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**THE ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL PASSENGER  
TRANSPORTATION THROUGH EAST ZANGEZUR-  
NAKHCHIVAN TOURISM ROUTE**

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**on the subject**

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## **Introduction**

The rapidly changing modern world economy and increasing global competition require companies to apply new approaches and technologies in management and supply issues. The increase in the price of limited resources, especially energy and raw materials, the new geopolitical situation on a global and regional scale, as well as the rapid application of technological innovations in the economy bring global trends such as economic efficiency, speed and longevity to the fore.

Today, international business is experiencing a period of rapid transformation. The globalization of economic activity and the rapid development of information and communication technologies enable the efficient development of business all over the world. In the development of global business, their exchange is based on the integration of logistics networks along with the production of finished products [6]. Global transport-logistics networks serve as an organizational system in which various components jointly perform various functions. To create such global logistics networks for sustainable development in today's world, governments need to develop and implement a unified transport policy.

A comprehensive approach to the issue and joining studies for the exchange of experience are needed for the implementation of these tasks. These studies are useful in identifying problems across different regions and specific to each region.

Companies of competition on the global level to produce better quality products at lower costs and to deliver them to the customer at the time and in the quantity they need and it makes to save consumer markets. In an environment where production costs are very close to each other, proper organization of logistics is the most important tool that can be used to stay competitive. Thus, logistics, which is directly related to all other sectors, plays a key role in achieving competitive

advantage in international markets [9]. Currently, logistics activity is not limited to the movement of goods and services and includes all processes from receiving an order from customers to delivering the product they needs, from preparing customs and transit documents to storage.

Azerbaijan is located at the intersection of the main land and air transport corridors of Eurasia because of its geographical position. Historically, Azerbaijan, being located on the ancient Silk Road connecting Europe and Asia, successfully used this position and played an important role in the transportation of goods [3]. The economic and geostrategic opportunities that have arisen after our country regained its state independence that creates wide opportunities for us to implement new infrastructure projects for the development of logistics, improve the old system, bring world experience and innovations to our country, as well as optimally use our existing potential. Thus, if we look at the scale of the trade and economic relations established along the China-Europe trade and Central Asia-South Caucasus-Europe energy corridors in the macroregion we live in today and to be developed the Middle Corridor for 2022-2027, it can be seen once again how important logistics provision it is [44]. In this sense, the strategic importance of these currently functioning corridors and perspective trade arteries such as the Zangezur Corridor is explained not only in terms of international trade, but also by creating a bridge of mutual cooperation, friendship and fraternal relations between countries [45]. Therefore, in the background of the new reality created by the increasing power of our country, especially the liberation of Karabakh from occupation and the transformation of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, which is an integral part of our country, into the logistics center of the region, great prospects have arisen in terms of cementing such cooperation relations.

All these mentioned make it necessary to study logistics issues on the Nakhchivan-Zangezur tourism route. In researching of this topic, the first chapter

analyzes at the history of transport logistics processes. Here, the history of transport-logistics operations was investigated, and the existing typical problems were studied.

In the second chapter, the situation of Baku-Nakhchivan-Yerevan passenger transport was studied during the former USSR. Here, the author studied the role of Baku-Nakhchivan-Yerevan passenger transport in the economic development of the South Caucasus region in the past. Here, the condition of the transport infrastructure was studied on that route in the period before the occupation of Karabakh by Armenia. Then, the security issues of logistics issues on the Eastern Zangezur-Nakhchivan route are studied in this chapter.

The 3rd chapter of the dissertation work is called the role of the logistics system in the development of the Nakhchivan-Zangazur tourism route. In this chapter, the possibilities of the Nakhchivan-Zangezur tourism route were investigated after the Armenian occupation of Karabakh. In this chapter, the possibilities of new transport and logistics conditions have been studied that will be created in the development of tourism along the Nakhchivan-Zangezur tourism route.

The scientific innovation of the dissertation work, the following scientific innovations were achieved with the completion of the work:

For the first time, the solution of regional cooperation issues arising after the resolution of a protracted conflict in the South Caucasus region was examined from the point of view of logistics;

The contribution of the transport-logistics network was studied which will be created after the occupation of Karabakh to economic development and sustainable peace;

The role of passenger transport and logistics issues was investigated in the development of tourism on the Nakhchivan-Zangezur-Shusha tourism route.

Historical documents, the decisions made by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan IlhamAliyev regarding the opening of the Zangezur Corridor, opinions expressed in various politically important meetings and articles written on the development problems of the logistics field were used in the writing of the dissertation.

The dissertation consists of 64 pages, with an introduction, 3 chapters, 8 paragraphs and a conclusion. 61 literature lists were used in this work.

## **CHAPTER I. PASSENGER TRANSPORT LOGISTICS, ITS HISTORY AND PRINCIPLES.**

### ***1. Historical background of passenger transport logistics development in the world.***

Although the concepts of “logistics” and “trade” are close to each other [8], in the historical sense, “logistics” was a relatively young concept, mainly reflecting the issues of necessary supply of the armies fighting in the years of the Second World War. If we look at the experience of the innovations applied due to the acute necessity in the military field and later in the civilian field with a more humanitarian purpose, we see that the logistic support is justified in terms of more logical and rational management of the flows of goods and materials in production and trade. This shows its importance as one of the most ideal ways to achieve efficiency in equipment processes, especially in the era of modern market economy, along with marketing measures conducted at a time when supply exceeds demand.

Unlike ancient trade routes, modern logistics is a logically complementary and high-throughout intelligent infrastructure network. Air and sea ports, road and railway junctions, customs points, all kinds of warehouses, security and social facilities on them serve to deliver the produced products and services to the final consumer in the most cost-effective and optimal way by connecting them as if by a virtual chain. From this point of view, the reliable and safe road-transport network, the output capacity of which is much higher than the current demand, the airports, customs points, terminals and warehouses opening one after the other, helping to realize the trade in the future many times more than the current volume, cope with any amount of work.

Logistics activity is a labor-intensive field. Thus, the logistics and trade area play an important role in the development of all sectors, creating added value, new jobs and income. Especially, the activity of the private sector in this area helps to

assess the market opportunities that have arisen and support infrastructure projects created by the state, and encourages longer-term investments. Today, if we look at the world experience, we see countries and their regions that make more profit than the producers by creating transport and trade hubs without producing practically any products.

Looking at the history of the development of transport and logistics in the world, it is possible to see its significant impact on the economy, as well as on the development of tourism [18]. Based on the experience of the world's leading countries in the 20th century and before, it is possible to note the development of their economy and later tourism with the development of transport.

The field of transportation in the world has evolved over the centuries. Historically, mobility, an important human need, has required the development of vehicles, both for travel and for the transportation of finished goods. For this purpose, it is necessary to solve the issues of how and why the movement is carried out, in accordance with the needs of the people, such as satisfying the needs related to work, services, shopping or recreation. Transport includes a large number of sub-sectors with unique characteristics. Thus, the evolution of transportation has been closely related to the processes of urbanization in the world, and at the same time, it also includes additional issues related to environmental problems, traffic jams, and safety[ ].

Transport-logistics issues are related to energy consumption at an important level. It depends on the type of transport and the route it is used on, as well as the condition of the infrastructure. In addition to the demand for energy carriers of the vehicles used here, it is also necessary to mention the spread of important transport arteries, which include energy corridors between countries in recent times. In the modern geostrategic situation created by the export of Azerbaijan's energy potential

to European markets, it is especially important to note that the Zangezur Corridor has gained importance from this point of view [32].

Historically, people's demand for transportation services has varied. If air transport is mainly used in modern times, especially for the transportation of tourists, in the past it was possible mainly by sea and then by railway. Since the beginning of the 20th century, we have seen the increasing role of road passenger transport, and since the 1950s, the role of air transport in passenger transportation [46]. Here, speed and comfort are taken into account as the main parameters. So, along with the duration of the transfer, the safety of the road, the provision of food, and the necessary parking facilities for passengers should be taken into account. It should be noted that the creation of such comfort depends on the duration of the displacement and the technical capabilities of the vehicles used.

The development of transportation, which plays an important role in the world economy today, has taken an interesting path to the supply chain. So, even when the pyramids in ancient Egypt were built, complex material transport equipment was needed to move the huge building blocks and put them in place. However, unfortunately, the science of history cannot fully explain how lifting equipment and vehicles were used 5,000 years ago.

The development of Greek rowing ships around 300 BC laid the foundation for both intercontinental trade and the massive logistical supply systems required for mobile army camps. Using these logistical possibilities, Alexander the Great marched to India with his troops, their families and weapons of war [8].

In the construction of the famous Mezquita Mosque in Córdoba, Spain, which is considered the largest mosque in Europe in 700 AD, an unusual logistics network was created to transport the pillars of the mosque from all over the Islamic Empire according to the requirements of that time [7].

The Hanseatic League, a cross-border trade established in Europe in the 12th and 13th centuries, has strong similarities with today's European Union. Thus, in 1188, the German city of Hamburg was established as a base in the North Sea to make sea travel safer and to represent business interests abroad. At that time Hansa trade extended from the Black Sea to Reval.

The postal service, which is still popular today, has a history of almost 600 years. A progressive postal service established in Europe in the 16th century delivered letters to places like Paris and Ghent in France, as well as Spain and the Imperial Palace in Vienna. Considering the infrastructure of that time, mail reached its destination with very little delay.

