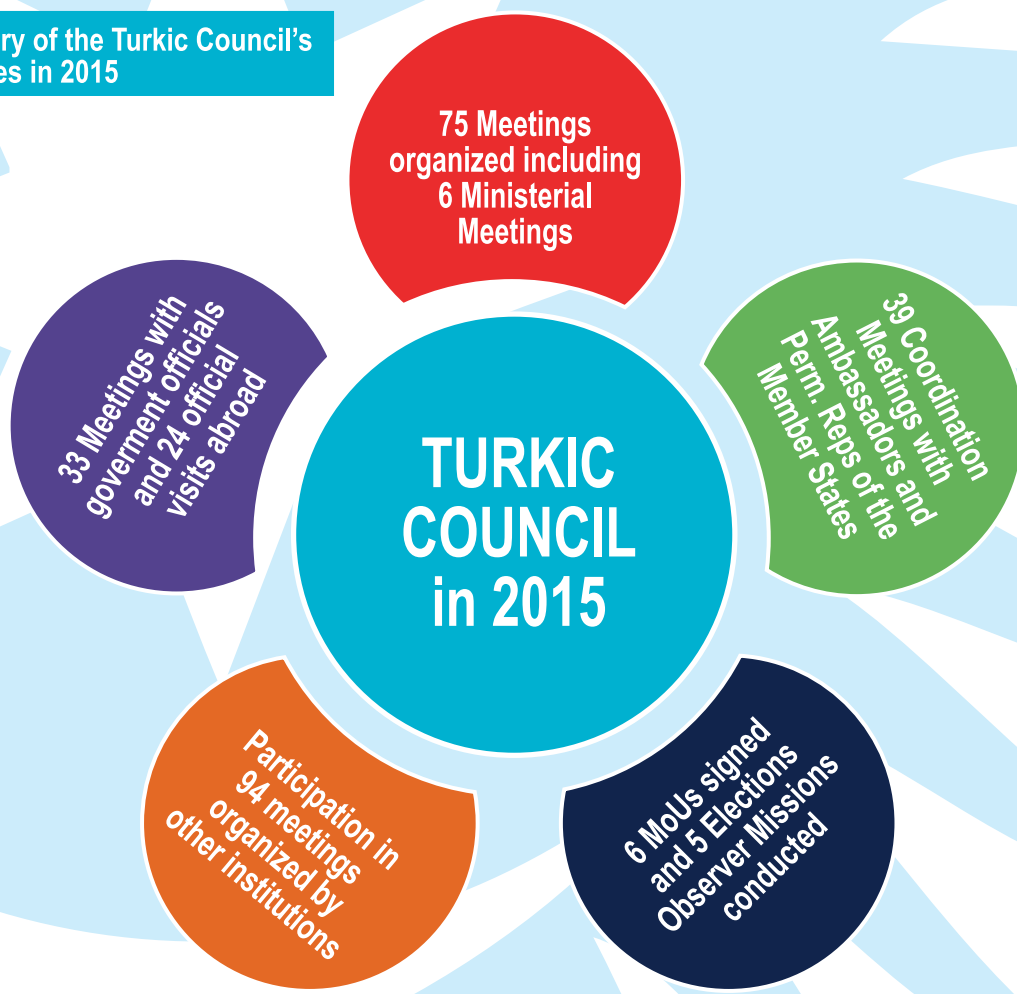
They also appreciated the momentum gained by the Council over the year in its relations with other regional and international organizations. In this context, the Heads of States called on the Council, which is an observer in the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), to deepen its relations with the United Nations (UN), the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and the Istanbul Process on Afghanistan. They welcomed the Memoranda of Understanding signed between the Turkic Council and World Customs Organization (WCO), UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and the International Centre for Sport Security (ICSS). Moreover, they expressed their support for meetings to be co-hosted with the UNDP, UNECE and other specialized UN agencies.



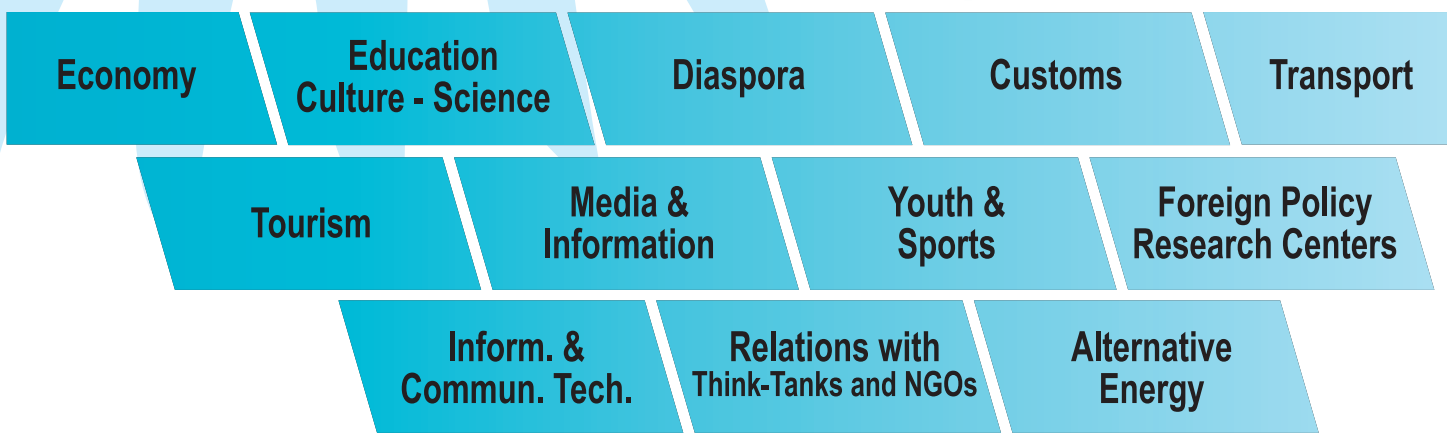
A day before the Summit, during the CFM Meeting on 10 September, Foreign Ministers discussed the complementary documents of the Turkic Academy, the Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation and the founding documents of the Center of Nomadic Civilization, which marked an important step for the institutionalization of these organizations. On 11 September, the said documents were signed and presented to the approval of the CHS.

The Turkic Council believes that “actions speak louder than words” and takes necessary steps in its each field of cooperation accordingly.

Summary of the Turkic Council's Activities in 2015



A R E A S O F C O O P E R A T I O N



II. DEEPENING COOPERATION AMONG THE MEMBER STATES AND IN THE REGION

A. Political Cooperation

As two regular platforms, the CHS and the CFM form the backbone for political motivation among the Member States. Furthermore, Member States deepen political cooperation through other means, such as regular security consultations; Junior Diplomats Joint Training Programs, meetings of Official Foreign Policy Research Centers, and election observer missions. Coordinating the activities of Turkic Speaking Diasporas is also among the issues on the agenda of the Turkic Council. Last but not least, Turkic Council Foreign Ministers, when necessary, issue a common view of the Turkic Council with respect to the developments taking place in the world. Expression of common views by the Turkic Council Foreign Ministers is a testament to the intense political cooperation that the Member States have endured within the framework of the Turkic Council.

Meetings of Council of Foreign Ministers

The CFM convened 11 times, up until the end of 2015, five of which were the informal gatherings customarily held on the margins of the UN General Assembly in New York. The meeting of the CFM in 2015 was hosted by Erlan Idrissov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan on 10 September 2015 in Astana on the margins of the Fifth Summit of the Council.

In line with the customary practice of convening the informal CFM on the margins of the UN General Assembly, Foreign Ministers also met on 26 September 2015 in New York and discussed the work of the Council as well as the other pressing issues of common concern.





