

## TURKIC COUNTRIES' RELATIONS WITH QATAR FROM A REALIST PERSPECTIVE

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### *Abstract*

This article focuses on power dynamics, strategic alliances, and security issues influencing Turkic countries' relationship with Qatar in a comparative geopolitical structure from a realist perspective. By determining motivations emanating from Qatar and Turkic countries foreign policy, this study reveals their diplomatic relations by examining the complex interactions among strategic calculations, power structures, and security concerns. Emphasizing the complexity of security issues and regional conflicts affecting Turkic countries and Qatar, the article investigates the interactions among these countries. Also, it emphasizes the critical factors influencing this relationship, such as security considerations and power balance. The study analyzes evolving case studies that highlight the mutual interest and developing relationship between Qatar and Turkic countries. This article gives policymakers and observers a nuanced understanding of power politics, security concerns, and state behavior within the complex geopolitical sphere.

### **Keywords:**

Realism Theory, Turkic Countries, Qatar, Strategic Partnerships, Diplomatic Interactions, Power Dynamics, State Interest.

### *Özet*

Bu makale, Türk ülkelerinin Katar ile ilişkilerini gerçekçi bir bakış açısıyla karşılaştırmalı jeopolitik yapıda etkileyen güç dinamikleri, stratejik ittifaklar ve güvenlik konularına odaklanmaktadır. Katar ve Türk ülkeleri dış politikasından kaynaklanan motivasyonları belirleyerek, bu çalışma stratejik hesaplamalar, güç yapıları ve güvenlik endişeleri arasındaki karmaşık etkileşimleri inceleyerek diplomatik ilişkilerini ortaya koymaktadır. Türk ülkeleri ve Katar'ı etkileyen güvenlik sorunlarının ve bölgesel çatışmaların karmaşıklığını vurgulayan makale, bu ülkeler arasındaki etkileşimleri araştırmaktadır. Ayrıca, güvenlik kaygıları ve güç dengesi gibi bu ilişkiyi etkileyen kritik faktörleri vurgulamaktadır. Çalışma, Katar ve Türk ülkeleri arasındaki karşılıklı çıkarı ve gelişen ilişkiyi vurgulayan gelişen vaka çalışmalarını analiz

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etmektedir. Bu makale, politika yapıcılara ve gözlemcilere karmaşık jeopolitik alandaki güç politikaları, güvenlik endişeleri ve devlet davranışları hakkında ayrıntılı bir anlayış sunmaktadır.

### **Anahtar Sözcükler:**

Gerçekçilik Teorisi, Türk Ülkeleri, Katar, Stratejik Ortaklıklar, Diplomatik Etkileşimler, Güç Dinamikleri, Devlet Çıkarları.

### **Introduction**

The article focuses on the complex interactions between power dynamics and strategic alliances in Qatar and Turkic nations relations. A realist perspective provides important insights into how states negotiate the competitive geopolitical environment. It focuses on strengthening security, influencing regional dynamics, and protecting national interests within the framework of international relations theory. Realism places a strong emphasis on state-centric decision-making, where states are the primary actors shaping international affairs and enacting new regulations according to their interests. This article aims to show how strategic calculations, security consideration, and power challenges influence international relations by examining the foreign policy interests and intentions of Turkic countries and Qatar.

The intricate web of security conflicts and regional challenges that characterize the relationships between Turkic countries and Qatar illustrates the complex nature of inter-state relations. Realism identifies the implications of power conflicts, security struggles, and power balance, providing a critical perspective on the obstacles of Turkic countries' relations within the geopolitical environment.

The development of partnerships between Qatar and Turkic countries is based on shared economic, political, and cultural interests. In addition, it structures regional dynamics and global influence. Qatar has strengthened its ties with Turkic nations through investments, joint projects, and a shared commitment to stability, promoting economic growth and collaboration. Moreover, the Qatar-Turkey military alliance and the strategic energy partnership highlight the complex nature of these partnerships, which are driven by shared objectives and concerted efforts to advance shared interests.

All in all, the difficulties of Qatar's relations with Turkic nations through the prism of realist theory are examined by highlighting the geopolitical interests, strategic alliances, and economic interdependence that define these relationships.

## 1. Theoretical Framework

Realism is a foundational theory of international relations that emphasizes the importance of state interests and power dynamics. It posits that there is no higher authority to impose laws or directives, highlighting the anarchic nature of the international system<sup>1</sup>. This viewpoint provides a basic structure for examining how states interact and behave in the international arena.

