



**Statement by Amb. Altai Efendiev,  
Secretary General of the Organization for Democracy & Economic  
Development – GUAM  
during the 9th Plenary Session  
of the Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic Speaking Countries**

*18 December 2019, Baku*

Mr. Chairman,  
Honorable Heads of national delegations,  
Mr. Secretary General,  
Distinguished participants,  
Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is my singular honor and privilege to represent the Organization for Democracy & Economic Development – GUAM (*further GUAM*) at the Ninth Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic Speaking Countries (*further TURKPA*). At the outset I would like to express my gratitude for the invitation and the opportunity to address this august assembly. I wish you successful session. I would like also to thank the organizers for the hospitality extended to me.

Since the GUAM representative is for the first time addressing the Session of the TURKPA, allow me to congratulate you with this remarkable initiative of bringing together Turkic speaking brotherly nations, aimed at forging strong alliance among them based on common historic, ethnic, cultural and religious roots. I wish every success to this noble and strategic initiative.

Mr. Chairman,

Today, when the existing international order is being reviewed and drifting towards uncertainty and unpredictability, and the system of international relations is failing to secure peace and stability across the world, regional and inter-regional cooperation assume growing importance. In this context I believe, that we should explore the possibilities of such cooperation between our Organizations, as complementary regional entities, covering vast and strategically important space of the Black Sea & the Caspian Sea basins and Central Asia.

In this regard, allow me to briefly inform you about our Organization, priorities and objectives of our cooperation. GUAM as a regional initiative was founded by the leaders of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine in 1997. The aim was to address security challenges, which our countries confronted with after regaining their independence in 1991. In 2006 this initiative has been transformed into a full-fledged organization with new title - the Organization for Democracy & Economic Development – GUAM and Headquarters based in Kyiv, Ukraine.



Cooperation in political, parliamentary, governmental and business domains constitutes main pillars of GUAM. Areas of cooperation cover a wide spectrum, stretching from economic to cultural, security and humanitarian fields.

The ODED-GUAM is a recognized member of the international community, developing close cooperation with partner-countries, as well as with international organizations.

We aim at transforming our area, through the means of cooperation, into a zone of peace, security, stability and prosperity. While interacting in political domain and other fields of activities, we put our emphasis on economic cooperation, in particular, on trade, transport and transit facilitation. Our immediate goal is to utilize our geographic advantage and to develop this region as an alternative transit short-cut, connecting Europe with Central Asia and beyond.

Currently we are implementing our two flagship initiatives. First, the establishment of the free trade area, based on the respective Agreement, in force since 2006. The second is the development of the GUAM Transport Corridor, based on the Concept adopted by GUAM ministers of transport in 2013. These two flagship initiatives are in the focus of the annual meetings of the Heads of Government of the GUAM Member States (*further MS*).

Mr. Chairman,  
Distinguished participants

Main challenge on our way are the conflicts on the territories of our MS. It is internationally acknowledged that the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all our MS have been blatantly violated in flagrant infringement of the norms and principles of the international law. The territories of our MS have been occupied, causing the loss of lives of dozens of thousands of innocent people, millions of refugees and IDPs. Unfortunately, the relevant Resolutions of the UN SC, as well as of other international bodies, remain unfulfilled, and international mediation efforts for the conflicts resolution, so far, have no desired results. The position of GUAM MS is clear-cut – the resolution of the conflicts on territories of our countries should be based on the norms and principles of international law, within internationally recognized borders.

Mr. Chairman,

It is difficult to overestimate the strategic significance of this vast area, comprising the constituencies of our two Organizations in current global development. Its importance stems from the abundance of natural resources, enormous transport/transit, as well as economic potential, rich human capital. After decades of isolation, our countries stand to utilize these advantages, not only to the benefit of their peoples and countries but a wider international community as well.



This vast area is emerging as an essential integral part of new connectivity architecture in energy and transport linking East and West. This architecture will allow countries of the Caspian Sea basin to overcome geographical constraints of accessing international markets, integration into global economy, diversify its national economies to ensure their sustainability. And I believe that interaction between our Organizations could make important contribution to these developments. Turkey as a strong regional power can play very important role in this process.

In conclusion, I would like to wish a successful Chairmanship to the Republic of Azerbaijan in the TURKPA. Coincidentally, in 2020 the Republic of Azerbaijan will also preside in the GUAM. This might provide conducive opportunity for the facilitation of the dialogue between our Organizations.

I thank you for kind attention.