The discovery of the railway was an important stage in the development of modern civilization, and from the beginning of the 19th century, it was an important event in the expansion of the logistics network along with new technologies and means of transport. The use of the steam engine in railways, the strategic cargo carried by this system, was the beginning of a new era that created new missions and opportunities for logistics.

And military logistics. In today's perception, the network that became the basis of true logistics logic was a vital link in the network that supplied food, weapons and equipment to the troops during the First World War. With the outbreak of World War II, logistics improved further [5]. As a result, logistics was transferred to the business world and took an important place in the economy.

The next period is the period of technology development in the field of logistics as well as in every field in the world. Thus, in 1956, with the invention of the sea container by the American Malcom P. McLean, it made it possible for exporting countries and regions to experience an increase in commercial operations, to create new markets and to be able to buy and sell products from all over the world at reasonable prices. Since the 1990s, QR and ECR technologies applied in the field

of logistics have been used by many retail and wholesale companies [7]. These technologies have had a major impact on logistics.

In modern times, it is necessary to mention the important importance of globalization in the development of logistics and supply chain. Since the 1970s, effective logistics applied in the era of globalization began to create an important competitive advantage for companies expanding in global markets.

Thus, looking at the path taken in the field of logistics, the following chronology can be seen. So, it is possible to evaluate the development of logistics according to the following trends.

- Rapid increase in transportation costs due to rising fuel prices
- Peak production efficiency
- Wide spread of computer technology
- The proliferation of mass goods with high demand and the expansion of highly complex logistics services.
- Declining economic regulation
- The growing power of retail trade
- Globalization

It would be interesting to look at the historical development of transport and logistics on the example of Britain and China.

Britain has historically been different in terms of its relations with the countries of the world and its level of development [14]. First, the country had close trade and passenger transport relations with the countries of the world through sea transportation. By the 20th century, Britain had emerged as the world's leading naval power. After 1900, steamships increasingly replaced sailing ships. Like other modes of transportation in this country, shipping experienced a brief boom after the First World War.

With the advent of shipping containers, which created a radical change in the world of transport and logistics, the historical model of English ports also changed. Felixstowe and Southampton emerged as the most important ports for new containers. They left behind the old ports of Birmingham, London and Liverpool, where goods such as coal were loaded. The economic recession between the wars of the last century also affected maritime trade. As a result, Great Britain's share of world shipping fell from 43% in 1914 to 26% in 1938 [14].

As a developed country, the railway has an important place in the transport system of Great Britain. The period of major expansion of the railway system in this country occurred between 1840 and 1890. Most of the railway network in this country was established in the 1870s; The Great Central Railway to London opened in 1899. Britain's railways reached their peak on the eve of the First World War. 1920 was the peak year for rail travel (2. 186 million people); In 1924, the tonnage of freight by rail reached its peak. Between the 1920s and 1980s, railroads suffered a long period of decline. Passenger and freight transport experienced sharp contractions, especially during the crisis years between the wars [14].

After 1950, the mass movement of automobiles made travel and transportation even more risky, especially in residential areas. To this end, although highways were built to accommodate traffic, pedestrians were forced to board subways or bridges, and sidewalks were built away from roads.

The car was the most dynamic form of transport in the 20th century. All types of motorized transport, from trucks and buses to cars and motorcycles, are considered motor transport. As an industrial nation, Britain was also a pioneer in the automobile industry. Cars have been produced in this country since 1896. A number of leading British car brands such as Austin, Rover and Sunbeam were still in production before the First World War. In Britain, in 1920, the government created the Road Fund, using the revenue to improve roads, and in 1935, it introduced the

driving test. Before World War II, there were about two million cars on Britain's roads.

The 1950s and 1970s were the most booming period for the automotive industry in Britain. The British car industry was the most important industry in the country, producing more than a million cars for the first time in 1958 and employing more than 500,000 people by 1965. The number of cars in the UK more than doubled between 1970 and 2000, from 11 million to 23 million. The increase of women as drivers was also important in this increase. In the 1960s, half of all men and one-fifth of all women in this country had a driver's license [14].

Apart from the car, civil aviation is the type of transport that underwent the most dynamic changes in the 20th century. British aviation began in 1909 with the establishment of the Advisory Committee on Aeronautics. The First World War had a strong influence on the development of aviation in this country as well as in the whole world. Firms such as Armstrong-Whitworth and Bristol moved into passenger aeronautics after the war. Founded in Britain, Imperial Airways was the first major airline to serve destinations such as Cape Town and Calcutta as early as 1924.

Since the 1950s, the advent of modern passenger aircraft has fundamentally changed air transport. Between 1950 and 1960, the number of passengers carried by air in Great Britain increased from one million to six million. London's main airports were developed during this period, with Heathrow (1946) and Gatwick (1958), Manchester and Glasgow (Prestwick) airports established for passenger traffic in 1958 and 1964 respectively [14].

Between 1970 and 2000, civil aviation experienced a period of unprecedented expansion. During this period, the number of flights in Great Britain more than doubled, the number of international passengers carried by the airports increased from 5 million to 14 million, and the distance traveled in passenger miles increased sevenfold. During the same period, the volume of international air cargo also

increased three times. Thus, whether in terms of aerospace production, passenger traffic or airport hubs, the UK has remained a major international hub for aviation since the 1930s.

China is the largest country in the world in terms of population, it is one of the most important centers in terms of transport and logistics, as well as industry, agriculture, and tourism [4]. Since 2011, China has become the world's second largest economy and is among high-income countries.

China plays a crucial role in global supply chains around the world. China's main export destinations are the United States, the European Union, Hong Kong and Japan, which account for 68% of exports by value [47]. About 50% of total imports come from Japan, Korea, Taiwan and the European Union.

The beginning of China's opening to the world economy and the liberalization of its centrally planned economy took place in the late seventies. So, about 30-40 years ago, China was a closed economy with little foreign trade. Until 1978, five-year central economic plans drawn up and approved by the Chinese Communist Party governed the economy. As a result of the reforms, since 1978 China's GDP began to grow almost vertically. The Chinese government's three-step reforms have enabled both manufacturers and commercial enterprises to explore new markets, select suppliers, and select logistics providers and services. Regulation in late 1993 allowed for greater market competition. China's entry into the World Trade Organization in 2001 marked a new stage for China's development. Since 2011, China has become the world's second largest economy.

In 2001, for China to become a full member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), the condition of removing restrictions on foreign logistics investments had an important impact on its development. Currently, public, private, domestic and foreign logistics companies are equally allowed to participate and compete in logistics and distribution activities in this country. As a result, 250,000 kilometers of

highways and 24,700 kilometers of expressways were built in the transport infrastructure between 2001 and 2006. By the end of 2006, the total length of China's highways reached 3,457,000 kilometers and railways reached 77,000 kilometers [47]. In 2006, China achieved the fifth largest GDP in the world after the United States, Japan, Germany and the United Kingdom.

In 1999, China's logistics industry reached an annual growth rate of 31%, 35% in 2000, and 55% in 2001. As a result of improving its logistics system, China's exports tripled from US\$63 billion in 1990 to US\$184 billion in 1998, and tripled again to US\$593 billion in 2004 [47].

China's steadily since the 1960s and has been the second most popular form of transport for more than 40 years. In 2016, the volume of cargo transported by railway reached 3332 million tons, and the cargo turnover reached 2 million 379 million 226 million ton-kilometers(China National Bureau of Statistics, 2018). The increase in the volume of freight is mainly from heavy and bulky goods such as coal, steel and iron. At present, the transportation distance of China's railways and electrified railways has reached the second place in the world.

In terms of water transport, goods transported by water in large countries such as China are usually divided into ocean and inland waterways. In terms of ocean transport, the total throughput capacity of all seaports in China in 2016 was 8,109.33 million tons (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2018). Shanghai port ranks first among Chinese ports. Air Transport Civil aviation falls under the jurisdiction of the Civil Aviation Administration of China. This included China Southern Airlines, China Eastern Airlines and Air China. As of 2016, China had 216 airports, 5,046 aircraft, and 2,950 transport aircraft, of which 3,794 aviation routes, including 739 international routes, 3,055 domestic routes, and 109 regional routes (routes from China to Hong Kong and Macau). The total length of the routes reached 6.35 million km. Among the top ten airports in China, Shanghai, Beijing and Guangzhou

are chosen by the volume of cargo transportation. They are ranked 3rd, 15th and 18th respectively among the top 20 cargo airports in the world. These airports are attracting more attention because they have become logistics centers.

## ***2. Typical passenger transport problems and its way of solution***

Transport, especially passenger transport, is a complex field of management that requires constant solving of certain problems. Thus, the creation of a new transport infrastructure in accordance with the demand, the introduction of new types of transport, and the increase of technical support do not always allow to achieve successful results. Therefore, in order to achieve an increase in the efficiency of the use of passenger transport, it is necessary to take into account the corporate interests as well as the individual interests, and take into account the state and public interests.

The field of passenger transport, which plays an important role in logistics operations, has its own various problems. Thus, transport is understood not only as a means of transporting people from one point to another, but also as a large part of the logistics operations that occur during the movement of goods and material flows from the source of origin to the places of consumption. One of the important conditions is the rapid implementation of operations in this area, that is, efficient use of funds while saving time. Economic problems in the field in the conditions of the market economy are among the problems that manifest themselves from this point of view.