The theory of realism demonstrates that power is a key motivator for state behaviour, with states aiming to increase their power and security as a primary consideration. According to realist theorists, “egoistic passions and self-interest have a significant impact on international politics, legitimizing amoral decisions under the concept of "raison d'état" or the reason of the state”<sup>2</sup>.

Realism also emphasizes self-help, where states rely on their own capabilities rather than collective security arrangements. The presence of anarchy makes cooperation difficult due to concerns about trust and potential cheating by adversaries<sup>3</sup>. Therefore, according to standard structural-realist theory, collaboration between rival states is expected to be rare, challenging, and provide limited benefits to state well-being<sup>4</sup>.

Self-interest is evident in all aspects of state governance, including political and economic connections. Economic ties are not just transactional; they are intricately linked to states' attempts to increase their influence. This is particularly observed between Qatar and the Turkic states such as Kazakhstan and Turkey. Turkey's military alliances in the region and Qatar's investments in Kazakhstan's energy sector are based on their ambition for regional and global influence. These actions improve their strategic positions within the anarchic international system.

Thus, applying this realistic theoretical perspective to the relationship between Turkic countries and Qatar provides a solid foundation for analyzing the motives and outcomes of their interactions. It highlights how states prioritize and structure their foreign policy diplomacy based on domestic economic and political interests.

Additionally, realism highlights the importance that the power balance plays as a safeguard against hegemonic domination and for maintaining stability. It illustrates the security issues, where states' efforts to strengthen their own security can unintentionally increase insecurity for other states. According to the

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<sup>1</sup> John Donnelly, *Realism and International Relations* (2000), Cambridge: The Press of the University of Cambridge.

<sup>2</sup> John Donnelly, *Realism and International Relations* (2000), Cambridge: The Press of the University of Cambridge.

<sup>3</sup> Charles L. Glaser, Realists as Optimists: Cooperation as Self-Help (1994), JSTOR, 50–90.

<sup>4</sup> Charles L. Glaser, Realists as Optimists: Cooperation as Self-Help (1994), JSTOR, 50–90.

balance of power theory, changes in the allocation of power are inherently dangerous because power is fungible. Some offensive realists claim that a state's ability to accomplish its objectives grows as its power base expands<sup>5</sup>. "The power dynamics surrounding the newly formed BRICS countries have been examined using this theoretical framework in the post-Cold War era<sup>6</sup>.

Moreover, the question of how Turkic countries and Qatar navigate the complexities of power distribution and strategic alliances in their diplomatic interactions will be clarified. This will demonstrate how states operate to strengthen their security and shape regional dynamics while protecting their national interests within a complex geopolitical sphere.

Also, the realist perspective highlights the significance of state-centric decision-making. Rationalists concentrate on examining state behavior in international relations, as they contend that states are the primary actors capable of making decisions, taking actions, and implementing policy changes to further their national interests<sup>7</sup>. According to this viewpoint, states are seen as the central factors and principal players in global affairs. Consequently, the decisions and behaviors of states wield significant influence in shaping world politics<sup>8</sup>. This applies to the economic and political relations between Turkic countries and Qatar, particularly their energy partnership and military cooperation.

## **2.Turkic Countries Relationship**

The relationship between Turkic Countries is diverse and transcends geographic boundaries. Additionally, Turkic countries develop their relationship in an organized cooperative structure, leading Turkey to recognize recently established republics and empower the regional organization. The Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA) and the Turkic Council facilitate collaboration across political, economic, and cultural aspects<sup>9</sup>.

The interdependence of Turkic states is further strengthened by economic alliances and regional cooperation programs, which facilitate investments and trade agreements aiming to promote mutual economic development among them.

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<sup>5</sup> **Stephen E. Lobell**, *Realism, Balance of Power, and Power Transitions* (2016), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>6</sup> **Stephen E. Lobell**, *Realism, Balance of Power, and Power Transitions* (2016), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>7</sup> **Carlos V. Hernandez**, "State Centrism in International Relations: Strengths and Limitations and Possible Alternatives" (14 July 2021), SocArXiv.

<sup>8</sup> **Carlos V. Hernandez**, "State Centrism in International Relations: Strengths and Limitations and Possible Alternatives" (14 July 2021), SocArXiv.

<sup>9</sup> **Gülay Güngör**, *Turkic Cooperation in the Center of Eurasia: The Turkic Council* (2021), Center for Eurasian Studies (AVİM).

In this respect, the economy forms a key pillar of collaboration within the Turkic Council. Studies indicate that these states possess substantial economic potential, but by uniting their efforts, they can enhance their collective influence<sup>10</sup>. According to the organization's official data, “Turkic States collectively have a population of about 150 million, accounting for 2% of the world’s total population”<sup>11</sup>.

