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TÍTULO: Desarrollo dinámico de Azerbaiyán: éxitos y logros (2003-2019).

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RESUMEN: El artículo justifica la implementación exitosa de la estrategia de seguridad energética de Azerbaiyán, la cual lo hace país líder en la región en términos de potencial económico en el Cáucaso del Sur. El artículo explora la implementación de los proyectos Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan, Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum, Baku-Tbilisi-Kars, TANAP, TAP y otros proyectos por iniciativa de Azerbaiyán, analiza logros obtenidos en los ámbitos de política exterior, cultural, humanitaria y deportiva, explora la diversidad cultural, los valores multiculturales y tolerantes en la política nacional y exterior de Azerbaiyán, así como examina la integridad territorial de Azerbaiyán como una prioridad clave de su política exterior. La garantía de la integridad territorial de Azerbaiyán se estudia en el artículo como la principal dirección prioritaria de su política exterior.

PALABRAS CLAVES: Azerbaiyán, política pública, seguridad energética, política exterior.

TÍTULO: Azerbaijan's dynamic development: successes and achievements (2003-2019).

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ABSTRACT: The article justifies the successful implementation of Azerbaijan's energy security strategy, which makes it a leading country in the region in terms of economic potential in the South Caucasus. The article explores the implementation of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan, Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum, Baku-Tbilisi-Kars, TANAP, TAP and other projects at the initiative of Azerbaijan, analyzes achievements in the areas of foreign, cultural, humanitarian policy and sports, it explores cultural diversity, multicultural and tolerant values in Azerbaijan's national and foreign policy, as well as examines Azerbaijan's territorial integrity as a key priority of its foreign policy. The guarantee of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan is studied in the article as the main priority direction of its foreign policy.

KEY WORDS: Azerbaijan, public policy, energy security, foreign policy.

INTRODUCTION.

After the Republic of Azerbaijan regained its independence on 18 October 1991, it acquired the historic opportunity to develop and strengthen its statehood. Under such circumstances, the most important issue on the agenda was to develop and implement a new political course aligned with the principles of national statehood. Armenia's unfounded territorial claims and military aggression against Azerbaijan not only left the country face-to-face with serious political and socioeconomic problems, but also brought the important foreign political objectives to the foreground. To prevent Armenia's military aggression, eliminate its bitter consequences, ensure the territorial integrity and security of our country and put it on a path of political and economic integration with the rest of the world required thought-out, consistent and proactive policies.

After national leader Heydar Aliyev returned to power in the second half of 1993, the country's political course was amended to reflect the new realities and secure Azerbaijan's national interests. The policies launched in that period are associated with the name and activities of the national leader.

In an effort to identify the key directions of a new political course of the state drawing on his own extensive experience, President Heydar Aliyev established a number of priority goals. The most important goal was to put an end to Azerbaijan's isolation from the international world, dispel the negative public opinion about our country, communicate the people's just cause to the world community and thus break the information blockade. The execution of the new political course required a cessation of the war and restoration of peace. Thanks to the ceasefire agreement reached with Armenia in May 1994 and the steps to create stability in the country, the necessary peaceful environment was built to facilitate a new foreign political course.

DEVELOPMENT.

The successful resolution of the socioeconomic and political problems the Republic of Azerbaijan faced after embarking on a path of democratic state building was closely connected to the international standing of our country, the process of mutually beneficial relations with countries and integration into the world community. From this perspective, what is important to regulate and develop relations with states and international organizations played a leading role in the formation of global politics in order to secure a worthy place in the system of international relations for Azerbaijan. As a highly skilled and experienced president and a mature political figure, the national leader demonstrated the ability to successfully and skillfully overcome the difficult and complex tasks.

The steps taken to expand bilateral and multilateral political relations played an important part in the systematic integration of our country into the world community. The "Contract of the Century" on the development of oil fields in the Azerbaijani sector of the Caspian Sea signed on 20 September 1994 gave a powerful impetus to the deepening of our country's relations with the world and strengthening its international positions.

The Baku International Conference on the Restoration of the Great Silk Road, held on 7-8 September 1998 and attended by representatives of 32 countries and 13 international organizations, was one of the most important achievements of Azerbaijan's foreign policy (H. Memmedov, 2012).