Junior Diplomats Joint Training Program

In accordance with the *Cooperation Protocol among the Ministries of Foreign Affairs*, signed at the Third Summit of the Turkic Council, Junior Diplomats Joint Training Program was included in the activities of the Turkic Council. In this framework, First and Second Junior Diplomats Joint Training Programs were organized in Turkey on 13-25 April 2014 and in Azerbaijan on 1-15 March 2015 respectively. The Secretariat prepares the contents of the training programs taking into consideration the priorities of the Turkic Council and the host country as well as the experiences from the previous programs. Through the programs, junior diplomats of the Member States attend a two-week training in one of the Member States to increase their knowledge about and





Cooperation among the Official Foreign Policy Research Centers of the Turkic Council

Launching a cooperation process among the Official Foreign Policy Research Centers of the Member States was initiated by the Secretariat in 2013. The first meeting among the Official Foreign Policy Research Centers was hosted by the Center for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan (SAM Azerbaijan) in Baku on 8 May 2015. Heads of the Centers; Dr. Farhad Mammadov, Director of SAM Azerbaijan; Mr. Yerlan Karin, Director of the Kazakhstan Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan; Dr. Talant Sultanov, Director of the National Institute for Strategic Studies of the Kyrgyz Republic and Prof. Ali Resul Usul, Chairman of the Center for Strategic Research of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey (SAM Turkey) as well as Deputy Director General of the Institute for Foreign Relations and Trade of Hungary Dr. Laszlo Vasa participated in the meeting. The meeting was followed by the signing ceremony of *the MoU among the Official Foreign Policy Research Centers of the Member States of the Turkic Council* was concluded.

After the ceremony, the abovementioned names visited Ambassador Novruz Mammadov Head of the Foreign Relations Department and Deputy Head of Presidential Administration of the Republic of Azerbaijan on 8 May 2015.

Secretary General Hasanov participated in the conference entitled “Countries of the South Caucasus and Central Asia in the Context of the Silk Road Economic Belt” hosted by SAM Azerbaijan on 7 May 2015 in Baku and addressed the audience.



As the implementation of the decision taken at the first meeting among the Official Foreign Policy Research Centers, SAM Turkey, with the contributions of the other Member States, prepared a special publication devoted to the Fifth Summit of the Turkic Council entitled *Fifth Summit of the Turkic Council: A Raising Actor in Regional Cooperation in Eurasia*.

The Second Meeting among the Official Foreign Policy Research Centers was held on 21-22 December 2015 in Istanbul with the theme of “Opportunities and Challenges in Developing Regional States and in Eurasia”. A senior expert from Institute for Foreign Relations and Trade of the Republic of Hungary was also present in the meeting.

At the meeting, the heads of SAMs put forward their recommendations in the sessions held under the titles of “Realizing the potential in developing regional cooperation among the Turkic Speaking States with a focus on political, social, economic and cultural dimensions”, “Economic and political developments in Eurasia and their effects in regional cooperation among the Turkic States and in the region” and “Developing a common agenda for increased cooperation among the Turkic States and in the region (2016-2020)”.





Election Observer Missions

The Turkic Council also participates in the election processes of the Member States by commissioning international observer missions in order to ensure fair, transparent and democratic elections. The observation missions comprise the representatives of the Member States, the Secretariat of the Turkic Council and Turkic Academy.

In 2015, Turkic Council observed Early Presidential Elections in Kazakhstan, Parliamentary Elections in Turkey, Kyrgyzstan and Azerbaijan. Elections were observed in the cities of Baku and Ganja of Azerbaijan, the cities of Almaty and Taraz of Kazakhstan, the cities of Bishkek and Osh of Kyrgyzstan and the cities of Istanbul, Izmir, Trabzon and Van of Turkey.

2015

“SEÇKİLƏR” MEDIA MƏRKƏZİ

“SEÇKİLƏR” MEDIA CENTER





B. Economic Cooperation

The Turkic Council attaches great importance to economic cooperation among Turkic Speaking States as well as to their economic ties with the rest of the world. Mutually beneficial economic cooperation is the sound basis and the core of the Turkic cooperation at large. In this context, the First Summit of the Turkic Council was organized under the theme of the “Economic Cooperation”.

A number of events and activities have been organized in the context of economic cooperation since the establishment of the organization including annual meetings of Ministers in Charge of Economy of the Member States. In this direction, three Working Groups on “improving the investment climate”, “diversification of the economies” and “promoting entrepreneurship” regularly conduct their activities. Ministers have held five meetings and the Working Groups had seven meetings so far.

The 6th meeting of the Working Groups on Economy was held on 16-17 March 2015 in Istanbul and the 7th meeting of the Working Groups was convened on 28 September 2015 in Astana. Numerous issues related to enhancement of the economic cooperation among Member States have been discussed at the meetings.

The Memorandum of Understanding among the Turkic Council Member States for Exploring the Possibilities Regarding Experience Sharing on Investment Climate and the Memorandum of Understanding amongst the Member Countries of the Turkic Council on Cooperation in the Field of Investment Statistics were signed by the Ministers in charge of Economy at the last Ministerial meeting that took place on 29 September 2015 in Astana.

In the said meeting, the Ministers also encouraged the finalization of the draft Memorandum of Understanding on establishing Cooperation among Special / Free Economic Zones and welcomed the proposal of Turkey to organize capacity building program for skills development and vocational education/training in the first half of 2016 in Turkey. The Ministers also decided that three Working Groups be consolidated into one group and carry out its activities under the name of the *Working Group on Economic Cooperation*.



Regional
12 May

Turkic Business Council and Business Forums

The Turkic Business Council also makes its contributions to fostering economic cooperation under the auspices of the Turkic Council. The institution brings together umbrella associations of entrepreneurs from the Member States and aims at enhancing cooperation among them. The Business Council was convened four times and three Business Forums have been organized so far. More than 100 businessmen from the Member States from various sectors found opportunity to have business to business meetings in these Forums.

The Turkic Business Forum is also in contact with like-minded international networks. Secretary General Hasanov participated in the “EU – Central Asia Business Forum” on the topic of Economic cooperation opportunities between Europe and Central Asia held in Jurmala, Latvia, on 4-5 June 2015, co-organized by the Association of European Chambers of Commerce and Industry (EUROCHAMBRES) and the Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Turkmenistan also participated in the meeting as a special guest. In addition, B-20 Azerbaijan Regional Consultation Forum was co-organized by National Confederation of Entrepreneurs (Employers) of Azerbaijan and TOBB on 12 May 2015 in Baku.



Within the Business Forum, an unofficial meeting of the Turkic Business Council was held on 4 June 2015. Secretary General Hasanov, Marat Sharshekeev, President of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Kyrgyzstan, Rifat Hisarcıklioğlu, President of the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey, Elnur Alakbarov, Director of the Foreign Relations Department of the National Confederation of Entrepreneurs (Employers') Organizations of Azerbaijan and Dinmuhamed Absattarov, Director of the Department of Regional Development of the National Chamber of Entrepreneurs of Kazakhstan participated in the meeting. Deputy Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce of Turkmenistan Dovran Hojayeov also participated in the meeting as a special guest.





Joint Investment Portal

The Joint Investment Portal of the Turkic Council www.turkicbusiness.com was launched in 2015 with a view to contributing to the development of the economies by bolstering investments and increasing business ties among the Member States and in the region.



C. Customs Cooperation

At the Second Summit on 23 August 2012, Heads of States urged the heads of customs authorities of the Member States to hold regular meetings to increase cooperation in the field of customs. To lay the basis for the relations on customs issues, *the Letter of Intent* among the Heads of Customs Administrations of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey and Georgia was signed during the *Fifth International Forum on the Role of Customs Administrations on Promoting and Facilitating Trade among Silk Road Countries* in November 2012 in Istanbul.