“More than 4.5 million square kilometers of the world’s total landmass are covered by these countries. The combined GDP of the Turkic Council member states represents approximately \$1.5 trillion, making them the 13<sup>th</sup> largest economy in the world, accounting for around 1.8% of the world GDP”<sup>12</sup>.

On the other hand, “the diplomatic interaction within the Turkic World is strongly linked to cultural heritage and history. During the last 25 years of independence, Turkic republics achieved significant development strengthening their global presence and cultural ties”<sup>13</sup>. By developing a strategic cultural diplomacy, peaceful relationships emanated, and institutions such as the International Organization of Turkic Culture (TURKSOY) created an advancing point in promoting Turkic cultural diversity<sup>14</sup>.

Additionally, the security and regional conflict obstacles emphasize the difficulty of interstate relations and creates a need for a more advanced strategy to deter mutual threats and maintain regional stability. This transition leads us to delve into the realist perspective on the interactions among Turkic nations, offering a deeper analysis of their dynamics through this theoretical lens.

## 2.1 Realist Perspective on International Relations among Turkic Countries

Understanding the relationships among Turkic countries through a realist lens provides valuable insights into the dynamics of power politics and state behaviour in the region.

Realism highlights the significance of power struggles and competition among states for influence and control. When examining Turkic countries, factors such as resource distribution, territorial disputes, and strategic alliances emerge as critical elements that shape the relationships between these nations. The interplay of these factors underscores the complex geopolitical landscape within which Turkic countries seek to secure their interests.

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<sup>10</sup> **Orkhan Baghirov**, *The Organization of Turkic States’ Economic Potential and Cooperation Prospects among its Members* (2022), DergiPark.

<sup>11</sup> **Orkhan Baghirov**, *The Organization of Turkic States’ Economic Potential and Cooperation Prospects among its Members* (2022), DergiPark.

<sup>12</sup> **Orkhan Baghirov**, *The Organization of Turkic States’ Economic Potential and Cooperation Prospects among its Members* (2022), DergiPark.

<sup>13</sup> **Ferhat Purtaş**, *Cultural Diplomacy Initiatives of Turkic Republics* (2017), Dergi Park, 81–114.

<sup>14</sup> **Ferhat Purtaş**, *Cultural Diplomacy Initiatives of Turkic Republics* (2017), Dergi Park, 81–114.

The Turkic Council, formed by Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Kyrgyzstan, is strategically located along the Silk Road and near major global powers like China and Russia. With abundant resources and a key position, collaboration within the Council is vital for mutual benefits. Energy cooperation, driven by the member states' roles as energy hubs, is central to fostering collaboration. Despite challenges in resource sharing and transportation leading to power struggles, the Council's members are engaging in collective efforts. Each country aligns its strategies with national concerns but maintains a shared commitment to prioritizing collective goals over individual interests<sup>15</sup>.

Moreover, realist theory underscores the need for a balance of power among states to prevent any single actor from asserting dominance. Within the context of Turkic countries, the organization of Turkic states (OTS) provides member states with a platform to explore diverse foreign policy options founded on principles of equality<sup>16</sup>.

While Turkey and Kazakhstan play prominent roles, their comparatively limited economic and political capabilities, in contrast to larger regional or global powers, encourage the other countries to engage with the organization as equal partners<sup>17</sup>. To shed light on the matter, Turkey's assertive foreign policy has propelled the organization forward, providing enhanced connectivity to both the West and Central Asia. This leadership also bolsters Turkey's geopolitical influence while offering a counterbalance to Chinese and Russian interests in the region<sup>18</sup>. Thus, by promoting common objectives and ensuring regional stability, Turkey's pivotal role within the Council establishes a strategic equilibrium that is advantageous for all member states<sup>19</sup>.

In addition, security interests from a realist perspective highlight the strategic decisions that Turkic countries determine in forming alliances and strategic partnerships, willing to strengthen their defence strategy and protect their interests from possible threats.

Moreover, after the Russian-Ukraine war, Turkic countries have been reinforcing their defence partnerships and strategies. In this respect, Turkey's geopolitical and military strength has played a major role in this case. Accordingly, these developments highlight a deliberate effort among Turkic Republics to collaborate

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<sup>15</sup> **Ömer Ağır and Zeynep Aksu**, Efforts for Energy-Based Regionalisation in the Turkic World: The Organization of Turkic States (2024), *bilig*, 105–128.

<sup>16</sup> **Erkan Aydın and Yi Liu**, Organization of Turkic States: Diverse Motivations for A Common Aim (2024), *Siyasal: Journal of Political Sciences*, 35–54.