The transport sector occupies an important place in the economic policy of every state. Thus, along with other sectors, transport as a service area is both the satisfaction of public needs and the role of the country in the international economic relations. In this sense, in accordance with the purpose of the dissertation, when looking at the problems of transportation along the Nakhchivan-Zangezur-Shusha

tourist route, it is possible to look at the problems that may arise both when people are transported through this important corridor in the future and due to its transit power on the East-West trade routes. In addition, the dangers that may arise from the actions of any anthropogenic or malicious people who may be on the route are serious problems that need to be solved in the future. In addition, the continuous development of the transport system and the effectiveness of measures implemented in this field are also important from the point of view of research.

When we look at the development problems of the transport system in the world, especially in developed countries, there are important issues such as increasing the intensity of transport according to the level of current demand, ensuring perspective development in the emerging competitive environment, and reducing costs by using logistics chains and new technologies []. The compatibility of transport with the ecosystem, ensuring the sustainability of its development in terms of ecological principles is also one of the serious problems. In general, the current problems of transport are caused by the philosophy of the work of this field. Thus, transport brings people together, creates relationships, and strengthens existing relationships. A well-organized transport service has an important impact on the development of both cities and residential areas along the transport corridor.

The most common problems in the field of transport in developed countries are:  
[15]

- Creation of transport infrastructure and its continuous renewal;
- Traffic management;
- Parking problems caused by the increase in the number of vehicles;

With the growth of cities, the creation of alternative modes of transport to traditional modes of transport.

In general, as the problems of transport, especially passenger transport:

- The economic problems of this field;

- The problems of creating the development of transport compatible with the ecosystem;
- The problem of applying new technology in the field;
- Security issues;

And it is possible to mention the issues of sustainable development of the field (reducing environmental impacts).

A well-functioning transport sector is a prerequisite for the economic and social development of all countries, as well as for supporting regional and global cooperation and integration. Historically, the development of the transport sector has been an indicator of the economic prosperity and success of a country. In this sense, a developed, efficient, safe and well-maintained internal transport system can provide access to markets, employment, education and essential human services, which are crucial for poverty reduction. At the same time, transportation is the main driver of the increase in global energy demand, which has a serious impact on the environment.

The sustainable development of transport is formed by socio-economic, demographic and environmental “megatrends” in society. Thus, transportation accessibility has a major impact on economic and human development, as improved transportation accessibility can help solve numerous economic, social, and environmental problems.

Transport relations on an international scale act as a strong catalyst for the development of world trade and one of the necessary conditions for economic development. Participation in global value chains is crucial for attracting foreign investment and businesses, as well as human capital. Such participation in many areas is adversely affected by weak international transport links, hindering the overall development of countries. Thus, foreign trade is especially important for small, landlocked, and island economies that depend on inland land and/or sea routes

and border crossings. For the economies of developing islands and landlocked countries, this requires special attention, as the geographical location of such countries hinders trade and economic development.

One of the important problems for the transport sector is the economic assessment, cost calculation. Thus, transport costs are explained by the cost of passenger and freight services, as well as the sustainability of investments related to the modernization, planning and construction of transport infrastructure. Transportation expenditures generally represent the financial resources allocated to the use of adequate transportation services without compromising the ability of members of society to purchase other basic goods and services such as food, housing, education, and health care. In addition, transportation costs can be assessed from several aspects, such as the level of private car use by individuals, private vehicle ownership, maintenance and parking costs, and the quality and cost of alternative modes of transportation such as public transportation and bicycles. It also means sharing the income of people in the field of transport. Thus, inequalities in income distribution are a unique problem in all countries and regions. Therefore, the low-income population, which spends a significant portion of its income on transportation, is particularly dependent on the availability of affordable public transportation.

Organization of efficient and safe transportation in the modern world is one of the important economic problems. In parallel with the acceleration of economic growth, the expected increase in freight and passenger traffic requires the planning and construction of new transport infrastructure, as well as the creation of sustainable financing mechanisms for the transport sector. In this regard, we can note that the organization of transport and logistics services on the Nakhchivan-Zangezur-Karabakh tourist route, which is the object of research in the dissertation, has its own problems. It is also possible to predict that the long-term investment that

will be made to create an efficient, safe and ecologically sustainable transport infrastructure aimed at the future will be a factor that creates stability in the region, even if it costs a lot. The complex construction and construction works carried out regardless of the complex relief and landscape difficulties here, as well as the location of the area in the seismic zone, their large investment capacity are factors that affect the success of the project in the future.

The most sincere wish of loved ones for every person who goes on a travel is that he/she returns safely. Therefore, ensuring security during the creation of the logistics chain and transport network is one of the main duties of any project, including tourism routes. Traffic accidents, man-made disasters, and injuries caused by terrorist incidents are a major socio-economic problem and an obstacle to development. Thus, globally, more than one million people die as a result of traffic accidents every year, which, in addition to loss of life, causes damages measured in billions of dollars. In some countries, these losses amount to 1-3 percent of GDP. Traffic safety is the most important comfort requirement. Safety depends on the behavior of drivers, the quality of the infrastructure and the technical performance of vehicles. Improvements in this direction can be achieved only by taking into account all these factors and with appropriate legislation adapted to the current conditions. special safety conditions are required In the transportation of dangerous goods. Because such loads pose a serious threat to the general public, property and the environment. For example, dangerous cargo passing through the Sea of Marmara, or the dangerous situation created by the Evergreen ship, which got stuck in the Suez Canal in March 2021 and caused a loss of 400 million dollars per hour to world trade, a total of 9.6 billion dollars [48], or the Black Sea grain as a result of the Russia-Ukraine war problems of delivery from ports to world markets can be an example of these. It is clear that a dangerous situation during the transportation of

goods can create an even more complicated situation during the transportation of passengers.

In terms of safety in transport, especially passenger transport, it is necessary to take into account the damage caused by various actions, from ordinary damage and everyday hooliganism, to carefully planned terrorist attacks against transport infrastructure systems, passenger and freight vehicles. Inland transport systems located in open areas are quite vulnerable to threats compared to well-protected ports and airports. In this regard, it is necessary to mention the attempts of Armenians to take passengers of the Baku-Nakhchivan train hostage at the Mehri station of the Azerbaijan Railway in 1992 [49]. In general, the level of transport crime is high in many parts of the world, and therefore the high level of transboundary transport crime in some regions calls for increased international cooperation and coordination of responses. For this, the institutions involved in the creation of transport routes should work on the creation of national, regional and international mechanisms that can ensure the safety of people, infrastructure and cargo transportation in cooperation with the relevant security agencies.

In modern times, air transport has a special importance in passenger transport, especially in tourist transport. Thus, according to the 2020 data of the World Tourism Organization (WTO) before the Corona virus pandemic, the first place in tourist transportation in the world is taken by air with 59 percent, followed by road transport with 35 percent [46]. After that, 5 percent of the tourists are transported by water transport, and 1 percent by railway transport. Undoubtedly, since it is faster for passengers transported from Nakhchivan to Karabakh and from there by passing through Zangezur in the future, it will be appropriate to use road transport and railway transport for mass convenient transfers.

Transport can affect and be affected by the environment in different ways and at different temporal and spatial scales. Transportation requires extensive

infrastructure, the construction of which requires extensive land use and can lead to the potential loss and alteration of natural habitats. The need for energy from transportation causes more air and water pollution. Thus, many of the most popular modes of transportation currently depend on the increase of non-renewable energy sources, which, despite increasing energy efficiency, increase greenhouse gas emissions that seriously damage the environment on a global scale. Air pollutants (nitrogen oxides, particulates, carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons) emitted by vehicles degrade air quality and have harmful effects on human health and ecosystems [12]. In addition, vehicle noise can have serious consequences for human health and ecosystems, especially in urban areas. These impacts may depend on the type of vehicle, local or regional conditions, and a wide range of socio-economic factors related to the natural environment. Therefore, ensuring the environmental safety of vehicles during the entire period of their use and the ecological distribution of transport services among modes of transport is one of the main issues in the world today.

One of the main issues facing transport is its sustainable development. Sustainable development is a general concept, it reflects the balanced development of many economic and social processes, it shows strong immunity against the changing economic transformations of the era, internal and external economic threats, global elements and influences, it ensures the stability of the national economy, economic development creates conditions for increasing the pace, strengthens the country's competitiveness. It consists of meeting the needs of current generations in a socially, economically and ecologically normal way, without endangering the lives of future generations. Sustainable transport is also a type of activity that is safe, high-quality and affordable for all, environmentally friendly, economically efficient, and positively contributes to sustainable development at the local, national and international levels.

Specific goals for the development of sustainable transport may include:

- improving service quality and access to goods and services,
- reducing the number of traffic-related accidents and crimes,
- improving air quality,
- noise reduction,
- protection of natural habitats and open spaces,
- preservation of historical heritage,
- reducing greenhouse gas emissions,
- increasing social justice,
- economic development and satisfactory quality of life, as well as achieving local goals consistent with the overall goal.