This document is an indicator of the importance that Turkic Council Member States, as well as the neighboring Georgia, attach to the subject. *The Letter of Intent* highlighted the support of the Turkic Council to national projects of Member States on revitalization of the Silk Road such as Kazakhstan’s “Silk Wind” and Turkey’s “Caravanserai”. Moreover, border-crossing point visits to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan’s border gates, particularly Aktau Port, Karasu-Aktilék and Subatay Baatyr – Chaldybar were carried out in July 2013 within the framework of the Caravanserai project and the studies on the Northern Route were conducted.

The Heads of Customs Administrations held four meetings and the Working Group on Customs has gathered five times until 2015. The fourth meeting of the Heads of Customs Administrations of the Turkic Council convened on 2 July 2015 in Bishkek with the participation of the Secretary General of the World Customs Organization (WCO), Mr. Kunio Mikuriya, as a special guest. The meeting was preceded by the fifth meeting of the Working Group on Customs Cooperation on 1 July 2015.

Training seminars on authorized economic operator, post clearance audit and risk analysis were organized by the Ministry of Trade and Customs of the Republic of Turkey for Member States and Georgia in 2015. At the international stage, *the Memorandum of Understanding between Turkic Council and WCO* was signed on 17 February 2015 in Brussels.



D. Transport Cooperation

Motivated by the overall target of promoting comprehensive cooperation among its members, Turkic Council has from the outset placed a special emphasis on bolstering transport linkages among the Member States. Eradicating the existing obstacles to efficient, stable and seamless transport and establishing new mechanisms to streamline transport operations in all modes constitute the basics of the relations in this area.

Seven Working Group, two Deputy-Ministerial and two Ministerial meetings were convened until 2015. *The Joint Cooperation Protocol on Development of Transport among the Member States and Memorandum of Understanding on Sister Seaport Relations and Cooperation among the Ports of Baku, Aktau and Samsun* were signed at the first ministerial meeting held on 3 July 2013 in Baku.

The Second meeting of the Coordination Council on Transport, at Deputy Minister-level, convened on 27 January 2015 in Istanbul. The Sixth and Seventh meetings of the Working Group on Transport were held on 26 January 2015 and 8-9 July 2015 in Istanbul.



Discussions among the Member States on the draft *Agreement between the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Turkey on the International Combined Transport of Goodshave* been launched in 2015. Once entered into force, it will be the first combined transport agreement in the region and will be instrumental in streamlining the transport operations among the Member States. In order to bolster the ongoing Sister Ports relations among the Sea Ports of Baku, Aktau and Samsun with the inclusion of Turkmenbashi Port of Turkmenistan, an invitation to the Turkmen authorities was sent. Besides, to increase the visibility of the national projects of the Member States along the Central Transport Corridor, a meeting between the Turkic Council and the UNECE-EATL Group of Experts was held on 20-21 October 2015 in Istanbul.

Another initiative aimed at connecting the countries in the Central Transport Corridor produced *the Agreement on the Establishment of the Coordination Committee on the Development of the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route (TITR)*. Signed among the Railway and Sea Port authorities of Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Georgia on 7 November 2013, the agreement aimed to redirect the bulk of rail transportation between Central Asia and Europe through the Caspian Sea. With the efforts of the Secretariat, Turkey (TCDD) acceded to the agreement on 7 November 2014. Later, China also became a party to the agreement. A test run of the first container train from Northwest China to Azerbaijan through Kazakhstan was successfully carried out in six days in in July 2015. The second leg of the test run from China bound for Georgia was conducted successfully in eight days in November 2015. The preparations for a third test run that will pass through Turkey for Europe are underway



E. Tourism Cooperation

Following the Fourth Summit with the theme of “Tourism Cooperation”, the efforts to increase cooperation in this field gained momentum. Enhancing collaboration among the Member States and contributing to transformation of the historical Silk Road into an attractive tourism destination are at the center of these efforts. Five Working Group and two Ministerial meetings were convened until the end of 2015. The Ministers signed *the Joint Cooperation Protocol on Tourism Cooperation among the Member States* at the first Ministerial Meeting held on 11 April 2014 in Istanbul.

The Third, Fourth and Fifth Meetings of the Working Group in Tourism were held on 21-22 January 2015 in Istanbul, on 21-22 April 2015 in Istanbul (with the participation of tour operators) and on 18-19 May 2015 in Baku, respectively.

The Second Meeting of Ministers in charge of Tourism Affairs was hosted by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Azerbaijan on 20 May 2015 in Baku. At the Meeting, *the Cooperation Protocol among the Private Sector Tourism Umbrella Institutions of the Member States* was signed.

The Ministers instructed the materialization of the Turkic Council Modern Silk Road Tour Package whose aim is to revive the Silk Road as an attractive tourism destination and approved the destination of the Tour Package. On the other hand, they urged the continuation of vocational training on service sector conducted by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkey in other Member States, as well as of info tours and joint photo exhibitions.

Modern Silk Road Joint Tour Package

The Joint Tour Package's route is designed to follow the landmarks of the cultural and historical heritage of the Silk Road in four Member States. Through the 12 day-trip, tourists would have a unique and adventurous experience. The first versions of the brochure and promotional video of the Joint Tour Package were prepared with the support of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkey and TRT AVAZ TV Channel and presented to the Heads of States of at the Fifth Summit in Astana. The first field visit on the Tour Package took place on 12-15 November 2015 in Kyrgyzstan with the representatives of media, relevant ministries and tour operators from the Member States. The visit was shot by TRT AVAZ and broadcasted at their News Bulletins.



**MODERN
SILK ROAD
JOINT TOUR
PACKAGE
by the
Turkic
Council**



Information Tour

The second information tour was organized on 12-15 November 2015 to Kyrgyzstan where the participants visited Bishkek, Burana, Cholpan Ata (Issyk Kul), Karakol, Jedy Oguz and Bishkek and explored the richness in tourism of the country.



Joint Photo Exhibition

Third Joint Photo Exhibition on the Silk Road Heritage in the Member States was held on the margins of East Mediterranean International Tourism and Travel Exhibition (EMITT) on 22-25 January 2015 during which 60 photos from Member States were exhibited.



Vocational Trainings

The Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkey continued to carry out vocational training programs on service sector for tourism employees of the other Member States in coordination with relevant Ministries and tourism associations. Several universities and hotels in the target Member States also involved in these vocational trainings. The aim of launching such a project within the Turkic Council was to make use of the rich knowledge, know-how and experience of Turkey in tourism sector to the benefit of other Member States. This project will also be instrumental within the framework of enhancing the South-South and triangular cooperation in compliance with UN objectives.

From December 2013 to December 2015, 835 tourism employees participated in the trainings that were held in different cities of Azerbaijan (İsmailli, Xachmaz, Baku), Kazakhstan (Astana, Almaty) and Kyrgyzstan (Bishkek). 534 tourism employees from Azerbaijan, 128 from Kazakhstan and 173 from Kyrgyzstan benefited from the trainings that focused on the areas of front office, catering, housekeeping, food production as well as preparing administrators as educators. Almost 50% of them were women. The involvement of the relevant Ministries, tourism associations, hotels and universities in the training processes constituted a utile example for public-private partnership in the tourism sector.

The trainings, which will continue in the coming years, provide a useful occasion for the trainees to access decent work opportunities in the tourism sector, which in turn, contributes to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through generating well-trained and skillful workforce in the Turkic Council Member States. Similar vocational trainings for tour operators in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan will be launched soon.

The Turkic Council intensively cooperates with the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) in the field of tourism to steer its efforts to a successful outcome. *The MoU for Cooperation* was signed between the two organizations to this end on 26 June 2015 in Madrid.