<sup>17</sup> **Erkan Aydın and Yi Liu**, Organization of Turkic States: Diverse Motivations for A Common Aim (2024), *Siyasal: Journal of Political Sciences*, 35–54.

<sup>18</sup> **Cemal Demir**, The Organization of Turkic States: Implications for the Regional Balance of Power (2022), *Dergi Park*, 39–71.

<sup>19</sup> **Cemal Demir**, The Organization of Turkic States: Implications for the Regional Balance of Power (2022), *Dergi Park*, 39–71.

on defence projects and initiatives as part of a strategic security-balancing policy<sup>20</sup>. The collaboration among Turkic countries has grown to the extent that they are now playing a significant role in the development of new security frameworks in Europe<sup>21</sup>.

All in all, exploring power struggles, security considerations, and the balance of power provides a comprehensive understanding of the complexities of interactions among Turkic nations, offering valuable perspectives for policymakers and observers navigating this intricate geopolitical landscape.

### 3. Qatar and Turkic Countries Relationship

The relationship between Qatar and the Turkic countries has generally developed over time, reflecting its impact on regional and global integration. These relationships are driven by common interests and rooted in historical ties. This exploration navigates the complexities of Qatar's interactions with Turkic nations, highlighting the diverse dimensions that define their collaborative efforts and mutual pursuits.

Economically, Qatar has established robust trade partnerships and investment flows with Turkic countries, fostering economic growth and mutual prosperity. Qatar has actively sought to enhance economic collaboration with Turkic countries through joint ventures, infrastructure projects, and investment opportunities. These efforts contribute to economic diversification and sustainable development in both Qatar and the Turkic countries.

In this respect, a prime example is the recent agreement between Qatar and Kazakhstan, which emphasizes a substantial investment of \$20 billion in nine key projects<sup>22</sup>. The creation of a new communications operator, the construction of a gas processing plant at the Kashagan field, and the expansion of the Beineu-Bozoi-Shymkent gas pipeline are among the key initiatives outlined<sup>23</sup>.

Politically, diplomatic efforts and alliances have played a pivotal role in strengthening ties between Qatar and Turkic nations, while shared interests in regional stability and global issues have further solidified their

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<sup>20</sup> **Kairat Bazarbayev, Zhanar Zhanaltay, and Amangeldy Amirbek**, A New Frontier in Relations between Türkiye and Turkic Republics: Cooperation in Defense Industry (2024), Al-Farabi Kazakh National University.

<sup>21</sup> **AZERNEWS**, "Türkiye and Turkic countries ensure role of security in Europe: Hungarian FM" (4 November 2023), available at: <https://www.azernews.az/region/217014.html> (accessed 3 December 2024).

<sup>22</sup> **Daulet Omirgazy**, "Qatar to Invest \$20 Billion in Nine Projects in Kazakhstan" (11 October 2024), The Astana Times.

<sup>23</sup> **Daulet Omirgazy**, "Qatar to Invest \$20 Billion in Nine Projects in Kazakhstan" (11 October 2024), The Astana Times.

relationship. In this respect, Turkey and Qatar serve as prominent examples of emerging powers in the Middle East actively involved in conflict resolution processes and regional transformation efforts.

Furthermore, they both share aligned positions on supporting popular movements against pro-status quo regimes, such as backing the Syrian opposition. Additionally, they collaborate against Iranian expansionism and have developed a close relationship across various fields<sup>24</sup>. This collaboration unveils the common vision for regional stability and geopolitical strategies in the Middle East and beyond.

On the other hand, it's noteworthy that cultural exchange connections empower the social neutralization of adopting common strategies. Consequently, Qatar's role as a major tourism contributor to Turkey highlights the growing mutual interest and engagement between the two countries<sup>25</sup>. By promoting a partnership centered on cultural exchange and shared interests, Qatar empowers Turkic leaders to drive collaborative efforts and discussions, reflecting a commitment to fostering cooperation<sup>26</sup>.

All in all, through investments, joint projects, and shared interests in regional stability, Qatar has strengthened its relationships with Turkic nations, paving the way for mutual growth and collaboration.

### **3.1 General Issues in Qatar's Relations with Turkic States through a Realist Theory Perspective**

Qatar's interactions with Turkic nations are influenced by power dynamics, economic cooperation, and security considerations. Utilizing a realist perspective, we will focus on Turkey and Kazakhstan as case studies within the broader context of Turkic countries. By examining the economic, political, and geopolitical dimensions, we can better understand the intricacies of Qatar's engagements in this regional framework.