The concept of green transport is also important in providing sustainable transport. Sustainable transport (or green transport) is any type of movement method and organizational form that reduces environmental impact [13]. This includes walking and cycling, eco-cars, transit-oriented design, vehicle rentals, and urban transportation systems that promote cost-effective, environmentally friendly, and healthy lifestyles. Sustainable transport systems contribute positively to the environmental, social and economic sustainability of the communities they serve. Transportation systems exist to ensure social and economic connections. Transportation systems have a significant impact on the environment, accounting for 20-25% of the world's energy consumption and sulfur dioxide emissions. As a result of transport activity, greenhouse gas emissions are increasing faster than in other areas of the energy sector. Car transport is also one of the main causes of local air pollution and soot formation. As a result of transport activity, social costs include traffic accidents, atmospheric air pollution, weakening of physical activity, increased time spent away from the family during intra-urban migration, and sensitivity to fuel

price increases. Many of these negative consequences fall disproportionately on social groups that are deprived of the opportunity to acquire and travel in a car. Traffic congestion increases economic costs and wastes people's time and slows down the delivery of goods and services. Traditionally, transport planning has adequately taken into account the more distant consequences by focusing on increasing the mobility of vehicles. But the real purpose of transportation is to provide access to work, education, goods and services, friends and family, and there are proven methods to improve this accessibility and prevent traffic congestion while mitigating the economic and social consequences. Societies that improve the resilience of their transport networks do so within a broader program to create a dynamic, livable and stable city.

It should be noted that the solution of these issues depends on the countries' geographical position, demographic, economic and historical conditions. At the same time, it is necessary to choose between different modes of transport, regional and cross-border cooperation, as well as cooperation between public and private companies.

## **CHAPTER II. PASSENGER TRANSPORT FLOW THROUGH BAKU-NAKHCHIVAN-EREVAN PASSENGER ROUTE DURING USSR PERIOD**

### ***1. The contribution of Baku-Nakhchivan-Erevan passenger route in the economic development of Southern Caucasus region***

Transport has always been one of the main factors of development. Although the routes traveled by camel caravans from Europe to the East during the ancient Silk Road trade are now symbolically traversed by fast mechanical means, there have always been returns to these routes at all stages of historical development. Even today, when the world is talking about the combat miracle of unmanned aerial vehicles, the issues of reviving the routes that were once the most reliable routes of traders are already firmly on the top ten of the agenda.

Roads played an important role in the economic life of Nakhchivan, located at the junction of East and West, on historical trade routes. In the past, caravan routes from Iran to Georgia, Shirvan and Dagestan passed through Nakhchivan [3]. Historical documents show that in the second half of the 16th century, merchants of Nakhchivan established extensive relations with major European industrial and trade centers such as Venice, Marseille, and Amsterdam.

After the “Gulustan” and “Turkmenchay” peace treaties, which resulted in the division of Azerbaijan into two parts, since 1829, customs control was organized by Russia and Iran in the area of Julfa city of Nakhchivan - on the commuting bridge over the Araz River.

Railway has been the main mode of transport connecting Nakhchivan to the outside world since the beginning of the 20th century. Thus, after the construction of the Alexandropol-Ulukhanli-Iravan railway line was completed in 1902, the construction of the railway line from Ulukhanli to Julfa was started. After the commissioning of Sharur and Nakhchivan stations in 1903 and 1905, the construction of the Ulukhanli-Julfa line, which is 189 versts long and is part of the

Transcaucasia railway, was completed on January 20, 1908. Julfa railway junction was of exceptional importance in economic and cultural relations with Iran during the period of the Araz-Turkish Republic [38].

Since 1908, the trade turnover between Russia and Iran has increased significantly as a result of the connection of the Julfa railway junction to the Transcaucasian railway network. At that time, in order to develop industry and transport in Nakhchivan, necessary measures were taken to build a railway line along the Araz River in the Minjivan-Julfa area. However, since 1905, the gradual weakening of the tsar's government, the revolutionary movement covering the whole of Russia, including the Azerbaijan Railway, caused such works to take a back seat. The First World War, which began in 1914, greatly complicated the work of the railway.

In 1915, the first railway was built from Julfa to Tabriz, and Nakhchivan became an important center in railway trade. After the construction of the railway, trade turnover and business volume increased. Thus, while in the 1940s of the 19th century, 1200-1300 silver manats were traded annually from Iran to Russia through the Julfa customs house, at the beginning of the 20th century, the turnover between these countries was close to 800 thousand manats, and in the years before the First World War, it reached 7 million manats. In the overview of the Iravan governorate for 1914, it is noted that 84.7 percent of the goods imported from Iran in that year fell to the Julfa customs house. Even after 1920, the process of abolishing the customs points on the border of the Soviet republics began, attention was paid to the activities of the customs service in Nakhchivan, which has a wide border line with Iran, which was possible thanks to extensive transport services. In the 1930s, 74 percent of transit cargo was held at the Julfa customs house. In the 1930s, 74 percent of the transit cargoes sent from Iran to third countries by crossing the borders of Azerbaijan were registered at Julfa customs house and sent to Batumi port. In 1936,

the construction of the Alat-Minjivan line was completed and put into operation. The Minchivan-Julfa railway line with a total length of 126 kilometers connects Nakhchivan with the capital of Azerbaijan [50].

In 1940, with the establishment of a railway connection between the cities of Tehran and Tabriz, the completion of the construction of the Baku-Julfa railway line, and the commissioning of the Julfa-Minjivan and Osmanli-Astara railway lines in 1941, freight and passenger transportation increased further. During the Second World War, cargoes of vital importance, including military and humanitarian aid from the allied countries, were inspected and cleared in this customs body. In the years after the war, Nakhchivan maintained its important position in foreign trade circulation and transit.

However, even though electrification, modern communication and signaling, application of traction forces, renewal of locomotive and wagon parks, construction of new lines, and technical development of stations were carried out rapidly in the railway system of the former USSR until that time, the railway industry of Azerbaijan was lagging behind due to inattention and development.

Thanks to the initiative of nation leader Heydar Aliyev, who came to the leadership of Azerbaijan for the first time in 1969, as well as in the economy of the entire republic, fundamental changes were pushed in the railway transport. In 1976, the central apparatus of railways at Imishli station was moved to the city of Nakhchivan in order to meet the growing demand for cargo and passenger transportation in Nakhchivan, as well as to organize a high-level transport service. In 1988, as a result of the completion of the electrification of the Julfa-Sharur area, the use of electric locomotives for freight and passenger transportation began.

In the later periods, taking into account the possibilities of the road, the section from Nakhchivan to Minjivan and from there to Baku was mostly used for cargo transportation. It is enough to say just one fact that during the Soviet period,

80-85 percent of the goods transported by the Nakhchivan Railway were addressed to Armenia. We can even say that the goods brought to Zangezur region are unloaded at Nakhchivan station and then transported by trucks. During the development period of the 80s, the volume of traffic was up to 25 pairs of trains consisting of 30-40 cargo and passenger cars every day. In total, 22-25 million tons of gross cargo and thousands of passengers were transported every day. At that time, passengers traveling on the Moscow-Tehran route also used the Nakhchivan Railway. However, on April 23, 1992, the last train was able to move from Baku to Nakhchivan [51]. The next period was the difficult transport blockade of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic. During the blockade period, many other railway infrastructure facilities such as depot, station, tunnel, bridge, electricity supply, communication, warehouse, which were completely owned by Azerbaijan, were destroyed by Armenians, locomotives, wagons and vehicles of various purposes were looted in Mehri and Minjivan zones.

In the near future, the railway will be restored in the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, which has been in a state of blockade for 30 years due to the suspension of the railway. According to the Statement signed by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia and the President of the Russian Federation on November 10, 2020, the safety of the transport connection between the western regions of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic was guaranteed. With the agreement of the parties, the construction of new transport communications will be ensured. With this, the blockade of Nakhchivan will be ended and a new phase of development will begin in the autonomous republic [45].

Speaking about this in his address to the people, President Ilham Aliyev said: *“We are taking Nakhchivan out of the siege, and at the same time, we are opening a new transport artery. I can say that all countries will only benefit from this.*

*Azerbaijan unites with Nakhchivan, which is its inseparable part. Azerbaijan unites with Türkiye. Russia, Azerbaijan, Türkiye, Iran and, if they want, Armenia can join this corridor. Thus, a new five-way cooperation platform can be created in the region“[33].*

## ***2. The infrastructure facilities of Baku-Nakhchivan-Erevan passenger route before occupation of Garabagh by Armenia***

One of the most important needs of people during their travels is the necessary infrastructure. Construction of roads, construction of necessary parking and overnight facilities, creation of conditions for safety is one of the main conditions for the traveler.

In ancient times, such facilities were built to develop domestic and international trade in all parts of Azerbaijan, which is located at the crossroads of important trade routes connecting Europe and Asia. Ancient caravansaries, roads, bridges still existed in Azerbaijan on the ancient Silk Road. Guard stations and caravanserais, which ensured the safety of caravans, were built on the main transit roads in Azerbaijan during the Middle Ages. According to ancient sources, Shah Abbas built 999 caravanserais in these areas [3]. Also, giving this number in the form of 999, not 1000, is associated with the fact that the pronunciation of this number sounds more luxurious than the number 1000. In particular, it is noteworthy that these opportunities are Nakhchivan, which has important trade and transport links between East and West, and Ordubad, which is the second most important city in the region after it. Thus, during the Middle Ages and later periods, Ordubad merchants had close trade relations with Iran, Central Asia, India, European countries, and even in the middle of the 19th century with Moscow, Russia. In addition to the Ordubad-Nakhchivan-Sadarak road, which passes through Nakhchivan territory and is one of the branches of the international trade caravan

route, the Nakhchivan-Shahbuz-Gorus road, which runs from north to south, also connects with the Silk Road routes passing through Northern Azerbaijan, creating connections with the main trade markets [3].