F. Cultural, Educational and Scientific Cooperation

Common culture, language and history of the Turkic Speaking States are the main pillars that underpin the cooperation under Turkic Council, making this regional cooperation unique in comparison to others. It was symbolic that the second Summit of the Turkic Council was held under the theme of “Educational, Scientific and Cultural Cooperation”. Education and science, therefore, are the other major fields that form the quintessence of the cooperation.

Five meetings of Senior Officials and four meetings of the Ministers of Education were convened until the end of 2015. One of the concrete results in the sphere of education is the common Turkic history textbook, prepared by the Turkic Academy. Similar to the history textbook, it was agreed to initiate the preparation of common Turkic geography textbook and common Turkic literature textbook.

The Turkic University Union, consisting of 15 universities from the Member States, presents another important component of cooperation in this field. *The Directive on the Establishment of the Turkic Inter-University Union and Higher Education Area* was signed at the second meeting of the Ministers on 21 November 2013 in Eskişehir. *The Establishment of the Scientific Council of the Turkic Council of the Turkic Academy* was signed at the third meeting of the Ministers on 27-28 November 2014 in Baku. The first General Assembly of the Turkic University Union was held in October 2014 in Erzurum. The Parties signed *the Directive for the Establishment of the Student Council of the University Union* at the said assembly. This Directive aims at carrying out projects to strengthen the cooperation among the young university students of the Turkic world.



The fourth meeting of Senior Officials was held in Istanbul on 9-10 July 2015 to discuss the issues on the agenda in the field of educational cooperation.

Before the Fifth Summit of the Turkic Council, the Fifth meeting of Senior Officials and Fourth meeting of the Ministers of Education were hosted on 4-5 September 2015 in Astana by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

At the meeting, Ministers welcomed the efforts of the Turkic Academy and the Member States on the preparation of *the draft Common Turkic History Textbook covering the period till the 15th century* and approved *the program of the Common Turkic History Textbook covering the period till the 15th century*. They called on the Turkic Academy and relevant institutions of the Member States to start preparing *the Common Turkic History Textbook covering the period from the 15th century till the 21st century*. They approved *the Regulation of the Secondary/High School Student Exchange Program of the Turkic Council Member States* and welcomed the initiative of the Turkish side to launch the first exchange program in 2016.

Preparation of *the Common Literature and Geography Textbooks* by the Turkic Academy and launching *the Sister Schools' Project* are on the agenda in this field of cooperation. Furthermore, conducting vocational and technical trainings among the Member States, teaching languages of Member States as elective courses in high schools and granting scholarships to Bachelor, Masters and PhD students of Turkic Speaking States studying on Turkology are among the focus areas.



G. Information and Media Cooperation

Acknowledging the importance of information and media in creating political, cultural, economic and social awareness among the Turkic region at the local and international levels, the Fifth Summit of the Turkic Council was dedicated to cooperation in the sphere of information and media.

Four Working Group meetings and one Ministerial meeting were convened until the end of 2015. The *Turkic Council Joint Cooperation Protocol on Information and Media* was signed at the first meeting of the Ministers and High Officials in charge of Information and Media of the Turkic Council on 18 August 2015 in Astana.

The second, third and fourth meetings of the Working Group in Media and Information sphere were held on 23-24 February 2015 in Istanbul, on 27-28 July 2015 in Istanbul and on 17 August 2015 in Astana, respectively.

The First Meeting of the Ministers and High Officials in charge of Information and Media was hosted by the Ministry of Investment and Development of the Republic of Kazakhstan on 18 August 2015 in Astana.

At the Ministerial meeting, the Protocol of Cooperation among the National TV Channels of the Member States of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States and the Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation among official News Agencies of the Member States of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States were signed.

The Ministers and High Officials in charge of Information and Media also inked the *Joint Cooperation Protocol on Information and Media* which will stimulate the cooperation on Information and Media sphere among the Member States.



International Turkic News Channel (ITNC)

In line with the instructions of the CHS at the 2014 Bodrum Summit for establishing an international Turkic news channel, the Ministers and High Officials in charge of Information and Media approved the *Concept Paper for the establishment of the International Turkic News Channel* and encouraged the relevant authorities of the Member States to continue their work for drafting the legal framework for the establishment of the ITNC, during their first meeting.



H. Diaspora Cooperation

The vital role of Diasporas in promoting the image of their motherlands and influencing public opinion in countries where they reside is well-recognized by the Turkic Council. In this regard, two meetings of the Ministers and Heads of the Institutions in charge of Diaspora Affairs of the Turkic Council and two Contact Group meetings were convened in order to discuss further actions and cooperation among the Diasporas of the Member States.



Furthermore, the *First Turkic Council Diaspora Forum* was held in Baku in June 2013. More than 600 representatives from 50 countries including heads of relevant state agencies and diaspora organizations participated in the organization. The participants of the forum recommended the establishment of the Regional Centers.

The *First Turkic Council Regional Diaspora Center* was opened on 24 December 2014 in Kiev, at the premises of Joint Azerbaijan Diaspora in Ukraine. The Turkic Council Regional Diaspora Centers similar to that of Kiev are planned to be opened in Paris, Washington and Berlin as well.

Furthermore, in fulfillment of the objectives set out in the field of diaspora cooperation, Secretary General Hasanov met with the Turkic speaking diaspora representatives based in the USA on 13 May 2015 at the Consulate General of the Republic of Turkey in New York.

During his official visit to New York, Secretary General Hasanov also participated in the Annual Turkish & US Flag-raising Ceremony at Wall Street's historic Bowling Green Park in New York City on 14 May 2015 that marks the Turkish Day Festival. He also attended the "Traditional Turkish Day Parade" on 16 May 2015.

In order to support Turkey's fight against terrorism, a "No to Terrorism" march was held on 20 September 2015 in Kiev with the initiative of the Turkic Council Kiev Regional Diaspora center. More than 200 representatives from Diasporas of Azerbaijan and Turkey in Kiev participated in the march.



I. Youth and Sports Cooperation

With a sizable young population, Turkic Council Member States emphasize the importance of policies on Youth&Sport considering their educational, cultural and economic role, as well as their ability to promote cooperation by building strong ties among themselves. Based on this understanding, Turkic Council Member States initiated a cooperation process in the field of Youth&Sport in 2015. First Working Group meeting was convened on 13 February 2015 in Istanbul.

Given the importance of educational, cultural, economic and social role of Youth&Sports in today's societies, at the Fifth Summit meeting, Member States decided to dedicate the next Summit to the very theme. Hence, the period up until the sixth Summit will see a special emphasis to be placed on activities on Youth&Sport.

At the Fourth Turkic Council Summit held in Bodrum, Member States decided to organize a Turkic Council University Sports Games with participation from across the Turkic Speaking Countries. The Games are expected to be staged in 2016 in Turkey. An *International Youth Camp* was successfully organized in August 2015 in Turkey. Azerbaijan will host a *Youth Festival* in June 2016. Member States also agreed to work on exchanging *Youth Experts* to share the experiences of the Member States, as well as establishing a *Youth Council* comprising the representatives of the Youth NGOs of the Member States based on the practice implemented in the European Union and Council of Europe. The Youth Council is envisaged to hold regular meetings in advance of the Ministerial meetings.



International Nomadic Games

In order to preserve and promote the cultural heritage of the nomadic civilizations as well as to strengthen the ties of friendship among the nations of the world, Turkic Council together with Kyrgyzstan organized the “First International Nomadic Games” on 8-14 September 2014 in Issyk-Kul.

More than 400 athletes from 19 countries gathered on the shores of prominent Lake Issyk-Kul to compete in wrestling, archery, Kok Boru (a game where mounted riders face off over a dead goat), Ordo (a Kyrgyz board game), Kyz Kumai (chasing women on horseback), Toguz Kargool (mancala game) and other traditional disciplines.