#### **3.1.1 Analysis of Qatar's Relationship with Turkey**

##### **3.1.1.1 Qatar and Turkey Political and Military alliance**

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<sup>24</sup> **Mustafa Ataman**, "Turkey and Qatar: Two Complementary Regional States" (2 December 2015), Siyaset Ekonomi ve Toplum Araştırmaları Vakfı.

<sup>25</sup> **Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs**, Türkiye-Qatar Economic and Trade Relations (2022), Republic of Türkiye - Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

<sup>26</sup> **Nils Koch**, "Qatar and Central Asia: What's at Stake in Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Kazakhstan?" (2017), PONARS EURASIA, The University of George Washington.



The political and military alliance between Turkey and Qatar has deepened, with joint efforts focused on promoting regional stability and security. This partnership underscores their shared interests and mutual commitment to bolstering stability and cooperation.

While other Gulf states viewed Arab uprisings as a threat to their political system, Turkey and Qatar supported revolutionary movements for Islamic-dominated governments between 2011 and 2013. Qatar and Turkey had an advantage in 2011 due to their alignment with prevailing sentiment and previous mediation efforts<sup>27</sup>.

Also, the deepening connection between Turkey and Qatar was further cemented through their military and strategic partnerships. Specifically, in December 2015, the two countries agreed to establish a military base in Qatar, marking a significant shift in Turkish foreign policy. This base, intended as a permanent installation, will enable Turkey to exchange operational training experiences and engage in defence industry collaboration with Qatar<sup>28</sup>.

Additionally, the establishment of a Turkish military base in Qatar and forming joint military exercises bolster Turkey's strategic agenda in the Gulf region. Turkish officials emphasize the objective of bolstering security and stability without singling out particular adversaries. In contrast, certain Turkish analysts interpret these actions as indicative of a resurgence of Turkish influence in the Arabian Peninsula<sup>29</sup>.

Moreover, scholars such as Cafiero & Wagner suggest that Turkey's ruling party is revitalizing Ottoman elements through economic and geopolitical integration, empowering Ankara's proactive role in regional issues, notably its participation in the Qatar crisis<sup>30</sup>. However, this perspective oversimplifies the situation. While Ottoman elements are part of Turkey's approach, the collaboration during the crisis was also driven by common interests. Unlike previous assumptions, Turkey's role during the Qatar crisis was one of mediation, motivated by mutual security interests. The mediation efforts during the Gulf crisis could be summarized by four main pillars that shaped Turkey's diplomatic strategy.

Initially, Turkey's interest lies in maintaining stability in the Gulf region, specifically as it shares common security with Qatar in Syria and Iraq. Turkey focuses on sustaining and strengthening ties with all parties involved in the crisis, attracting investments, and facilitating joint projects<sup>31</sup>. Secondly, in 2016, direct

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<sup>27</sup> Ersin Yüksel and Hasan Tekineş, "Turkey's Love-in with Qatar" (2021), CRU Report.

<sup>28</sup> Neslihan Cetinoglu, "Turkey's Intensifying Partnership with Qatar and Its Implications for Turkish-American Relations" (2016), Middle East Review of International Affairs (MERIA), 1–11.

<sup>29</sup> Giuseppe Cafiero and David Wagner, "Turkey and Qatar's Burgeoning Strategic Alliance" (2016), Middle East Institute.

<sup>30</sup> Giuseppe Cafiero and David Wagner, "Turkey and Qatar's Burgeoning Strategic Alliance" (2016), Middle East Institute.

<sup>31</sup> Laila O. Alnuaimy, Qatari-Turkish Relations 2003-2017: A Study in Political & Diplomatic Field (2020), Regional Studies Journal, 9–34.

foreign investments in Turkey from the Gulf reached \$3.12 billion, with substantial contributions from Saudi Arabia and Qatar<sup>32</sup>. Accordingly, Turkey will not favour clashing economically with Gulf countries, especially Saudi Arabia.

Additionally, Turkey's strategy to counter Iran's influence in the region relies on its Gulf Cooperation Council states alliance<sup>33</sup>. Accordingly, Turkey prioritizes regional security and positive relations among Gulf states. Finally, Turkey negotiates with Saudi Arabia and backs Qatar to defend its economic interests and prevent unfavourable sanctions<sup>34</sup>.

Overall, Turkey's strategy and motives for mediating the Gulf conflict are not only based on religious affinities but also on self-interest protection in the face of shifting geopolitical conditions. Its diverse strategy demonstrates dedication to stability and regional security.

### 3.1.1.2 Qatar and Turkey Geopolitical and Regional Affairs

Qatar and Turkey have strengthened their geopolitical partnership by placing a high priority on developing cooperation and stability in their regions. The mutual strategic objectives and foreign policy strategies increased their regional impact and improved bilateral relations. Both countries have reaffirmed their roles as key allies internationally.