The use of Nakhchivan as a transit was made possible by strong communication lines and facilities created both during the Tsarist Russia period and during the Soviet period. According to the information, before the Armenian occupation of Karabakh, there were 25,000 km of roads and dirt roads, 160 bridges with a total length of 3,984 meters, 14,500 km of power lines, 2,500 transformers, 2,300 km of water pipelines, 20,000 km of gas pipeline, 240 km of sewage lines, 160 water tanks, more than 34 gas distribution facilities, 35 thousand telephone exchanges. At the same time, important communication and infrastructure facilities such as 4 airports, Baku-Aghdam and Horadiz-Ordubad railway lines, Baku-Khankendi-Nakhchivan gas pipeline existed in the Karabakh zone before the occupation of Armenia [31].

Before the Armenian occupation, the total length of highways in the Karabakh zone alone was 4,012 km, of which 3,433 km were asphalt-concrete roads, including nationally important roads — 1,065 km, of which 897 km were asphalt-concrete roads. There were 110 bridges over highways with a total length of 3.2 km.

Before the Karabakh conflict, 240.4 km of the Azerbaijan Railway was used here. Before the conflict, there were 7 more stations from Horadiz railway station to the border with Armenia (Aghband, Minjivan, Hekari, Gumlag, Soltanli, Shukurbeyli and Marjanli). There was road 144 km on Horadiz-Ordubad section of “Azerbaijan Railways”, (including 43.4 km on Mehri district), 39.1 km on Minjivan-Gafan section, 51.0 km on Tazakend-Khankendi section, 6.3 km on Gazakh-Barkhudarli section. In the railway in this direction, there was equipment and technical means related to road management with an estimated price of 45 million US dollars. Looking at farms, there were 10 locomotives of different brands with an

approximate value of 14 million US dollars in the Minjivan circulation depot. The approximate amount of wagons available here was 4 million 860 thousand US dollars. In addition, there were technical inspection points for wagons at Horadiz-Mincivan-Gafan stations, current repair shops, lifting mechanisms, special dead-end roads for repairing wagons, a large number of freight wagons and other technical equipment. In general, the value of auxiliary equipment in the existing road management in this direction was 10 million 250 thousand US dollars. These were a gravel plant with a production capacity of 200,000 cubic meters, lifting devices, heavy machinery, administrative buildings, switching devices, different types of rails, large and medium bridges, tunnels, galleries, passages ,equipment and etc [32].

The Minjivan-Julfa railway line, which was built in 1941 and connects Azerbaijan with the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, was forced to stop its operation in 1991 as a result of the military aggression of Armenia. That area is 46 km long, 24 km of which belongs to Nuvedi village. Trains going to Yerevan and Nakhchivan stopped for a few minutes at Sighirt located in Nuvedi, then at Nuvedi station, then at Nuvedi, and finally at Astazur village, in the distance from Agbend village of Zangilan district to Astazur village of Megri district. Since there is a mountainous area from Nuvedi to the Armenian village of Astazur, the railway line passed almost 15-20 meters close to the Araz river. In this area, it was not possible to build the railway far from the Araz river. Due to the fact that the mountains are very close to Araza and it is difficult to cross them, in 1941, at a time when the technical possibilities were not very wide, a tunnel was forced to be built in both Sigirt and Nüvedi for the passage of the railway line.

In the middle of the 80s of the last century the construction of the Baku-Nakhchivan highway, passing through the Zangezur corridor, began. That road was built from Baku to Nuvedi (434 km), and from Nakhchivan to Aldara village of Megri district. Armenian chauvinists did not allow the construction of a wide asphalt

road connecting approximately 13-15 km between Nuvedi-Astazur and approximately 5 km between Astazur-Aldara. With this, they unnecessarily extended the Baku-Nakhchivan road by 140 km, and also made it difficult to travel for five to six months (in autumn and winter) in mountainous conditions [31].

The transport infrastructure in our regions under the Armenian occupation, especially along the Zangezur corridor, which has lasted for nearly 30 years, is completely destroyed. The first cause of this is undoubtedly the acts of looting carried out by Armenians in these areas. On the other hand, for nearly 30 years, the infrastructure here has been left out of the economic cycle, and as a result, regardless of wear and tear due to time, it has inevitably been left behind from repair and restoration works.

### ***3. The necessary infrastructure creation measures to improve secure logistic system in new East Zangezur-Nakhchivan tourism route***

Tourism is a complex field, where the organization and management of services offered to tourists is closely related to the rational use of the tourism resources of the region, the protection of ecological interests, the creation of modern infrastructure and human resources, and at the same time, the design of tours created on existing tourist routes [46].

A tourism route is a geographically pre-defined area, associated with specific objects and described at different levels of march, travel and movement. In other words, a tourist route is understood as a package of services prepared in a predetermined direction, for a certain period of time and for a certain purpose. These services are tourism-excursion services used by a tourist based on a tour or referral. In this sense, the creation of tourist routes is the main technology of providing tourist services.

Tourist routes to be created within the tourist destination, their attractiveness, economic justification and safety are one of the main problems. In this regard, the problems of preparation of tourist routes, their classification, passing through the appropriate design stages and their offer to tourists should be solved. Tourism routes are classified according to the travel motives of tourists, the duration of tours, and the types of vehicles used.

The creation of tourism routes and their use are very sensitive to logistical issues [18]. When talking about tourism routes, it is necessary to approach the problems of their creation and development as a part of modern cultural human needs, to take into account technical and economic evaluation issues during their design and use, to prioritize infrastructure creation, environmental requirements, security and national interests.

Infrastructure is a supporting system that supports all kinds of functional activities. In the preparation of tourism routes, it is the provision of territory, production and trade opportunities. Tourism infrastructure is a set of conditions necessary for the tourism industry to operate and tourism resources to be used effectively. Infrastructural conditions play an important role both in terms of the work of tourism enterprises and the use of tourism products by tourists themselves, and are an integral part of the organization of tourism. Tourism infrastructure, especially accommodation and means of transport, are important conditions along the tourist route.

Nakhchivan-Zangezur-Shusha tourist route is one of the potential destinations that have a potential attraction for the development of tourism in our country [37]. The use of Zangezur, which is an important crossing point on the travel routes for both international and internal Azerbaijan tourism trips, for this purpose is not only the realization of the possibilities of this route, which has been unused for a long time, but also the creation of long-term stability in the region after the Victory won

by our country as a result of the 44-day Patriotic War in 2020. It is also an interesting idea. The fact that tourism is the best stabilizing, socio-economic, and humanitarian development tool in the post-conflict era in the whole world, in this regard, once again reveals the future prospects of the Nakhchivan-Zangezur-Shusha tourism route and the Zangezur corridor in general [35].

In the tripartite statement signed by the presidents of Azerbaijan and Russia and the prime minister of Armenia on November 10, 2020, it is planned to restore all economic and transport relations in the region by guaranteeing the safety of the transport connection between the western regions of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic. In this sense, the re-opening of communications in the region under the terms of the agreement will make this tourism route a reality [45].

The construction of new transport communications connecting the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic and the western regions of Azerbaijan is also planned on this route. This line will provide the Republic of Türkiye and the Islamic Republic of Iran direct, unhindered, short-cut access to Azerbaijan and the Central Asian republics through the Caspian Sea. The Zangezur corridor will shorten the current transport distance between Azerbaijan and Türkiye by 400 km. This factor will have a positive effect on the socio-economic development of Nakhchivan. Nakhchivan's closer relationship with Türkiye will not only stimulate the development of relations between Azerbaijan and Türkiye, but will also lead to the economic convergence of Central Asian countries. It will play a major role in the development of water transport in the Caspian Sea at a time when the volume of cargo transportation is increasing with the increase of foreign trade turnover with the Central Asian countries of the Republic of Türkiye and China, which is the second largest economic power in the world [38]. Thus, the importance of this corridor in the formation of a new intercontinental alternative transport network between

European and Asian countries is very high. From this point of view, the Zangezur Corridor creates an opportunity to use the China-Central Asia-Azerbaijan-Türkiye-Europe transit-transport line between Far China and the Western world [60]. As a new transport route, the corridor will also act as an important trade route for uninterrupted and efficient transportation of goods and will bring new dividends to Azerbaijan and all participating countries. The new transport and communication infrastructure that will be created in this way will provide high economic benefits to participating and partner countries on a regional and global scale by serving the growth of cargo transportation, and at the same time will have a great role in stimulating economic development and international trade.

The Zangezur Corridor will provide access to the main territory of Azerbaijan for the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, which has lived under a difficult blockade for nearly thirty years. At the same time, the corridor will strengthen the relations with the brother country Republic of Türkiye through the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic and will serve to further develop these relations. So, after many years, the brotherly countries will meet again through the Zangezur corridor. This union between Azerbaijan, the leading country of the South Caucasus, and Türkiye, which has great potential and power in the world, will contribute to positive changes in the restoration of peace, stability and cooperation in the South Caucasus. From this point of view, the Zangezur Corridor's start of operation means the geographic unification of the Turkic world in general [32].

Among the infrastructure projects implemented for this purpose, we can mention highways, railway lines and airports.

First, if we look at the construction of highways in Karabakh, it is reported that in the near future 1441.7 km long roads will be built in the liberated territories of Azerbaijan. Of these, 101 km long Victory Road has already been put into use,

and 15 other road projects with a total length of 1441.7 km will be built in a row [52].