The Games gave a powerful boost to the rehabilitation of original national sport disciplines and reviving the spiritual consciousness and historical memory not only of the Turks but also of all nomadic peoples in the world. The second International Nomadic Games will also be hosted by Kyrgyzstan in 2016.





International Youth Camp

Member States put a special emphasis on the youth activities with the aim of contributing to the personal development of the future young leaders, promoting socialization among the youth sharing the same history, culture and language, as well as creating a generation with increased sense of awareness towards the social problems.

To serve that purpose, *the First Turkic Council International Youth Camp* was hosted by Turkey on 19-25 August 2015 and 27 August-2 September 2015 in Trabzon and Samsun respectively.

Around 200 youngsters attended the camp activities from across the Turkic Speaking Countries. The Camp activities included local trips, cultural and sports activities, as well as thematic debates on issues relating to our common history, culture and language as well as social problems facing today's youth.





MoU with the ICSS

The Turkic Council and the ICSS (International Centre for Sports Security), a not-for-profit organization striving to develop stronger international policies, strategic reforms and solutions to safeguard sport, signed an MoU on 17 August 2015 in Istanbul. The MoU aims at boosting cooperation between the ICSS and the Turkic Council in the area of sport through various joint activities. It is considered instrumental by both parties to promote highest organizational and ethical standards in sport in the Member States and across the region.

As part of the MoU and its growing portfolio of work with international organizations, governments and sport governing bodies, the ICSS and its *Save the Dream* initiative will work with the Turkic Council in the area of Youth and Sport, as well as sport safety, security and integrity, and will see the two organizations develop a range of projects in this area.



III. CONTRIBUTING TO INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

A. UN and Its Specialized Agencies

Turkic Council is an intergovernmental organization committed to the purpose and principles of the Charter of the UN and other universally recognized principles and norms of international law, including sovereign equality, territorial integrity and inviolability of internationally recognized borders of states, as well as the maintenance of international peace, security and development of good-neighbourly and friendly relations and cooperation among its Member States. While trying to enhance institutional relations with the UN and its bodies, the Council aims at complementing the UN targets with its regional development endeavours. The Council has working relations with the UNDP, UNECE, UNWTO and UNESCO. It is an applicant for observer status in the UN General Assembly (UNGA) and is improving its institutional ties with various UN sub-organizations through solid projects.



In line with this perspective, Secretary General Hasanov participated in *the UN Summit for the Adoption of Post-2015 Development Agenda* held on 25-27 September 2015 in New York where countries as well as international organizations came together at the highest level to show their commitment to implement the new development agenda.

To raise an understanding about the Turkic Council and its application for an observer status in the UNGA, the Secretariat hosted a reception on 15 May 2015 at the Headquarters of the UN in New York. The reception was attended by over 50 guests including Permanent Representatives, representatives of missions to the UN, and high level officials from various UN bodies.

The Turkic Academy organized on 15 April 2015 in cooperation with UNESCO, a cultural event entitled *Korkut's Legacy and the Turkic World* dedicated to the celebration of the 70th anniversary of UNESCO and the 200th anniversary of first printed version of *the Book of Dede Korkut* at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris. Moreover, TURKSOY and UNESCO co-hosted the Nowruz activities on 24 March 2015 in Paris at the headquarters of UNESCO. The Secretariat was represented at both events at highest level.





In this context, Olivier Adam, Deputy Regional Director, **UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and CIS (UNDP RBEC)** paid a visit to Secretary General Hasanov on 9 April 2015. At the meeting, ways of collaborating in line with shared mandates aimed at improving the lives of the people of the region were discussed.



Within the framework of the visit to New York on 11-16 May 2015, Secretary General Hasanov had a meeting with Ms. Cihan Sultanoğlu, Assistant Secretary General, Administrator and Director of Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States of the UNDP on 15 May 2015. During the meeting issues of mutual interest, future avenues of cooperation between the Council and the UNDP as well as the preparations of the joint conference on *Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) for Development* were discussed. Secretary General briefed Ms. Sultanoğlu on the activities of the Council. Ms. Sultanoğlu, in return, stated that UNDP would give its support to the efforts of the Council to further the relations.

The Turkic Council co-hosted the international conference on ICT for Development with the UNDP RBEC on 27-28 October 2015 in Istanbul. Secretary General Hasanov and Ms. Sultanoğlu addressed the audience at the opening session of the conference. Speakers at the level of Vice-Minister from the Turkic Council Member States as well as other regional states including Moldova and Afghanistan took the floor at the conference. Furthermore, governmental officials and senior representatives of private sector also addressed the audience at the panels on the topics of e-governance, open data, ICT's role in transforming rural development and agriculture and private sector in putting ICT to work for development.



The conference was attended by 150 guests from various sectors related to the ICT and sustainable development from 15 countries. The panels were followed by brainstorming sessions.



The Conference enabled knowledge and expertise sharing in order to promote e-transformation and open data in the Member States and around the region. In that sense, it was instrumental to discuss how countries in the region should advance their development priorities using modern technology. The documents distributed and presentations done at the conference are available at www.ict4distanbul2015.org/en/.

On the occasion of the meeting, Secretary General Hasanov had bilateral talks with Ms. Sultanoğlu, on 27 October 2015 in Istanbul. They discussed the development needs of the Turkic Council Member States and ongoing projects in the region and expressed the hope that the conference would provide an opportunity for creating ideas which would form the basis of concrete development projects to be jointly implemented by the two organizations to achieve SDGs in the Turkic speaking world. Through an MoU scheduled to be signed between the two organizations in 2016, the Turkic Council and the UNDP will continue their cooperation for the regional development in various areas to face new challenges and better meet peoples' needs.

The Turkic Council Secretariat attended the Regional Launch of UNDP's 2015 Human Development Report organized by UNDP RBEC and hosted by Boğaziçi University on 15 December 2015 in Istanbul. H.E. Cevdet Yılmaz, Minister of Development of the Republic of Turkey and Ms. Sultanoğlu were among the keynote speakers of the opening session of the said event.



United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation

Furthermore, upon the proposal of the **United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation**, the Turkic Council started a cooperation process with the Former. In this regard, a contact point from the Turkic Council was designated in September 2015 to explore possible avenues of cooperation between the two organizations. Signing of an MoU, implementing joint projects and organizing joint events are on the agenda of this cooperation process.

The Turkic Council cooperates with the **UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)** in the framework of the improvement of tourism sector along the Silk Road. During the second visit by Secretary General Hasanov to the Headquarters of the UNWTO, *the Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation between the Two Organizations* was signed on 26 June 2015 in Madrid. The document constitutes the first MoU signed between the Turkic Council Secretariat and a specialized UN body. The Parties agreed on the participation of each other's relevant activities and organization of joint trainings to promote Silk Road tourism.





Upon invitation of the UNWTO, the Secretariat participated in the Fifth UNWTO Silk Road Ministers' Meeting on 4 March 2015 in Berlin. The Secretariat also attended the Senior Officials and the Tourism-20 Ministers Meetings held on 29 and 30 September 2015 in Antalya co-organized by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Turkey and the UNWTO within the framework of Turkish G-20 Presidency. The Turkic Council was among the international organizations that approved the meeting declaration, which would serve as a list of recommendations addressed to the G-20 leaders laying down the necessary steps to be taken to support stimulating job creation worldwide through the development of tourism sector.

Secretary General Hasanov participated in the Ninth UNWTO and World Tourism Market Ministers' Summit held on 3 November 2015 in London. On the margins of the Summit, Secretary General Hasanov had a bilateral meeting with Secretary General Rifai. During the Summit, various tourism projects of the Turkic Council, including the Turkic Council Modern Silk Road Joint Tour Package were presented.