Turkish leadership has subsequently come to view Qatar as Ankara's most trusted Arab ally<sup>35</sup>. Turkey and Qatar have responded in similar ways to the security and political situations in Syria, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, and Tunisia. During the initial meeting of the High Strategic Committee between the two nations in Doha in December 2015, Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan confirmed that their countries maintain consistent and parallel positions on regional issues<sup>36</sup>.

During the Syrian war in 2011, Turkey and Qatar closely cooperated closely as a bloc. They both had key influence in structuring the Syrian National Council and its military counterpart<sup>37</sup>. Accordingly, both Turkey and Qatar shared supported the Syrian opposition in aiming to remove former president Al-Assad from power.

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<sup>32</sup> **Laila O. Alnuaimy**, *Qatari-Turkish Relations 2003-2017: A Study in Political & Diplomatic Field* (2020), *Regional Studies Journal*, 9–34.

<sup>33</sup> **Laila O. Alnuaimy**, *Qatari-Turkish Relations 2003-2017: A Study in Political & Diplomatic Field* (2020), *Regional Studies Journal*, 9–34.

<sup>34</sup> **Laila O. Alnuaimy**, *Qatari-Turkish Relations 2003-2017: A Study in Political & Diplomatic Field* (2020), *Regional Studies Journal*, 9–34.

<sup>35</sup> **Giuseppe Cafiero and David Wagner**, "Turkey and Qatar's Burgeoning Strategic Alliance" (2016), Middle East Institute.

<sup>36</sup> **Sami A. Eid**, *Turkish-Qatari Relations: Foreign Policy and Regional Security (2002-2020)* (2021), Al Jazeera Centre for Studies.

<sup>37</sup> **Sami A. Eid**, *Turkish-Qatari Relations: Foreign Policy and Regional Security (2002-2020)* (2021), Al Jazeera Centre for Studies.

Additionally, both countries aligned on the Libyan crisis, backing the Government of National Accord (GNA), which had serious implications for their interests. Facing significant financial losses due to unpaid deals and investments, Turkey felt compelled to participate in the conflict as a regional power<sup>38</sup>. Moreover, the shared maritime boundary between Turkey and Libya influenced Turkey's interest in fostering stability within the Libyan state<sup>39</sup>.

Furthermore, Qatar strategically signed an oil contract with the National Transitional Council (NTC) to support the political dimension of the uprising and facilitate stability throughout the transitional phase and advance its own interests. Notably, Qatar made history as the first Arab nation to formally recognize the NTC as the legitimate representative of the Libyan populace<sup>40</sup>. Ultimately, Turkey and Qatar's collaboration during the Libyan crisis exemplifies their joint efforts to forge alliances that advance their mutual interests in the region.

In conclusion, Qatar and Turkey have solidified their regional and geopolitical partnership through aligned strategic objectives and coordinated actions. Their close collaboration in addressing shared challenges and pursuing mutual goals has not only bolstered their influence in regional affairs but also deepened their bilateral ties. This strong alliance sets the stage for further exploration of their economic relationship.

### 3.1.1.3 Qatar and Turkey Economic Relations

Qatar and Turkey have built strong economic relations through bilateral trade agreements and collaborative economic initiatives. In the 2000s, both countries' foreign policies evolved in response to national and regional circumstances, which increased their economic influence<sup>41</sup>.

Subsequently, the number of economic, military, and cultural agreements between the two states reached 62 after 10 new agreements were signed in November 2020. Over 500 Turkish and 170 Qatari businesses had begun operations in each other's countries by 2019<sup>42</sup>. The expended use of foreign policy instruments by both states increased their impact domestically and globally.

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<sup>38</sup> **Shamsa A. Maalim**, "Implications of Realist Defensive Foreign Policy: Towards a Turkish Intervention in Libya During the First and Second Libyan Crises" (2023), *Journal of International Relations and Political Science Studies*, 27–50.

<sup>39</sup> **Shamsa A. Maalim**, "Implications of Realist Defensive Foreign Policy: Towards a Turkish Intervention in Libya During the First and Second Libyan Crises" (2023), *Journal of International Relations and Political Science Studies*, 27–50.

<sup>40</sup> **Harold J. Das**, *The Role of Qatar and UAE in the Libyan Civil War* (2019), New Delhi: Vivekananda International Foundation.

<sup>41</sup> **Osman Pala**, *The Evolution of Turkish-Qatari Relations from 2002 to 2013: Convergence of Policies, Identities, and Interests* (2014), Qatar University, Graduate Studies College of Arts and Sciences.