Currently, the busiest road in the region and one of the roads most used by tourists is Zafar road. The foundation of Zafar road, a direct road from Fuzuli to Shusha city, was laid on November 16 during the visit of President of Azerbaijan IlhamAliyev and Vice President MehribanAliyeva to the liberated Fuzuli and Jabrayl regions. It was opened on November 7, 2021. The highway passes near the new Fuzuli Airport. For this purpose, in order to connect the highway with the airport, a road junction and an access road to the airport were built at the 27th km of the road. The Fuzuli-Shusha highway starts from the part of the Hajigabul-Bahramtep-Minjivan — Republic of Armenia state border highway passing through Ahmedbeyli village of Fuzuli district and passes through the territory of Fuzuli, Khojavand, Khojaly and Shusha districts, which were freed from occupation. The highway covers more than 20 settlements of the mentioned regions. Thanks to the Ahmedbeyli-Fuzuli-Shusha highway, the distance from Baku to Shusha city has become shorter and made approximately 345 km. In the future, it is planned to build a new 4-lane Ahmedbeyli - Fuzuli - Shusha highway with a length of 81.6 km.

At the next stage, the 123.9 km, 4-6 lane Horadiz-Jabrayil-Zangilan-Aghband highway, which will connect Nakhchivan with Karabakh, and also 76.3 km of the 81.6 km long 2-4 lane Togana-Kalbajar-Istisu highway. A long 2-4 lane Kalbajar-Lachin highway is also planned. The Horadiz-Jabrayil-Zengilan-Aghband highway, which will be on the Zangezur corridor, is one of the 10 road infrastructure projects implemented in the territory of Karabakh and Eastern Zangezur, which will play an important role in the socio-economic development of the regions and villages freed from occupation. This road, being a part of the Hajigabul-Horadiz-Aghband-Zangezur corridor highway, is of great importance in terms of connecting Zangila with other regions of Azerbaijan and the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic. The

Horadiz-Jabrayil-Zengilan-Aghband highway passes through the liberated Fuzuli, Jabrayil and Zangilan districts, and the Ahmedbeyli-Fuzuli-Shusha, Shukurbeyli-Jabrayil-Hadrut and Khudafarin-Gubadli-Lachin highways, which are currently under construction, start from this road. According to the project, 3 car tunnels with a total length of 6015 meters, 2 viaducts and 23 car bridges, 8 overpasses, 50 underpasses and 5 overpasses will be built along the newly built road [52].

Besides the strategically important highway, the Horadiz-Zangilan-Aghband railway line, which is planned to be built, is also an important event. This railway is of great strategic importance for both Azerbaijan and the countries of the region. The railway line is single-track and has an axial length of 110.4 kilometers and 140.6 kilometers with side tracks. 9 stations - Horadiz, Marjanli, Mahmudlu, Soltanli, Gumlaq, Hekari, Minjivan, Bartaz, Aghband, 469 engineering facilities, 41 bridges, 22 road crossings, 3 tunnels are planned for the project.

Among the important transport and logistics facilities put into use in Karabakh and Eastern Zangezur after the Armenian occupation, airports are of great importance. Fuzuli International Airport, which is the first of them, will contribute to the economic development not only of that region, but also of the country as a whole, by enabling the diversification of transport infrastructure [53]. Thus, the reconstruction and restoration of our territories freed from occupation, at the same time, the implementation of transport and logistics services in accordance with international standards are among the priority issues. In this regard, the fact that the airport, which the President laid the foundation on January 14, 2021, will be ready for use in a short time, even before the planned time, can be considered an example of the strong will of the Azerbaijan state, special attention and perseverance to the restoration and reconstruction plans implemented in Karabakh.

On October 26, 2021, the opening ceremony of Fuzuli International Airport, called the air gate of Karabakh, was held with the participation of President of the

Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and President of the Republic of Türkiye Recep Tayyip Erdogan [53]. The construction of the airport in Fuzuli will create favorable conditions for maintaining a convenient and operational connection with this region of the country, for the development of the territories liberated from occupation, as well as for the increase of tourism opportunities, for tourists to go directly to our territories liberated from occupation in a more cost-effective and short way, to visit Shusha and other cities. will allow them to know. The opening of the international airport in Fuzuli will expand the logistics capabilities of Azerbaijan, which is an important factor in terms of increasing the economic capabilities of the region.

The construction of an international airport in Fuzuli district and its commissioning in the near future is also important in terms of the development of residential areas cleared of enemies and tourism. Fuzuli International Airport is one of the fastest built international airports in the region. The airport consists of a 3-kilometer-long, 60-meter-wide runway, a 60,000-square-meter parking area for 8 aircraft, a passenger terminal, and other auxiliary buildings. At the same time, the airport will be able to serve 200 passengers in 1 hour. In order to reach the cultural capital of Azerbaijan faster, it will be possible to first land at Fuzuli International Airport, and then go to Shusha by first-class route. This factor is important for both domestic and foreign tourism, facilitating the arrival to Shusha, Azerbaijan, as well as from outside the country. The construction of the International Airport in Fuzuli means the diversification of the transport infrastructure not only of Shusha, but of the region in general. Considering that a part of the region's economic potential is related to tourism, this is a convenient mode of transport for tourism in the future. In all cases, Fuzuli International Airport is able to contribute to the economic development of not only that region, but the country as a whole by allowing the diversification of transport infrastructure. The presence of the airport in this area will

have a positive effect on the development of the industrial and agricultural sectors of the region, in addition to tourism. The airport brings the equipment from abroad for the construction of modern production areas in these areas, and at the same time, the issues of organizing the export of the goods to be produced to distant foreign markets are also relevant.

The construction of the second high-quality airport meeting modern requirements was realized in Zangilan district in a short period of time in the liberated territories. In order to establish a Logistics Center in Zangilan district, the ground-breaking ceremony of Zangilan airport was held in April 2021 on the instructions of the head of the country. The geographic location of Zangilan region and the opportunities available here naturally create opportunities to turn Zangilan into an international transport and logistics center.

Zangilan International Airport on October 20, 2022, is an important project implemented in the direction of creating a modern logistics center in our country. The runway of Zangilan International Airport, which was built last year and is the second international airport in the territories freed from occupation during the Patriotic War, can receive all types of aircraft, including heavy transport aircraft, is 3 kilometers long. This airport, which will be integrated into the Zangezur corridor, will also be connected to the East-West transport corridor [54]. Zangilan International Airport, which is the second airport after Fuzuli International Airport in our liberated territories and will become a major transport hub in the near future, will play an important role in the development of the economy not only of our country, but of the entire region. Passengers will also use the airport, which will play an important role in the development of transport infrastructure in the region, and at the same time in the transportation of international cargo through Azerbaijan, which will primarily have a positive effect on the revival of tourism in the region. Thus, this airport will create conditions for the arrival of both local and foreign tourists to

Eastern Zangezur, which has a large and uninterrupted tourism potential, and will increase the potential of the region's industrial area. The multifunctional international airport will be of great importance in the region by playing an important role in solving social, economic and transport issues.

These two airports are the gateway to the Victory Road and the key to the main transport hubs to the city of Shusha. Azerbaijani citizens and foreign guests going to Shusha will reach many regions of Karabakh and Shusha in a short time by using this port. This will increase interest in the region, especially, favorable incentives for the economic attractiveness of investors will be created. In the coming years, Fuzuli and Zangilan airports will become one of the attractive investment zones of the region. We should also take into account that Karabakh is considered the paradise of the South Caucasus from the point of view of tourism, so it will become the main address of tourists who will travel to our country. One of the most necessary conditions for tourists is a convenient and less time-consuming road infrastructure. Airports are the gateway to the tourism of Karabakh. Foreign tourists who want to come to the city of Shusha, considered the pearl of Karabakh and the cultural capital of Azerbaijan, will use these airports.

### **CHAPTER III. THE ROLE OF PASSENGER LOGISTIC SYSTEM IN DEVELOPMENT OF ZANGEZUR-NAKHCHIVAN TOURISM ROUTE**

#### ***1. New tourism possibilities of East Zangezur-Nakhchivan tourism route after liberation of Garabagh***

The state of Azerbaijan, which has restored justice broken by the liberation of Karabakh from enemy occupation, is using all means to establish sustainable peace in the South Caucasus in the post-conflict period. In this sense, the role of tourism in creating economic relations with the restoration of all communications in the coming period can be noted. Thus, tourism, being the best stabilizer in the post-conflict period in the whole world, will play an important role in the humanitarian development of the entire region in the future, and will have a key position in the economic and cultural relations of the countries along the Zangezur corridor. In this regard, it is interesting to study our unique tourism resources in the lands of Western Zangezur, separated from Azerbaijan.

Zangezur is attractive to everyone with its location, unusual nature and historical-cultural riches. Many foreigners traveling to the South Caucasus for the first time have a hard time understanding why this slice between the great Azerbaijan, divided into three parts, is in a different color on the map. Also, tourists traveling to Nakhchivan for the first time have difficulty understanding why this area is separated from the main part of Azerbaijan.

Studying the historical Azerbaijani land of Zangezur from the point of view of tourism interest is very important in terms of returning to nostalgia and prospects of future economic and humanitarian development.

From this point of view, it is the dream of every Azerbaijani to be able to return to the natural beauties of Zangezur, as well as to the places of historical monuments and settlements of Turkic origin that existed a thousand years before the Emanians were moved here [58].

As centuries ago, Zangezur has rich natural and recreational resources. Unfortunately, the natural and historical-cultural tourism resources here have been exploited by Armenia, which brings a lot of income to the country's economy. Therefore, in the future, the Nakhchivan-Zangezur-Shusha tourism route will be of great importance in terms of recognition and promotion of these as reserves belonging to Azerbaijan.