On the other hand, in a bid to increase the visibility of the national projects of the Member States along the Central Transport Corridor and coordinate efforts aimed at streamlining the projects, the Turkic Council established relations with the **United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Euro-Asian Transport Links (UNECE-EATL)** in 2014 and has been attending EATL meetings regularly since then. The two organizations co-hosted a Group of Experts meeting on 20-21 October 2015 in Istanbul with the participation of Turkic Council and other UNECE-EATL countries and discussed the existing problems in transport sector as well as ways to address them.



B. OSCE and EU

Through its growing institutional relations with the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Turkic Council aims at generating added value to the development and prosperity of Eurasia. Interaction between the Turkic Council and the OSCE started in 2011. The Secretariat of the Turkic Council was represented at the OSCE Ministerial Council meetings and OSCE Mediterranean and Asian Conferences between 2011 and 2015. Secretary General of the Turkic Council addressed the OSCE Permanent Council four times until the end of 2015. At the 2013 OSCE Ministerial Council meeting in Kiev, Foreign Ministers of the Turkic Council Member States issued a joint statement which became a document of the OSCE emphasizing the potential of the Council to contribute to security agenda in Eurasia.





On the margins of his visit to Vienna to address the OSCE Permanent Council, upon the invitation of OSCE Serbian Chairmanship, Secretary General Hasanov met with OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier on 21 July 2015 at the OSCE Headquarters. Moreover, Secretary General Hasanov had a meeting with Ambassador Zug Vugic, Chairperson of the OSCE Permanent Council on 22 July 2015 in Vienna. Furthermore, he visited Ambassador Galip Israfilov, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the OSCE on 22 July 2015 in Vienna.

Upon the invitation of the OSCE Serbian Chairmanship, Secretary General Hasanov addressed the OSCE Permanent Council on 23 July 2015. In his address, noting that 2015 marks the 40th anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act, he underlined his firm belief that there is room to develop collaboration in all three dimensions of the OSCE between the two organizations and highlighted that such a development would be beneficial for the entire OSCE geography.

After his address, he attended the official luncheon hosted by Serbian Chairmanship in his honor. Ambassadors of Turkic Council Member States, Secretary General of TURKPA, as well as Senior Representatives of OSCE, EU, Russian Federation, Germany and the USA were also present at the said lunch.

Secretary General Hasanov participated in the 22nd OSCE Ministerial Council meeting on 2-3 December 2015 in Belgrade as a special guest of the OSCE Serbian Chairmanship. Foreign Ministers of the 57 OSCE participating states and senior representatives of international organizations attended the event. As a regular practice, at his address to the 22nd OSCE Ministerial meeting, Mr. Erlan Idrisov, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan, in his capacity as the Chairperson-in-Office of the Turkic Council thanked the OSCE Serbian Chairmanship for inviting the Turkic Council to the meeting and expressed his support for development of relations between the Council and the OSCE.

Moreover, Secretary General Hasanov had bilateral meetings with Minister Erlan Idrisov, Mr. Erlan Abdildaev, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the OSCE Ambassador Kairat Sarybai, Permanent Representative of Kyrgyz Republic to the OSCE Ambassador Ermek Ibraimov, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Turkey Ambassador Tacan İldem to the OSCE and Executive Director of CICA Ambassador Gong Jianwei on the margins of the 22nd OSCE Ministerial Council Meeting.





Secretary General Hasanov had a bilateral meeting with OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier on 4 December 2015 in Belgrade on the margins of the 22nd OSCE Ministerial Council meeting and informed his counterpart on the Council's relations with relevant international organizations including UNDP, UNECE and UNWTO. Both Secretaries General confirmed that there was an ample room to further the existing cooperative relations between the two organizations on the issues of mutual interests while they agreed on starting the preparations at expert level for concrete joint projects to be carried out in the future.

On the margins of the Ministerial Council meeting, Project Directors of the Turkic Council had a bilateral meeting with relevant officials from the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Austria (the upcoming member of the OSCE Troika) on 2 December 2015 in Belgrade. During the meeting, Project Directors informed the officials about the vision of the Turkic Council with a special emphasis on expanding relations of the Council with relevant regional and international organizations.

The Secretariat also attended the OSCE Asian Conference on the Changing Global Security Environment and Visions of Multilateral Security Co-operation in Asia held on 1-2 June 2015 in Seoul.





The aim of the cooperation with the European Union (EU) is to contribute to the regional collaboration in Eurasia. The official contacts between the two organizations were launched at the beginning of 2015. Secretary General Hasanov had a meeting with Ambassador Luis Felipe Fernández de la Peña, Managing Director for Europe and Central Asia, European External Action Service (EEAS) on 17 February 2015 in Brussels to discuss possible avenues of cooperation between the EU and the Turkic Council.

Following this visit, the Secretariat contacted the Delegation of the EU to Turkey on 25 February 2015 in Ankara to brief on the meeting. As a continuation of the abovementioned contacts between the two organizations, Mr. François Naucodier, First Counselor, Political Officer on Foreign Policy of the EU Delegation to Turkey was received by Secretary General Hasanov on 12 June 2015.





C. ECO and BSEC

During the 12th Summit of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) hosted by Azerbaijan on 13-16 October 2012, Observer Status of the Turkic Council to ECO was approved. Since then the Turkic Council regularly participates in the ECO meetings as an observer.

Secretary General Hasanov met with the Secretary General of ECO Ambassador Halil İbrahim Akça in New York on 28 September 2015 on the sidelines of the UN 70th General Assembly. Secretaries General exchanged views on the ongoing relations between the two organizations and sought ways to further develop joint projects for the upcoming period. The Council participated in the 25th and 26th meetings of the Regional Planning Council of ECO held in Tehran in 2015.

The Turkic Council cooperates with the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC) on the areas of mutual interest. The Council participates in the events of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC). In this regard, Secretary General Hasanov participated in the 45th and 46th Plenary Sessions of PABSEC held in Moldova and Bucharest in 2015.





D. OIC

As its members are also the members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the Turkic Council is of the view that, developing well-established relations with the OIC will help promote socio-economic development in and around the region. As an observer status applicant at the OIC, Turkic Council attends the Council of Foreign Ministers meetings of the latter. Additionally, the Turkic Council and the OIC Youth Forum, as organizations based in Istanbul, are in touch and regularly invite each other to their conferences and events.

Moreover, the first Round Table meeting of the Turkic Business Council was held on 26 November 2014 in Istanbul in parallel with the Round Table meeting of the ICCIA (Islamic Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture) Board Members & OIC Member Countries hosted by TOBB (Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey).

Furthermore, the Turkic Academy signed the *Cooperation Protocol* with the Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture of the OIC (IRCICA) on 11 March 2013. Both organizations are to develop joint projects in the field of history, arts and culture in the coming period. On the other hand, TURKPA has been cooperating with the OIC as an observer member to the Parliamentary Union of the OIC Member States (PUIC) since 2011. An MoU between the Turkic Council and the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC) will be signed soon.



E. CICA and ASEAN

In order to promote close cooperation and consultation on matters of common interest and to contribute to the security, economic and social development of their members, the Turkic Council and Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) have recently launched a cooperation process.

Secretary General Hasanov had a bilateral meeting with Ambassador Jianwei Gong, Executive Director of CICA on 27 October 2015 on the margins of the International Conference on ICT for Development co-organized by the Turkic Council and the UNDP RBEC. In the meeting, the Parties agreed to work on developing joint projects to the benefit of the region. Preparations to sign an MoU between the two organizations are underway.

Upon the invitation of the Executive Secretariat of CICA Business Council, the delegation of the Turkic Council participated in the Fourth Business Forum & Founding Assembly of CICA Business Council held on 24-25 November 2015 in Beijing. On the sidelines of the Forum, the delegation had a bilateral meeting with Executive Director Gong. The delegation also had meetings with leading Chinese companies interested in exploring joint investment opportunities in the Turkic Council Member States.

