

**About the signals from Baku to change
the regional security balance
ARVAK Center comment, July 05, 2025**

**Key strategic signal:
statement by E. Namazov**

The most radical of these reports was the statement by Eldar Namazov, former head of the Presidential Administration of Azerbaijan, which was released on July 3, 2025. Namazov spoke about Baku's alleged plans to provide its territory for the establishment of the largest Turkish military base in the region, as well as the possibility of inviting to the nation the Air Force of Pakistan – a country which has nuclear weapons.

It seems unlikely that E. Namazov, who has a formidable political record and experience, could voice such information on his own initiative. Most likely, he was instructed to speak in such a manner, with the expectation that such a statement would be perceived in Moscow as a signal of Baku's readiness to raise the stakes and raise the Russian-Azerbaijani political and diplomatic quarrel to a geopolitical level. Particular attention in the statement of the former head of the presidential administration is drawn to the mention of Pakistani nuclear weapons. Obviously, this is a hint that Azerbaijan and its ally Turkey, in their readiness for escalation with Russia, will not stop even before its “nuclear status”, which Baku, if necessary, allegedly can neutralize at the expense of its Pakistani ally.

**Turkish base placing
possibility analysis**

It is obvious that E. Namazov's statement is populist in nature. However, there is reason to believe that Baku thereby made it clear to Moscow: if events develop in a direction unacceptable for Azerbaijan and the RF's stand further hardens, Azerbaijan, with the help of its allies, is capable of initiating a revision of the balance of power in the region. In this context, the hypothetical possibility of the appearance of a Turkish base on the territory of Azerbaijan is quite high.

Following the logic and provisions of the so-called “Shushi Declaration” on alliance, Turkey reserves the right to designate its military presence on the territory of Azerbaijan. Baku's military doctrine allows the presence of “foreign troops” (obviously, of the Turkish army) in “exceptional cases”. The question is how to interpret this vague concept, which Baku is permitted to employ in any given circumstance, assessing it as threatening national security, and request a military contingent from Turkey, which it will be obliged to provide, in accordance with the provisions outlined in the “Shushi Declaration”.

Technically, Ankara is capable of deploying its air force, ground and motorized units in Azerbaijan within a relatively short timeframe. The Turkish military has already worked out all elements of air transport and deployment at Azerbaijani military facilities both during the Karabakh war in 2020 and during numerous exercises on the territory of the ally. The new infrastructure of these facilities is built according to NATO standards, and the logistics are integrated into the Georgian route, through which Turkey and Azerbaijan, in accordance

with a number of agreements with Tbilisi, can carry out unimpeded transit of military equipment and means.

Russia's potential reaction & hidden agreements

The question is how Russia itself will respond to such actions by Turkey, if Azerbaijan's interpretation of the "exceptional case" is not adequate to the current situation "on the ground". In other words, what would be the reaction of Moscow if, for example, Baku, were to cite "aggressive behavior by the Russian Federation" and request military assistance from Ankara or demand the establishment of Turkish military bases on its territory already at this point?

It is obvious that Turkey's positive response to such a request will cause an extremely negative reaction from Moscow and will be assessed as the intention of a traditional rival in the Caspian-Black Sea region, which is also a NATO member, to permanently settle in the strategic security zone of the RF. This will be considered a direct challenge to Moscow and its existential interests, which presupposes escalation in a complex region with an extremely high probability of its transition to a direct military clash between Russia and Turkey. Consequently, without taking into account Turkey's strategic interests and its readiness for such a development of events, Baku is not in a position to simply "force" the signatory of the "Shushi Declaration" to actions that provoke the Russian Federation.

Apparently, during the process of premature withdrawal of the Russian Peacekeeping Contingent (RPC) from Nagorno-Karabakh in the spring of 2024, a tacit agreement was reached between the Russian and Turkish sides on mutual refusal to establish military bases on the territory of Azerbaijan, either by force or sanctioned by Baku. This agreement was indirectly confirmed by the Turkish leader. On June 26, 2025, at the NATO summit in The Hague, R. Erdogan stated during a briefing with journalists that since the Russian military had left Karabakh, the issue of Turkey's military presence in Azerbaijan was "no longer relevant". The Turkish president's statements indicate that the issue of establishing Turkish bases on the territory of Azerbaijan is directly related to the Russian factor, and any other form of pressure from the Russian Federation on the Azerbaijan Republic, except for establishing the presence of Russian troops in this republic, is not considered by Ankara as a threat to the sovereignty and security of Baku. This does not mean that the Turkish leader is guaranteed not to change his stand, but it indicates Ankara's caution in the geopolitical rivalry with Moscow for a direct military presence in Azerbaijan and the South Caucasus as a whole.