The 1993-2003 period was crucial for our country. It was in those years that a solid foundation of our statehood was laid. The strategic course of Azerbaijan – both domestic and foreign – was defined and Azerbaijan joined the world community. In addition to becoming a member of international organizations, Azerbaijan regularly and actively participated in their activities. The established fruitful cooperation made it possible to communicate the problems our country was facing to the international community. In those years, very serious reforms were carried out, the principles of market economy prevailed and major investments were attracted to Azerbaijan.

The first Constitution of the independent Republic of Azerbaijan was adopted, the political system was strengthened and a solid foundation for the successful development of our country was laid. The work done in these years contributed to the successful development of our country and the projects launched at that time are still proving successful.

Important stage in Azerbaijan's dynamic development.

Since 2003, the people and the state of Azerbaijan have experienced a period of rapid development in the true sense of the word. The sustainable development of the Azerbaijani economy against the backdrop of a global recession of the past years and the timely implementation of all social programs is clear evidence of the solid foundation of the national economic development model put forward by national leader Heydar Aliyev.

One of the most important factors behind Azerbaijan's success in its active integration into the global economic system is its energy, food and environmental security, diversification of the economy and the successful implementation of sustainable development strategies in all areas (A.Hasanov, 2017).

The dynamism observed in the country's non-oil sector is also an important result of the policy of economic diversification.

Over the past 16 years, the Azerbaijani economy and its GDP has more than tripled. Azerbaijan's foreign debt is at a very low level, accounting for only 17 percent of the gross domestic product. In particular, by effectively investing foreign currency revenues fetched from its rich oil resources Azerbaijan managed to create favorable framework for the dynamic development of all sectors of the economy, and now the non-oil sector has become a strategically viable asset.

Azerbaijan's foreign currency reserves exceed the country's foreign debt 5 times. More than \$250 billion has been invested in the country's economy over the past 16 years. Over the past 16 years, the poverty rate in Azerbaijan has dropped from about 50 to 5.4 percent, while unemployment is at 5 percent.

In 2019, the non-oil industry grew by 15 percent and agriculture by 7 percent. The dynamism observed in the country's non-oil sector can also be seen as an important consequence of the policy of economic diversification. This shows that "black gold" and gas have turned into human capital.

Leading economic and financial institutions of the world have acknowledged Azerbaijan's success, as the country ranks among leaders in all international reports (P. Goble, 1995). The Global Competitiveness Report of the World Economic Forum ranks Azerbaijan's economy first in the CIS. The annual "Inclusive Development Index" report for 2017 ranks Azerbaijan in third place among 80 developing countries. Azerbaijan had \$1.8 billion foreign exchange reserves in 2003 but has now increased them to \$50 billion. It is a great achievement for the newly-independent state, which shows the diversified development of Azerbaijan's economy (I. Aliyev, 2003).

The decision to launch an Azerbaijani satellite into orbit was made in 2008 and the launch of the first Azerbaijani telecommunications satellite "Azerspace-1" on 8 February 2013 was a remarkable and historic day in the life of our country. Thus, Azerbaijan became a member of a club of space-faring

nations. In 2014, Azerbaijan received the second observation satellite “Azersky”, which was handed over to our country. What makes “Azersky” special is that the satellite observes the surface of the Earth with a high degree of precision and only 20 countries in the world have such satellites. Besides, being a great success for our country, it is also an indicator of its rapid development. On 26 September 2018, another telecommunications satellite “Azerspace-2” was launched into orbit. Azerbaijan's national interests and security interests are therefore fully met and our space industry develops.

Azerbaijan's energy security policy.

Over these years, our country's security strategy has been successfully implemented, first and foremost, Azerbaijan's energy security has been fully ensured and its dependence on external sources has been eliminated. Today, Azerbaijan is the leading country in the region in terms of economic potential. It accounts for more than 80% in the South Caucasus economy (S. Chernyayevskiy, 2000). The Agreement on Joint Development and Production Sharing for the Azeri, Chirag and Guneshli Fields in the Azerbaijani Sector of the Caspian Sea signed in Baku on 20 September 1994 was extended until 2050 on 14 September 2017. The implementation of the “Contract of the Century” is successfully ongoing and Azerbaijan's new oil strategy was launched following the signing of this contract (I. Aliyev, 2003).