On 24 November 2015 Secretary General Hasanov met with Mr. Le Luong Minh, Secretary General of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) at the headquarters of ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta in order to discuss establishment of relations between the two organizations and implementation of joint projects.



F. WCO

In order to complement the overall efforts in customs cooperation among its Member States, the Turkic Council established ties with the World Customs Organization (WCO). To this end, *the Memorandum of Understanding between Turkic Council and WCO* was signed on 17 February 2015 in Brussels. Following the signing of this MoU, the Secretariat participated in the 125th and 126th Sessions of the Customs Cooperation Council held on 11 June 2015 and the fourth meeting of the WCO Working Group on the Trade Facilitation Agreement held on 12 October 2015 in Brussels. Upon the invitation of the Secretary General of the WCO, Mr. Kunio Mikuriya, the Secretariat participated in the WTO's 10th Ministerial Conference held in Nairobi, Kenya, on 15-19 December 2015.





G. Others

Believing that development is among the key concepts to reach a more stable and prosperous world, the Turkic Council cooperates with **Republic of Turkey Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA)** on the projects of mutual interest. The gist of the cooperation derives from the common aim of the two organizations to contribute to the attainment of the SDGs for a more liveable planet. Thus, TIKA supported the organization of the international conference on ICT for development co-hosted by the Turkic Council and UNDP RBEC on 27-28 October 2015 in Istanbul.

The Turkic Council is of the view that the future of Afghanistan certainly impinge on the future of Eurasia. In this regard, the Turkic Council would like to have an active role in the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process on Afghanistan and provide an additional asset to the ongoing initiatives of the international community to attain a more prosperous, stable and developed Afghanistan. Therefore, the Turkic Council participated in several Ministerial and Senior Officials' meetings of the Process until the end of 2015. Lastly, the Secretariat attended the Senior Officials meeting held on 27 September 2015 in New York.



IV. OTHER ACTIVITIES

A. Official Contacts

2015 was an active year in terms of deepening cooperation among our Member States. Accordingly, in addition to the Summit of Heads of States that took place in Astana in 11 September 2015, Secretary General Hasanov was also separately received by HE Ilham Aliyev, HE Nursultan Nazarbayev, HE Almazbek Atambayev and HE Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in 2015. In the framework of the receptions, Secretary General Hasanov gave the Heads of States reports on the activities and projects of the Turkic Council.



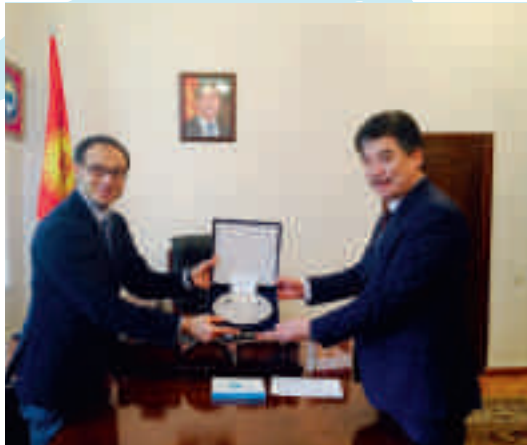


Other than the official and informal meetings of the Council of Foreign Ministers, he also had meetings with Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov, Foreign Minister Yerlan Idrissoy, Foreign Minister Erlan Abdildaev and Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu and informed them on the work done by the Secretariat.

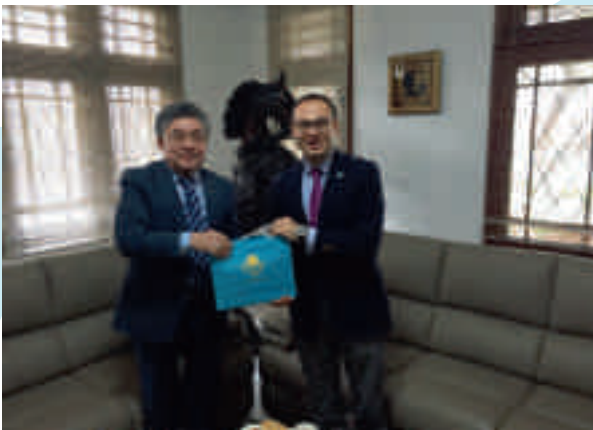
When the abovementioned occasions and his meetings with relevant Ministers of the Member States put together, Secretary General Hasanov had in total 33 meetings with the high level officials of our Member States in 2015. During these meetings, he informed the officials on the projects of the Turkic Council and further steps to be taken to enhance cooperation among the Member States.



Furthermore, he had 24 official visits to the Member States and abroad on various occasions. In his visits to the cities of non-member countries including New York, London, Paris, Brussels, Moscow, Vienna, Jakarta, Kiev, Madrid, Belgrade and Jurmala he had 39 coordination meetings with the Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives of our Member States. In the coordination meetings, Secretary General and Ambassadors exchanged views on the very subject of the official visits as well as brainstormed on the ways to increase awareness on the Turkic Council and its activities.



On the other hand, high level officials including Ambassador Ali Kemal Aydın, Deputy Undersecretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, and Mr. Gabor Kiss, Ambassador of Hungary to Ankara, paid visits to the Secretariat throughout the year.





“Türk Dili Konuşan Ülkeler İşbirliği Konseyi” 9 Ekim 2015, İstanbul

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9 October 2015, İstanb



B. Complementary Activities

After the finalization of its institutionalization process in the first five years of its establishment, the Turkic Council Secretariat paid an extra effort to make its achievements and future projects public in 2015.

Organization of a reception on the occasion of the 30 October Cooperation Day of the Turkic Speaking Countries became an annual tradition for the Turkic Council Secretariat. On this noble day, which also marked the 5th anniversary of the Official Inauguration of the Turkic Council Secretariat in 2015, Secretary General Hasanov hosted a reception on 9 October at the Pera Palace Jumeirah Hotel in Istanbul.

At the reception, Secretary General Hasanov addressed the audience after the presentation of the short promotional video of the Turkic Council. Erestü Habibeyli, Deputy Director General of the Presidency of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Prof. Dr. Mustafa İsen, Deputy of the city of Sakarya and the Chief Adviser to the President of the Republic of Turkey, Ambassador Ali Kemal Aydın, Deputy Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, Ambassador Elshad İskenderov, President of the Youth Forum of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Jandos Asanov, Secretary General of TURKPA, Dusen Kaseinov, Secretary General of TURKSOY, Günay Efendiyeva, President of Turkic Cultural and Heritage Foundation as well as ambassadors of various countries in Ankara, representatives of the Consulates General in Istanbul, international organizations and members of press attended the reception.





Aiming at enhancing cooperation and coordination between the Member States, the Secretariat has compiled and published *Official Documents Book* covering all official documents since the establishment of the Turkic Council in 2009. The book, which was published in the languages of the Member States and English, includes the founding and statutory documents of the Turkic Council as well as the affiliated organizations from their inception. The book was distributed to the organizations cooperating with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Embassies and Consulates General of the Member States, as well as the affiliated organizations.

Furthermore, a promotional video of the Turkic Council was prepared in 2015 in three languages (Turkish, English and Russian) to ensure capturing a wider audience. The video marked the progress achieved through concrete activities and projects over the 5 years by the Turkic Council. The video was also made available on our web-site and was displayed in major events throughout the year.

Furthermore, the Secretariat's website (www.turkkon.org) has been actively administered with up-to-date information on its activities and programs. The Secretariat uses all means of social media to announce the outcomes of its activities and projects. The facebook, i and twitter accounts of the Turkic Council were created by the Secretariat in 2015 to this end. The number of our followers on Facebook has increased by 70% in 2015.



