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Pan-Turkism as a Rising Threat to Stability

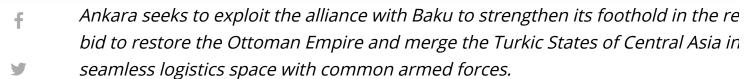


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Direct involvement of Turkish military and Syrian mercenaries in the Nagorno-Ka conflict on the side of Azerbaijan marked the peak of the pan-Turkism policy aggr pursued by the Turkish leader Recep Erdogan and his ruling Justice and Developr Party to extend Ankara's influence to the Turkic States of Southern Caucasus and Comments Asia regions. "We celebrate this glorious victory here today. But Azerbaijan's liber its lands from occupation does not mean that the struggle is over. The struggle, v waged in the political and military spheres, will continue on many other fronts," E said during the victory parade in Baku last December after the signature of a pea agreement that cemented the end of hostilities in Nagorno-Karabakh. Thus, he unequivocally confirmed Turkey's readiness to secure its geostrategic interests by of means, including military force.

Inciting ethno-religious conflicts

Erdogan's ominous mention of the "other fronts" provides an insight into the very of the foreign policy of today's Turkey that is trying to regain its former grandeur all openings in the turbulence created by the crumbling unipolar world order led United States. The disintegration processes in Europe and the diminishing role of powers, which had previously prevented Ottoman ambitions from transcending i borders, gave Turkey a green light for geopolitical revenge. However, in order to its regional leadership, Ankara chose rather dubious methods, including prolifera political Islam and encouragement of separatist sentiments in countries with Tur minorities.

It is worth noting that although the ideology of pan-Turkism precedes the preside Recep Erdogan, he is the first leader in Turkey's modern history to vigorously imp in the most radical fashion.

Turkey and the armed groups Ankara took under its wing pursue a consistent po terror against the Kurdish population in the areas of Northern Syria captured dur

Turkich intervention Ethnic cleancing acception and abduction of Kurdich

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to human rights watchdogs, during the three-year period of Turkish occupation c 674 civilians were killed, more than 7,300 were abducted and 300,000 were forcik displaced. In addition, Turkish companies cut down over 314,000 olive trees and plundered more than 70 archaeological sites.

Besides the Kurds, Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh have also experienced the p Turkic nationalism last year. Turkey sent thousands of Syrian mercenaries to sup Azerbaijan's troops in the fight for the disputed region. Nagorno-Karabakh is con part of Azerbaijan, but since 1994 it has had a quasi-independent status, profiting the protection of Armenia. During three months of fierce clashes, Azerbaijan mar achieve superiority with Turkey's active support and forced Armenian Prime Mini Pashinyan to sign an agreement that secured Baku's control over occupied territorical sign and secured se

Military experts say that Azerbaijan's victory was regarded by Ankara as a proof c correctness of its foreign policy. It also was strategically important in terms of Turgaining direct access to the Caspian Sea and the Central Asian region via Nakhich Autonomous Region, Nagorno-Karabakh, and the main lands of Azerbaijan for fu expansion into the Turkic countries.

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