Tourists get an opportunity to get acquainted with Mehri district first. For Azerbaijanis, this is a kind of domestic tourism route, but for foreigners who will use the Zangezur corridor in the future, this road will be remembered as a very interesting international tourism route. Mehri, whose name is not fully Armenianized, borders Iran in the south through the Araz River, Ordubad in the west, Zangilan in the east, and Gafan in the north. Its area is about 660 square kilometers and it has a mountainous landscape [58]. During the Soviet period, a railway owned by Azerbaijan passed through the region, along the Araz river. After the conflict started by the Armenians in 1988, this railway was also left unused, the road infrastructure was destroyed, and even the steel rails were sold to the neighboring country as pieces of metal [56].

Gafan is one of the largest districts of Zangezur, bordering Gubadli and Zangilan to the south, Sisyan and Gorus to the east, and Mehri districts to the southwest. Its area is 1345 square kilometers, twice as much as Mehri district. It mainly has a mountainous area, the highest peaks are Kapcik and Khusdub mountains. There is a railway line in the region that is the property of Azerbaijan. Travelers can choose the Mehri-Gajaran road to go to Gafan. This city, located in the Okhchu river bed, about 50 kilometers from the Araz fault, and formerly known as Okhchu, is known for its copper-molybdenum mines. It takes 40 minutes to reach the city of Gafan, which is about 30 kilometers from here. Gafan is one of the big cities of Zangezur. After the last ethnic cleansing committed in Armenia, in 1991,

the name of the city was subjected to moral terror and was renamed “Kapan” by an official decision [56]. The unique nature and flora of Gafan have attracted travelers since ancient times. Gafan is a district rich in forests in Zangezur. There are famous mineral springs called “Turssu” in the upper part of the Okchuchay basin. Gazangol and Yagingol lakes are also located in Gafan.

In terms of natural resources, Gafan is one of the richest places not only in Zangezur, but in all of Armenia. This region of Zangezur, rich in non-ferrous metal ores, accounted for more than half of the entire income of Western Azerbaijan in the 19th century. In addition to exploiting mineral resources in Gafan, Armenians also polluted the Araz River basin with industrial waste.

The city of Gorus, with a population of over 20,000 people, is very attractive due to its surrounding landscape [57]. This city is at the intersection of Zangezur and the road to Karabakh, and is in an important transit position. Gorus can be reached by passing through Gafan and Garakilsa-Lachin corridor. A large part of the Black Lake, which is considered the most beautiful and the largest water body of Zangezur, is in the territory of Gorus region. Gorus is one of the rainiest regions not only of Zangezur, but of all Western Azerbaijan. In the middle of summer, the average temperature here is close to 20 degrees, which is very attractive for tourists from the city. In terms of nature, the Stone Forest around the city of Gorus is a very attractive tourist attraction.

Like other regions of Zangezur, Gorus has a rich historical past. The Gorustoponym is related to the name of the Gorus tribe of Turkic origin. There are many toponyms of Turkish origin in the region. The most important tourist attraction of Gorus is undoubtedly the Tatev Albanian Church [58], built here on a basalt rock. This unique architectural monument, whose history is known since the 9th century, has been known since the Middle Ages, 30 kilometers from Gorus.

More than a third of Zangezur, which has a total area of 4505 square kilometers, belongs to Garakilsa (Sisyan) district. The district is also the largest district of Western Azerbaijan. It is bordered by Gorus from the southeast, Gafan district from the south, Kuku mountain of Shahbuz district, which is the highest peak of Deraleaz, from the northwest, and is surrounded by Zangezur and Bargushad ridges on four sides. Bazarchay, the most abundant river of Zangezur, passes through this region. Along the Bazarchay stream, it passes through narrow gorges and forms beautiful waterfalls in different places. One of the most beautiful waterfalls in the South Caucasus, the Sheki waterfall on Bazarchay, which falls from a height of 18 meters, is also in Garakilse. From the point of view of tourism, the most important object of familiarization in Garakilsa is the Goshundash monument here. The monument, which is believed to belong to the Neolithic period, consists of more than 200 huge stones built into the ground and standing upright [58] .

In the future, tourism resources of Western Zangezur will be in the attention of every Azerbaijani traveler with its unique charm. One of the types of tourism interesting for tourists on this route will undoubtedly be ethnic tourism. In this sense, ethnic tourism, which is a type of travel by Azerbaijanis who have been away from their ancestral lands for a long time, go out to visit their relatives or their graves, will attract tourists who want to see Zangezur and all the lands of Western Azerbaijan again.

Karabakh is a region of Azerbaijan with a very high tourism potential. 30 years ago, before the Armenian occupation, this place was one of the most attractive tourism and recreation places not only in Azerbaijan, but also in the entire South Caucasus. Undoubtedly, when evaluating the tourism-recreational potential of each region, it is necessary to take a general look at the factors that determine its attractiveness. The geographic location of the region, the distance to the main tourist-sending countries, natural and climatic conditions, environmental cleanliness,

historical and cultural richness, national hospitality of the local population, existing infrastructure and the state of organization of tourism services are taken into account. Communication between the cities and regions of Karabakh was carried out mainly by highways. Horadiz-Fuzuli-Khojavand-Aghdam, Aghdara-Tartar, Yevlax-Barda-Kalbajar, Barda-Aghdam-Shusha-Lachin highways were the main routes for transporting goods and passengers [52].

The Karabakh region includes Kalbajar, Lachin, Zangilan, Gubadli, Jabrayil, Fuzuli, Aghdam, Khojavand, Khojaly, Shusha districts and the city of Khankendi. In this region, Aghdam and Füzuli regions were larger in terms of their population before the occupation. During the occupation, 89 villages in Aghdam district alone were completely destroyed and razed to the ground with unprecedented cruelty.

Along with the natural beauty of the city of Shusha, which is considered the pearl of Azerbaijan, the heart of Karabakh, every traveler who sees the results of all the inhuman actions committed by the infamous Armenians during the nearly 30 years of occupying these lands returns home with these feelings. In particular, people who saw the occupied areas of Zangilan, Jabrayil and Fuzuli districts, starting from Nakhchivan, passing through Zangezur and along Araz, which were subjected to Armenian brutality, then started from Ahmedbeyli settlement, along the Victory Road, passing through Fuzuli, Khojavend, Khojaly and Shusha districts, to the city of Shusha, approximately 100 kilometers long. they experience such shocking feelings almost every meter. No matter how exciting the Shusha route is, where people originally from Karabakh, who spent their childhood and youth here, eagerly set off to see their native lands after 30 years, those who have never seen these lands in their lives can only read about the development, rich natural and historical-cultural beauties that existed here in the past. it is equally shocking to see the traces of Armenian vandalism for people who have read his books [37].

It takes about 12-13 hours for tourists from Nakhchivan to reach Shusha via Zafar Road. Considering the flight from Nakhchivan to Baku and the 400-kilometer round trip by Baku-Shusha buses, this period should not seem too long. However, after the opening of the Zangezur corridor in the future, this period may decrease to approximately 6-7 hours. Thus, after passing through Western Zangezur, it will take a shorter time for tourists to reach Shusha on the Agband-Minjivan-Zangilan International Airport-Fuzuli route. Along the route, tourists listen with interest to information about the historical places in the territory of Fuzuli, Khojavand, Khojaly and Shusha regions, the ancient Azikh cave, as well as the newly built Fuzuli International Airport, the high-voltage energy infrastructure that passes through it, tunnels, viaducts and other new buildings of various purposes. Tourists approaching Shusha, passing through Fuzuli city, Beyuk Taglar village, Topkhana forest and Dashalti village, get a deep impression. As you approach Shusha, the BeyukKirs peak, located on the left side between Shusha and Turshsu, attracts attention from a distance as one of the most important strategic points of Karabakh.

The city of Shusha is the last point of the route, the most attractive tourist destination. Shusha is one of the unique cities in the world. Thus, there are 17 neighborhoods, 17 baths, 17 springs, and 17 mosques in Shusha, which is located approximately 1400 meters above sea level. As a historical center, Shusha had an important role in the life of the Karabakh Khanate. Tourists who have visited Shusha can get acquainted with the Shusha cave, Cıdır plain, Topkhana, Castle walls and Castle gate, caravansaries, Upper and Lower Govhar Agha mosques [59].

## ***2. The role of new established logistic facilities in the promoting of tourism in East Zangezur-Nakhchivan tourism route***

The road infrastructure works created in Karabakh after the Armenian occupation and the construction of which is currently being continued will play an

important role in the development of tourism in the region, and in general, in the whole of Azerbaijan. Thus, this region of Azerbaijan has always been in the center of attention for the past 200 years in terms of its historical past, the culture of the peoples living here, the places of settlement, and the interests of major powers here. Especially, since the beginning of the 19th century, the strengthening of Russia's position in these lands as a result of the wars between Russia and Iran shaped the relations between the peoples living here in a new way.

The planned Zangezur corridor is 42 kilometers long between Zangilan district of Azerbaijan and Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, passing through Mehri district of West Zangezur province, which is in the territory of Armenia. Until 1988, not only with the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic of Azerbaijan, but also with almost all of Armenia, almost the main transport and logistics issues were solved through the road and communication links that existed here.