A special publication devoted to the fifth Summit of the Turkic Council entitled *Fifth Summit of the Turkic Council: A Rising Actor in Regional Cooperation in Eurasia* was prepared by SAM Turkey and the Turkic Council. The said publication, starting with the article by Secretary General Hasanov, entitled *Turkic Council: A Strong Regional Mechanism to enhance cooperation in Eurasia*, contained articles by the Foreign Ministers of the Member States. Articles by the heads of affiliated institutions of the Council together with the articles by the directors of Official Foreign Policy Strategic Research Centers were also included in the publication. Through this publication, Turkic Council's contribution to regional cooperation in five years as well as its future projects were addressed from different aspects and introduced to the public.

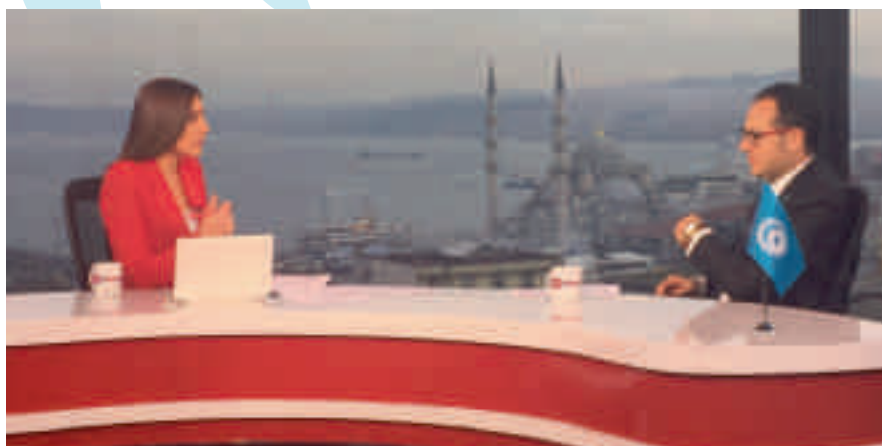
The Heads of States, at the Astana Summit, appreciated the work done in the publication and instructed preparation of similar studies. Secretary General Hasanov also introduced the publication to the press on the margins of the Summit.



On the other hand, numerous groups of students, journalists, strategists and academicians visited the Secretariat premises in Istanbul during 2015.

Secretary General Hasanov gave more than 40 interviews to nation-wide TV channels of the Member States such as AZTV, İçtimai TV, KHABAR, TRT TÜRK and TRT AVAZ in the course of 2015.

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C. Relations with Think-Tanks and Universities

The Turkic Council pays utmost importance to develop its relations with think-tanks working on Eurasia and universities of the Member States, spreading its message for enhancement of regional cooperation.

The meeting entitled Turkic Council and Cooperation in Eurasia in the Light of Developments across the Region took place on 24 February 2015 at JW Marriott Hotel in Ankara organized with the collaboration of Turkic Council, SAM Turkey and AVİM (Center for Eurasian Studies).

The meeting, attended by more than 40 guests including ambassadors, academics, and representatives of relevant think-thanks, constituted the first event of the Turkic Council organized in this format. The promotional video of the Turkic Council was shared with the public for the first time at the said meeting. During the meeting, Rtd. Ambassador Halil Akıncı, Former Secretary General of the Turkic Council made a presentation on “the Turkic Council in the Framework of Cooperation in Eurasia”.





Secretary General Hasanov was given Red Apple Diplomacy Award by Turkish Asian Center for Strategic Research (TASAM) at an event which brought together opinion leaders, think-tanks, NGOs of Turkic speaking diaspora.

In the course of 2015, Turkic Council Secretariat participated in several round-table meetings, conferences and seminars organized by different think-tanks on topics related to its Member States and Eurasia.

Delegation of the Turkic Council had a conference with the students at Uludağ University. During the interactive session the delegates of the Council gave information about the organization, its recent and future activities. The delegates received a number of questions from the students concerning the functions of the Turkic Council, its cooperation with other international organizations and its importance for the region.





D. Participation in Major International, Regional and National Events

Apart from organizing 75 meetings including 6 Ministerial meetings, the Secretariat participated in 94 other events in 2015 organized by international organizations, embassies, governmental organizations, think-tanks and universities in the Member States and in other countries of the region. One of these events was the reception and dinner hosted on 3 March 2015 by the President of the Republic of Turkey, HE Recep Tayyip Erdoğan in honor of the President of Turkmenistan, HE Gurbanguly Berdimuhammedov, who paid an official visit to Turkey.

Turkic Council Secretariat participated in the 33rd meeting of the Permanent Council of Ministers of Culture of TURKSOY held on 28 December 2014 in Merv city of Turkmenistan, which was designated by TURKSOY as the Cultural Capital of the Turkic World for 2015.





As a regular practice, the Member States continued to invite the Turkic Council to the major international and regional events they hosted in 2015. In this context, Secretary General Hasanov attended ceremonial events on the Commemoration of the Centenary of the Çanakkale Land Battles organized under the auspices of HE President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan on 23-24 April in Istanbul and Çanakkale. Representatives from more than 100 countries and international organizations participated in the events.

Secretary General Hasanov participated in the 3rd Forum on Intercultural Dialogue entitled Shaping the Global Agenda: Responsibility of International Institutions and Governments in Building Trust and Understanding between Cultures and Civilizations on 18 -19 May 2015 in Baku. He addressed the audience at the plenary session of the 3rd World Forum on May 2015.

Secretary General Hasanov attended VII Astana Economic Forum on 21-22 May 2015 in Astana. Within the framework of the Forum, a Panel session under the theme Caspian Transit Corridor: Infrastructure Development and





The Secretariat participated in B-20 Conference on 3-5 September 2015 in Ankara. This provided an opportunity for the business community to share business priorities with government officials and build momentum after the G-20 Summit organized under the Turkish Presidency in Antalya in November 2015. More than 1,400 business leaders and CEOs from 65 countries participated in the conference.

Secretary General Hasanov attended the 8th Summit Meeting of Global Forum on Migration and Development held on 14-16 October 2015 in Istanbul under the Turkish Chairmanship of the Forum. Representatives from 150 countries and high level officials of international organizations attended the event.





On the other hand, the Secretariat continued to participate in the relevant prestigious international events in the Member States and abroad. In this sense, the Secretariat participated in the Homeland and Global Security Forum held on 14-16 October 2015 in Geneva in the framework of the Crans Montana Forum.

Furthermore, the Secretariat attended the international conference entitled Securing Sport 2015: The Global Power of Sport, organized by the ICSS on 3-4 November 2015 in New York. The Secretariat took part in the International Cooperation Platform's 6th Bosphorus Summit on 9-11 December 2015 in Istanbul.

The Secretariat also supported the organization of the meeting among the High Judicial Institutions of the Turkic Speaking States hosted by the High Council of Judges and Prosecutors (HCJP) of Turkey on 22-23 December 2015 in Istanbul.

The Secretariat participated in the 13th General Assembly of the Association of Engineers and Architects of Turkic World on 28 February 2015 in Ankara; International Engineering Forum organized by the Federation of Consultants from Islamic Countries (FCIC) and Foreign Economic Relations Board (DEIK) on 27-28 November 2015 in Istanbul; and the 5th International Festival of Architectural, Civil Engineering and Design Schools of Eurasia held on 8-9



In addition to the abovementioned meetings, Project Directors of the Turkic Council attended various meetings, conferences, and forums organized by the partner countries and organizations of the Turkic Council where they found the opportunity to network with other participants on the areas of cooperation.





During 2015, the Secretariat participated in conferences, receptions and other events organized on the occasion of National Days of the Turkic Council Member States. In this regard, the Secretariat took part in the celebrations with regard to the 550th Anniversary of the Kazakh Khanate around the world.



The Secretariat also attended the commemorative days of the leaders and leading figures of the Turkic Council Member States with a determination to share their noble legacies regarding increasing cooperation among the Turkic Speaking States and in the region with the future generations.



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