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ELENA DMITRIEVA. TURKMENISTAN: AT THE TRADE ROUTES CROSSROADS

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Abstract. The article discusses the main directions of the state policy of Turkmenistan on the implementation of large-scale transport and logistics projects, taking into account the favorable geopolitical position of the country and the development of the infrastructure accompanying them.

The Caspian region today is a powerful transport and logistics hub of the international level, which in the context of the sanctions policy of the West opens new opportunities for the development of geo-economic relations in the Eurasian space.

Turkmenistan's advantageous geographical position at the crossroads of the region's trade routes allows the country to successfully realize its transport and logistics potential to ensure the transit of goods between the markets of Europe and the Asia-Pacific region through the territory of Central Asia. Cargo traffic on this route will significantly reduce the distance and travel time.

The North-South and East-West transport directions are considered a priority in Turkmenistan, special attention is also paid to the Central Asia - Persian Gulf (Turkmenistan - Iran - Qatar) and the Caspian - Black Sea (Turkmenistan - Azerbaijan - Georgia - Turkey) transport corridors. Significant transport arteries for the project of the Turkmen transport and logistics corridor are: the railway from Kazakhstan to Iran running through Turkmenistan, expressways built recently, automobile and railway bridges over the Amu Darya River, international as well as local airports, the largest international seaport in Turkmenbashi and other facilities.

Particular attention is paid to the construction of cross-border railways. Railway line Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan-Iran is the eastern part of the North-South transport corridor. Thus Turkmenistan participates in the revival of the Silk Road and has access to countries of Persian Gulf and inland railways of China. Previously, cargo transportation from China to countries In the Persian Gulf, mainly by sea and taking a month in time, and by rail, the travel time was reduced to two weeks. China has shown great interest in this route and has become one of the main suppliers of cargo in this direction.

An interesting direction is the railway project Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Tajikistan, which Turkmenistan is actively implementing, unlike Tajikistan. For example, the first stage of the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Tajikistan railway, which will pass through the North of Afghanistan, has already been commissioned. This project is the initial stage of the inclusion of Afghanistan in the transport and logistics system of Turkmenistan and through it - of the entire region. It is possible that in future

this railway line may be reoriented to China against the background of Tajikistan's not too active participation in the project.

An important role in the transport and logistics system of Turkmenistan is played by the seaport in Turkmenbashi. The logistics center created there is universal, year-round and designed for maintenance of all types of transport around the clock: sea, rail, road and air. The trade route from Baku to Turkmenbashi along the Caspian Sea allows to shorten the way of cargo delivery by 1400 km compared to the overland route through Iran. This is the shortest logistics route for road cargo transportation from Turkey and the Caucasus countries to the Asian region, which provides the best conditions for European countries to access the markets of the Near and Middle East, the states of the Indian Ocean basin, significantly reduce distance and time for large-scale cargo transportation. Seaport in Turkmenbashi is also a major railway hub for highways coming from Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Russia, and China. It is often called the "Sea Gate" connecting Europe with Asia.

Much attention is paid to the development of the national communications system when implementing logistics routes (an artificial communication satellite created in France and launched in the U.S. in 2015, development of telecommunication system according to international standards, next-generation communication systems (NGN), etc.). A new stage of modernization of communication systems in Turkmenistan until 2024 provides for the development of mobile communications in the country including 3G, 4G, 5G high-speed Internet. With implementation this project, coverage across the country will be 100%. This is the way Turkmenistan is trying to organize modern high-quality provision of means of communication of transport and logistics chains, their interaction and coordination in the movement of commodity flows.

Turkmenistan has large reserves of natural gas and has a developed system of gas pipelines, providing supply of raw

hydrocarbons to consumers. To date, the following gas pipelines operate in Turkmenistan: Turkmenistan - Uzbekistan - Kazakhstan - China, Dovletabad - Deryalyk, Korpedje - Kurtkui, Dovletabad - Serakhs - Hangeran and East-West. The Turkmenistan - Uzbekistan - Kazakhstan - China gas pipeline with a total length of more than 9,000 km delivers gas to the main industrial centers of China, such as Shanghai, Guangzhou, Hong Kong. Dovletabad - Deryalyk provides delivery of natural gas from the eastern and western gas producing regions of Turkmenistan in the northern direction to the borders with Kazakhstan. Gas is being transported to Iran via the Korpedje-Kurtkui and Dovletabad-Serakhs-Hangeran gas pipelines.

The East-West gas pipeline connects the large fields of the East Turkmenistan with its western regions. It will be possible to deliver natural gas through this pipeline to any desired point on the territory of Turkmenistan.

The creation of an extensive transit transport system that meets modern logistics requirements and broad participation in regional and international cooperation has become a priority for the country's leadership. That's why the state policy of the leadership of Turkmenistan on positioning the country as a strategic crossroads the Eurasian transport corridors should also assume an exit of Turkmenistan from the policy of isolationism, carried out especially actively in the first years of independence. Isolationist politics will be an obstacle to the development of trade and economic ties necessary for the implementation of the plans of the country's leadership aimed at the transformation of Turkmenistan into a transport and logistics crossroads of not only regional, but also international scale.

Modern transport and logistics infrastructure is a system that combines resource sources, production facilities and labor potential into a single chain. The future belongs to the combined transport system, which includes the largest international and regional pipeline, rail, road, water (sea and river), and air hubs.

In these conditions, the development of transport infrastructure is one of the main priorities of the state policy of Turkmenistan. The transport and logistics network with many railway, sea and air terminals created by the country's management can become one of the main elements in the international transport system on the Eurasian continent, and Turkmenistan may become one of the crossroads of trade routes.

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