<sup>42</sup> **Amir Mohseni Cheraghlou**, "Qatari-Turkish Relations in the Post-Blockade Era" (2021), *Gulf International Forum*.

The development of a knowledge-based economy and economic diversification has been a central objective to Qatar's strategy. In recent years, the nation has shown encouraging economic growth, achieving outstanding results in areas like general construction, business expansion, and electricity production and consumption<sup>43</sup>

Similarly, Turkey experienced a political and economic transformation and ended up being a major regional force. Particularly in the Middle East, where Turkey continues to strengthen connections with adjacent countries, including Qatar<sup>44</sup>.

Lately, trade between both countries has witnessed significant development, with a 57% increase in volume expected to reach 1.4 billion USD<sup>45</sup>. Moreover, over 180 Turkish companies have been established in Qatar, with projects worth 17.4 billion USD and undertaken by Turkish contractors<sup>46</sup>. Thus, the expansion of Qatari capital investments in Turkey highlights the deep economic relationship between both states.

Both countries are well-positioned for long-term economic success, as Qatar continuous to develop into a knowledge-based economy and Turkey solidifies its position as a major actor in Eurasian geopolitics. Overall, strong economic ties, numerous bilateral trade agreements, and cooperative economic projects that promote growth and economic interdependence define the strong economic partnership between Qatar and Turkey. Further regional cooperation and long-lasting economic prosperity for both states remains open following their mutually beneficial partnership.

### 3.1.2 Examination of Qatar's Relationship with Kazakhstan

#### 3.1.2.1 Qatar-Kazakhstan Economic Interdependence

When examining the economic interdependence between Qatar and Kazakhstan, it becomes evident that these ties are not only about commerce and trade but are intricately linked to enhancing the political power and self-interest of both states.

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<sup>43</sup> **Gianluca Mele**, *Mauritania Economic Update, July 2014* (World Bank Group, Washington, DC, 2014), <http://hdl.handle.net/10986/19973> [accessed 10 January 2025].

<sup>44</sup> **Stephen F. Larrabee**, "Turkey's New Geopolitics," in *Survival*, 52(2) (2010), 157–180, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00396331003764686> [accessed 10 January 2025].

<sup>45</sup> **Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs**, *Türkiye-Qatar Economic and Trade Relations* (2022), Republic of Türkiye - Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

<sup>46</sup> **Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs**, *Türkiye-Qatar Economic and Trade Relations* (2022), Republic of Türkiye - Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

President Tokayev executed agreements totalling \$24 billion during his visit to Qatar, significantly boosting economic collaboration and cultivating mutually beneficial partnerships. This marked a pivotal development in the bilateral relations between the two countries<sup>47</sup>. Qatar aims to rank among the top 10 investors in Kazakhstan, while Kazakhstan anticipates utilizing Qatar's expertise in liquefied natural gas (LNG) and petrochemical production, acknowledging the potential for economic diversification and the safeguarding of foreign investments<sup>48</sup>.

Additionally, the establishment of the Qatar-Kazakh Chamber of Commerce and Industry strengthened their economic relations. The initiative concentrates on boosting investments and enhancing economic relations between both states. The strategic creation of this chamber aims to enhance economic relations, drive bilateral trade growth, and promote greater business collaboration between Qatar and Kazakhstan<sup>49</sup>. In this respect, the establishment of the economic chamber demonstrates how states take measures to foster mutual economic interest within the anarchic system constraints.

Ultimately, Qatar and Kazakhstan's economic interdependence provides a key factor in advancing bilateral relations and shaping domestic interest.

#### 3.1.2.2 Qatar- Kazakhstan Geopolitical and Energy Relationship

Partnerships between Qatar and Kazakhstan in the energy sector have strengthened their energy security, and established them as key players in the geopolitical sphere.

Moreover, the construction of two gas treatment plants with yearly capacities of one billion cubic meters and two and a half billion cubic meters, a new compressor station, the main gas pipeline, and the second phase of the Beniu-Bozoy-Shymkent gas pipeline project are among the seven projects in Kazakhstan for which Qatar-based companies have obtained two energy contracts<sup>50</sup>.

In this respect, "Kazakhstan's dependence of gas and oil has driven its economy since the 1990s, specifically during periods of high oil prices. However, there are also negative impacts, such as pro-cyclical growth and vulnerability to oil shocks"<sup>51</sup>.

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<sup>47</sup> **Gian Interesse**, "Qatar and Kazakhstan Sign US\$25 Billion in Deals, Strengthen Relations" (2024), *Middle East Briefing*.