The Pakistani nuclear weapons factor: provocation & incompatibility

As for Namazov's mention of the Pakistani Air Force and Islamabad's nuclear weapons, this is, in essence, an openly provocative move that absolutely contradicts the logic of the "nuclear geopolitics" in the world and the foundations of the "nuclear consensus". The appearance of tactical nuclear weapons in Azerbaijan (whereas Pakistan lacks strategic nuclear warheads) would be tantamount to Islamabad declaring war on Moscow with all the

ensuing consequences. It is unlikely that the Russian Federation, even if it is not in the most favorable circumstances from the point of view of its defense readiness, will allow Pakistani or any other nuclear forces in proximity to its immediate borders. In this case, we could be talking about completely legitimate preventive actions by Moscow against Islamabad and Baku, including the use of the same nuclear weapons.

Moreover, the “Pakistani threat” to Russia voiced by E. Namazov does not align with the Israeli factor, which is tangibly present in Azerbaijan. There is no reason to assume that Azerbaijan can ensure the presence on its territory of military and intelligence bases of two countries that are in hostile relations, as evidenced by Islamabad’s reaction to Tel Aviv’s actions in Iran and Gaza, as well as the military support provided by the Jewish state to India in connection with the events around Kashmir. In conditions where Israel already has its own hidden bases in Azerbaijan and has access to almost the entire military infrastructure of Azerbaijan, it is impossible to talk about allowing the Pakistanis in, especially when it comes to their nuclear arsenal. The participation of Israelis and Pakistanis in the 2020 Karabakh War cannot be considered a basis for consensus on mutual military presence in Azerbaijan, since at that time both sides specialized in completely different elements of conducting military operations against Armenians and pursued their own, non-intersecting interests in participating in the anti-Armenian military campaign.

Conclusion: strategic coercion & pan-Turkic projection

Thus, E. Namazov’s statement about Baku’s already adopted decision to establish a Turkish base in the short term is, from a *realpolitik* perspective, does not stand up to criticism. Rather, it is a “plant” organized by the Azerbaijani authorities with the aim of blackmailing Moscow and testing its reaction. At the same time, this does not mean that Ilham Aliyev and his team will not try to bring at least the “Turkish component” of this kind to the practical plane at the critical stage of the Azerbaijani-Russian crisis. In the long term, this is a fairly realistic scenario if the trend of weakening Russia both in terms of internal security and the surrender of positions in the international and geopolitical arena at a certain stage forces Turkey to act more decisively and radically. The issue of the compatibility of the Turkish and Israeli presence in Azerbaijan in the context of the ongoing Turkish-Israeli confrontation in Syria is a matter that requires separate analysis.

Meanwhile, in his statement, E. Namazov voiced another thought, which, oddly enough, was least of all paid attention to by the politicians and experts from Russia commenting on his speech. Meanwhile, it was precisely this that was the key signal from Baku, directed not only and not so much to Moscow. We are talking about E. Namazov’s words that the Turkish base in Azerbaijan will be able to “serve a population of 250 million people”. The fact is that the figure he voiced exactly coincides with the periodically announced Pan-Turkists’ estimates of the number of ethnic Turks, who should become part of the future “Turan” association with their lands. This concerns the population of Turkey, Azerbaijan, Central Asian countries, as well as the Uyghurs, Iranian and Caucasian Turks, Bashkirs, Tatars and other Turkic-speaking peoples of Russia. This nuance in E. Namazov’s statement fundamentally changes the meaning of his statement, presenting plans to create a

Turkish base not as a forced measure to protect Azerbaijan from Russia, but as a decisive step towards the formation of “Turan”, the basis of which should be a unified military force under the leadership of Turkey. Therefore, the statement can be considered as a signal for the commencement of a program that will initiate Turkey’s military expansion into the eastern direction. And now it no longer matters whether the latest aggravation of Russian-Azerbaijani relations will become a reason for the practical creation of the so-called “Armies of Turan”, or this aggravation, due to Turkey’s still unpreparedness, will once again be smoothed over, and a new reason will appear when Ankara already considers it necessary to act radically.