At the same time, by signing the “Contract of the Century”, Azerbaijan, known worldwide as an oil country, became an important player in the global energy market through the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan project. In 2002, Azerbaijan laid the foundation of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline at the Sangachal Terminal expecting major oil from the Azeri-Chirag field. This pipeline was commissioned in 2006 and currently serves the people of Azerbaijan and all friendly countries. At the same time, our country has also attracted attention in recent years for its natural gas reserves.

Today, Azerbaijan is a country playing the key role in the energy security of the region and Europe and on the global energy market. Azerbaijan's share in the gas market of a number of European countries has reached 40 percent. Currently, oil and oil products from Azerbaijan are exported to 30 countries of the world.

In 2007, the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline was commissioned. This is also a very important project. Without this project, the development of the Shah Deniz field would have been impossible. Thus, Azerbaijani gas was transported to Georgia and Turkey for the first time in 2007 and work on the establishment of the Southern Gas Corridor started.

After hard work and negotiations, Azerbaijan and Turkey signed an agreement on TANAP – the Trans-Anatolian gas pipeline (I.Aliyev, 2003). The Caspian Basin, which has become a venue of international cooperation, now draws attention as a hub for a number of global energy projects implemented thanks to ample hydrocarbon reserves. From this perspective, the Shah Deniz field in the Azerbaijani sector of the Caspian Sea is of particular importance. The signing of the final investment decision on the project in Baku on 17 December 2013 paved the way for the full-field development of the Shah Deniz field.

As President Ilham Aliyev said, the Shah Deniz-2 energy project is one of the largest energy projects in the world. This project is about energy security and energy diversification. Twenty years ago, Azerbaijan signed the “Contract of the Century”, opened the Caspian Sea to foreign investment and ensured the successful economic development of our country. “If that contract is described as a contract of the 20th century; then, Shah Deniz-2 is the largest energy project of the 21st century.

A strong impetus was given to the implementation of the Southern Gas Corridor project. On 20 September 2014, the 20th anniversary of the “Contract of the Century” was celebrated. It is quite symbolic that the foundation of the Southern Gas Corridor was laid on that day as well. The Southern Gas Corridor is Europe's largest infrastructure project, and our country has once again demonstrated

its leadership in the implementation of this gigantic transnational project. As is the case with other international cooperation matters, Azerbaijan has taken the lead in these projects too. More than \$40 billion has been invested in this project. Azerbaijan's proven gas reserves constitute 2.6 trillion cubic meters. At the same time, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey have established a very strong tripartite regional cooperation format having implemented the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan, Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum and other important projects, including the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars project in the transport sector. The selection of TAP, the Trans-Adriatic Pipeline project, as the main export route in 2013 was also a historic event (I. Aliyev, 2003).

The official opening of the Southern Gas Corridor held at the Sangachal Terminal and the opening of the 25th Caspian Oil and Gas Exhibition on 29 May 2018 played a major role in the implementation of Azerbaijan's energy policy. The commissioning of the TANAP gas pipeline in Eskişehir, Turkey, on 12 June 2019 is a clear indication of the highest level of relations between the two friendly and fraternal states.

Issues of energy security are high on the global agenda today and are regarded as matters of national security of countries. In addition, the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan, Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum, Baku-Tbilisi-Kars, TANAP, TAP and other projects implemented on the initiative of Azerbaijan have reaffirmed Azerbaijan in the world as a country with its own economic model.

Foreign policies, successes achieved in cultural and humanitarian areas.

As a reliable partner in the European security architecture, Azerbaijan plays an important role in the energy security of the continent. In 2004, Azerbaijan joined the European Neighborhood Policy, the main objective of which is to accelerate political and economic integration of South Caucasus states into European values. In 2006, the Republic of Azerbaijan and the European Union signed a Memorandum of Understanding on strategic partnership in energy matters, and after Azerbaijan

joined the EU's Eastern Partnership Program in 2008, this political, economic cooperation expanded and entered a qualitatively new phase.