<sup>48</sup> **Gian Interesse**, "Qatar and Kazakhstan Sign US\$25 Billion in Deals, Strengthen Relations" (2024), *Middle East Briefing*.

<sup>49</sup> **Qatar-Kazakh Chamber of Commerce and Industry**, "Qatari Companies Seek Partners from Kazakhstan" (2024), available at: <https://qa-kz.org> (accessed 2 December 2024).

<sup>50</sup> **Gian Interesse**, "Qatar and Kazakhstan Sign US\$25 Billion in Deals, Strengthen Relations" (2024), *Middle East Briefing*.

<sup>51</sup> **Ricardo Hausmann, Douglas Barrios, David Barrios, Claire Brenot, Nihat Taniparti, Erica Protzer, and Stefan Henn**, *The Economic Complexity of Kazakhstan: A Roadmap for Sustainable and Inclusive Growth* (2023), *International Development Center at Harvard University*.

The energy partnership between both states forms a securing energy alternative source for Kazakhstan as it assists in lowering reliance on regional competitors by increasing investments in the Qatar energy sector. Thus, the energy security partnership between Qatar and Kazakhstan enhances their energy security and geopolitical influence. Similarly, despite its energy independent significance, Kazakhstan remains highly reliant on Russia. This dependence requires Kazakhstan to maintain cooperation and engage in negotiations with Russia while balancing Kazakhstan's benefits and risks<sup>52</sup>.

In this scenario, forming an alliance with Qatar offers Kazakhstan a chance to broaden its network through strategic positioning and Arab world involvement. This partnership facilitates varied connections, lessening Kazakhstan's dependence on the dictates of a single state, and fortifying its autonomy by fostering diverse collaborations and partnerships.

Additionally, Qatar emerges as a favourable choice due to its strategic location and vast reserves of oil and natural gas, which are key assets that amplify its global relevance. Located in the Middle East, near key nations in the Red Sea area, Qatar's geography offers significant strategic and economic benefits<sup>53</sup>.

Furthermore, Qatar's geopolitical interest in Kazakhstan is driven by the latter's strategic location as a transit conduit in Eurasia. Kazakhstan's central position and abundant natural resources make it an attractive prospect for major global powers<sup>54</sup>. This potential as a key player in the global economy underscores the importance of Kazakhstan's foreign policy decisions for Qatar's interests in the region.

Therefore, Qatar's growing involvement in Central Asia carries substantial geopolitical implications. Qatar's growing involvement with Turkic states could significantly reshape the region's complex alliances and partnerships, potentially affecting the influence of major powers such as Russia, China, and the United States, all of whom play significant roles in the region<sup>55</sup>. Furthermore, "Qatar's investment in the region's energy sector has accelerated the development of critical infrastructure projects, including pipelines and transportation networks, ultimately improving regional relations and energy cooperation"<sup>56</sup>. All in all, Qatar's strategic energy cooperation with Kazakhstan enhances not only its energy security but also its position as a key player in global and regional geopolitics.

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<sup>52</sup> **Tatiana Mitrova**, *The Geopolitics Behind Kazakhstan's Turbulent Energy Sector* (2023), New York: Center on Global Energy Policy at Columbia University, School of International and Public Affairs.

<sup>53</sup> Viswapramod C, *Understanding the Emerging Geopolitical and Strategic Significance of Qatar* (2022), Samvadaworld.

<sup>54</sup> **Tatiana Mitrova**, *The Geopolitics Behind Kazakhstan's Turbulent Energy Sector* (2023), New York: Center on Global Energy Policy at Columbia University, School of International and Public Affairs.

<sup>55</sup> **Suleyman Boltuc**, "Qatar's Central Asian Diplomatic Blitz: A New Era of Opportunity" (2023), *SpecialEurasia*.

<sup>56</sup> **Suleyman Boltuc**, "Qatar's Central Asian Diplomatic Blitz: A New Era of Opportunity" (2023), *SpecialEurasia*.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the relationship between Qatar and Turkic countries demonstrated a synergistic alliance from the perspective of realism theory in international relations. The analysis of Qatar's relationship with Turkic states highlighted how countries navigate a competitive geopolitical landscape to strengthen their security and influence regional dynamics.

The study emphasized that the relationship between Qatar and Turkic countries was marked by a complex web of security issues and regional conflicts within inter-state relations. Numerous factors, such as territorial dilemmas, strategic alliances, and resource distribution, complicate the navigation of these calculations within a challenging geopolitical sphere. Also, the study illustrated the positive relationship between Qatar and Turkic states that resulted from their mutual economic, political, and geopolitical interests. Specifically, military alliances in the Middle East and strategic energy partnerships in both regions motivated further cooperation between them.

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