In addition, on 24 October 2011, Azerbaijan won a convincing victory by receiving the votes of 155 out of 193 UN member-states to become a non-permanent election to the UN Security Council for 2012-2013.

Admission of non-permanent members of the UN Security Council is one of the biggest diplomatic achievements in the history of Azerbaijan and should be viewed as a clear proof of the growing political authority of our country on the world stage in recent years. As a country that has steadily developed for the past several years, showed impressive economic results and earned international authority for its activities in global politics, Azerbaijan was elected to become a member of the most influential international body (I. Shukurov, 1997).

Our country is trying to contribute to the issues of friendship, peace, partnership and cultural diversity today. The well interfaith and intercultural relations are regulated in Azerbaijan is well known to the world. A number of steps have been taken to study Azerbaijan's experience. In 2008, the "Baku process" began at the initiative of our country, and issues of intercultural and inter-civilizational dialogue and multiculturalism are now part of the "Baku process". Azerbaijan continues its efforts in this direction, and the fact that representatives from more than 100 countries have come to Baku to discuss these important issues inspires us to achieve our goals as the country keeps on contributing to friendship, peace, partnership and cultural diversity.

Having become a political, economic and humanitarian center of the region, Azerbaijan has also taken its rightful place in the system of international relations and earned the reputation for being a strong state and reliable partner. Baku is already known as a venue for continental and global humanitarian events discussing these important issues.

Azerbaijan has become the center of dialogue between cultures and civilizations, global political, economic, humanitarian and other issues. Five times – in 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017 and 2019 – the World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue was organized in Baku at a high level and initiatives undertaken by Azerbaijan in this area go beyond regional onto a global plane (T. Goltz, 1993).

The Baku International Humanitarian Forum joined by heads of state and government, Nobel Laureates and renowned public and political figures has already become a tradition. Having hosted the Seventh General Assembly of the International Conference of Asian Political Parties, the World Summit of Religious Leaders and other high-profile events, Baku is now widely recognized as one of the venues of global events. Also, playing host to the World Economic Forum “Strategic Dialogue on the Future of the South Caucasus and Central Asia”, a meeting of the Club of Madrid, the First South Caucasus Forum, the first meeting of the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly outside Europe and other great international events in the past 16 years, Azerbaijan demonstrated again that it is a geopolitically important South Caucasus venue for the discussion of burning issues of the modern world.

A number of important events held in our country and on the initiative of the head of state, such as the 2018 Sixth Baku International Humanitarian Forum, the Sixth Global Baku Forum, the Foreign Ministers Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement, the Meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization, the Ministerial Meeting of the Southern Gas Corridor Advisory Board, the Official Opening Ceremony of the Southern Gas Corridor, the Seventh Global Baku Forum held in March 2019 have significantly enhanced Azerbaijan's international authority.

In addition, the decision to hold the inaugural European Games in Baku in 2015 was not accidental. The first European Games “Baku 2015” opened an interesting page in the history of sports. At the same time, Azerbaijan gained the opportunity to host sports of any level with the highest quality. In

May 2017, Baku hosted the Islamic Solidarity Games. The fact that such two major sporting events were held in Azerbaijan in a matter of two years is not only a historic event, but also a significant contribution of our country, which plays a bridge between Asia and Europe, to the inter-civilizational and intercultural dialogue.

CONCLUSIONS.

All this gives us ground to say that on the one hand, the Azerbaijani state defines the model of its economic and political development by benefiting from the global experience, and on the other, embarks on international relations by maintaining its national interests in accordance with internationally recognized principles.

In general, all of the aforementioned suggests that the events of global proportions held in Azerbaijan have significantly enhanced Azerbaijan's international authority and made our country a leader in the South Caucasus. As a result, Azerbaijan has gained the opportunity to influence not only the processes going on in the region, but also those processes taking place in the international arena. As the key state in the South Caucasus region, Azerbaijan pursues an independent foreign policy in difficult geopolitical circumstances. At present, as an important geopolitical location Azerbaijan is viewed as the most promising partner for maintaining peace and security in the region.

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