After 30 years of Armenian occupation, the new communications that will pass through Zangezur, which is the historical territory of Azerbaijan, will bring important innovations to the transit map of the region. Along with Azerbaijan, the Zangezur Corridor, which is of strategic importance as the creation of new transport opportunities in the region, for brother Türkiye, the European Union, Russia, China, Iran, Armenia and other countries, being an effective transport infrastructure, will significantly increase the desire of foreign companies to invest in the region. Launching the Zangezur Corridor will provide access to Azerbaijan by land, starting from Türkiye, and then via the Caspian Sea to Central Asian countries and China [60]. Zangezur, an ancient Azerbaijani land that was once taken from Azerbaijan and joined to Armenia in order to hinder the development of mutual relations between Azerbaijan and Türkiye, will now play the role of a bridge connecting the entire Turkic world. In other words, after a long time, the Turkic world will unite again

along the Zangezur corridor, and new projects, including international tourism routes, will be created in the region.

The largest interested party in the opening of the Zangezur corridor is undoubtedly the Republic of Azerbaijan. At the same time, taking into account the current situation and strategic interests, it is possible to classify the countries interested in the opening of the Zangezur Corridor into four groups:

1. The group of Turkic world states, which includes Azerbaijan;
2. Iran and Russia, which have similar common interests;
3. Big countries such as USA, China, England, France;
4. Armenia, which is economically quite weak and dependent.

In terms of tourism and other new economic projects, the Zangezur corridor is a new door for the Turkish world. This corridor will be the re-establishment of a direct route geographically cut off by the forced transfer of Zangezur to Armenia at the beginning of the 20th century. Due to the dictates of time, the processes after the 1990s will make it possible for the Turkish-speaking countries in Central Asia, which gained independence after the collapse of the former USSR, to have direct access to Türkiye, the leading state of the region. This road will also be recognized throughout the world as a symbol of a new economic power. Thus, the corridor will connect Turkic-speaking countries with a nominal gross domestic product of more than 1.1 trillion dollars from a strategic and economic point of view. This is for brother Türkiye with a gross domestic product of \$761.4 billion, Kazakhstan with \$181.7 billion, Uzbekistan with \$57.9 billion, Azerbaijan with \$48 billion, Turkmenistan with \$48 billion and Kyrgyzstan with \$8.5 billion is a new economic-cultural connection gate [60]. If we add tourism to such an economic potential in the future, in particular, the growing potential of Türkiye will create opportunities for establishing serious tourism relations here.

Due to the current events in the world, especially the tension between Russia and Ukraine, the intersection of interests against Central Asia and China, as well as man-made factors (as a result of the shipwreck in the Suez Canal), it is necessary to form a new alternative transit corridor in the Europe-Asia corridor compared to the traditional routes. is emerging. If we look further into the future, it can be said that the Zangezur corridor will form new geopolitical relations in the 21st century and will form new relations in the world energy and technology market. It can be assumed that the new regional cooperations that will be created with the launch of the corridor will further develop and in the future will even lead to the transition to new cooperation formats in the field of security, which will be a great contribution to global peace.

The Zangezur corridor is one of the absolute conditions for the reconstruction of Karabakh after the occupation. The government of Azerbaijan has successfully started this important task at the expense of its internal resources and in a short period of time, it has started with clearing mines in the territories freed from occupation, providing modern settlements, energy, road, water, logistics, and all the necessary conditions for the normal social life of the people who will be resettled in their native lands. is driving fast. In this sense, the creation of smart settlements in the territories destroyed by Armenian vandals, the application of green energy, ecologically clean production standards will bring new production management models not only to the South Caucasus, but also to the entire nearby region. Therefore, the opening of the Zangezur corridor is an absolute necessity so that both Azerbaijan and all the countries of the region, including revanchist Armenia, can benefit from these works. To open the corridor, after the Shusha Declaration signed on June 15, 2021 and the official declaration of alliance between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Türkiye, the scale of the corridor will be expanded. It is possible to predict that a new reliable trade channel will be launched on the

Shanghai-Istanbul-Frankfurt-London route when the economic potential and technological capabilities of the mentioned countries are combined with natural resources. Thus, today, Azerbaijan, as a country closely involved in the formation of East-West and North-South transport corridors, has a significant impact on the development of the regional part of these transport corridors, and also demonstrates significant financial support for this work.

In the future, as a result of using the Zangezur corridor, new opportunities will arise for the regional economy. Looking at the new opportunities that East Zangezur and the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic will get with the realization of this corridor, it is possible to see the following results:

- The long-standing blockade will be ended
- Favorable conditions for new long-term foreign investments will be created in the area
- Application of the latest technology in the projects to be implemented for the reconstruction of transport and communication links and, as a result, more spread of innovative projects
- More tourists will move from the region in both directions
- Earnings from transit passengers and cargo
- Participation in joint economic, cultural and even security projects that are important for regional states

Zangezur Corridor is one of the important chains of the policy of economic development and expansion of regional relations carried out by sister country Türkiye in the 21st century. Thus, Azerbaijan, Central Asia, Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Siberian region of Russia and even China are of economic interest to Türkiye, which bases its policy on the formula of comprehensive cooperation with its neighbors. It should be noted that in addition to the Turkish presence in all these

areas, Zangezur Corridor will put new projects on the table in the future in order to compete with China in many of the mentioned countries, as well as in Siberian markets. The economic backwardness of some of the Central Asian republics (Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, as well as Kyrgyzstan), which are very rich in terms of energy, raw materials and human resources, creates a serious need for Türkiye's presence there. Disputes over territory, energy and water sources that are still ongoing in those areas cause this backwardness and lead to conflict and even armed conflict even among Turkic-speaking countries. Therefore, Türkiye's access to these territories through the Zangezur corridor will allow the establishment of normal political and economic relations between these countries in the future. For Türkiye, the Zangezur corridor means a new tourism and economic cooperation bridge. The further increase of the economic potential of the eastern regions of Türkiye is among the results expected from the activity of this corridor. Thus, it is not difficult to think how much Turkish businessmen can benefit from the new economic opportunities that will arise in the next 20-25 years as a result of the economic relations with Nakhchivan alone, considering the level of development of the neighboring Iğdir province of Türkiye and the areas close to it. Long-term investments by Turkish businessmen in important service areas such as construction, trade, logistics, education, tourism and healthcare will further increase the dynamics of development in the region.

Tourism is a field sensitive to new technologies. One of the current links between Europe and Asia is technology transfer. In this field, Türkiye has highly developed industrial potential and human resources. Among the China- Türkiye competition in the field of technology, it is possible that the countries surrounded by the Zangezur corridor will benefit more from it. In particular, it is possible to say that Azerbaijan will be in a leadership position in this field, and the entire infrastructure will be completely renewed. One of the important contributions of the

Republic of Türkiye on the Zangezur-Nakhchivan-Istanbul route will undoubtedly be realized in terms of both inbound and outbound tourism potential of this country. It is predicted that a significant part of incoming tourism trips from other countries to Türkiye will be through the Zangezur corridor in the future, along with outbound tourism trips, which arise from the tendency of the citizens of this country, which has a high level of mobility and human resources, as well as tourism attraction elements. The tourist attraction elements in the Turkish section of the route are quite rich. From the cities of Iğdır, Kars, Erzurum to Istanbul on the route of Türkiye, in many places, travelers can get acquainted with leisure, recreation and familiarization tourism resources of various types of tourism, they can use the high-level tourism-service complex of the brother country.

As for the USA, China and European countries interested in the opening of the Zangezur Corridor, developing countries rich in energy resources such as Azerbaijan are important in terms of gaining new markets in trade relations between countries with large financial and technological capabilities. Especially in the background of the unstable situation in the Middle East and the further straining of Russia-Ukraine relations, the creation of new safe routes in the Europe-China corridor is also in the interest of these countries.

And finally, the realization of the Zangezur corridor will create an alternative passage with the main territory of our country and Nakhchivan, which is of great importance within the framework of the regional political configuration, which will reduce the impact of the “Nakhchivan transit” issue, which is Iran's strongest means of pressure on Azerbaijan. In addition, the proposal of a new route between Russia and Türkiye bypassing Georgia highlights another regional importance of the corridor. The new corridor is also important in terms of the emergence of a new route between Türkiye and Central Asia.

## **Conclusion**

Bringing up the “Zangezur Corridor” issue, which opens the way for wide economic cooperation in the region, is an important part of the decisive measures taken under the leadership of the victorious country Azerbaijan for the establishment of lasting peace in the entire South Caucasus under the dictates of the new reality created after the 44-day Patriotic War. So, one of the most important aspects of our great victory in the Patriotic War is that the opening of the Zangezur Corridor was included in the agenda of the political parties. The reassertion of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, which was taken away by force 103 years ago, and the establishment of the Eastern Zangezur economic region by the decree of President IlhamAliyev show that the opening of this corridor is a geostrategic issue.

“Zangazur Corridor” is not only tourism in the South Caucasus, but also the beginning and facilitation of large economic projects. This corridor is the door to the establishment of direct relations between Azerbaijan and Türkiye and the unification of the Turkic world. As a result of the realization of this corridor, Azerbaijan and Türkiye will be united by a new transport project. If we take into account that thanks to the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway, the relations between the brotherly countries have already expanded, but in addition, the Zangezur corridor will be a second connecting direction. In the words of President IlhamAliyev: “Thus, new opportunities will emerge for us. Azerbaijan will be connected with the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, which is its inseparable part, by railway. At the same time, we demand that the highway be built - in the West Zangezur territory under the control of Armenia, in the Mehri region. Because this is absolutely necessary”.

According to our head of state, the Zangezur corridor will be a new opportunity not only for Azerbaijan, but also for the countries of the region, Türkiye will be able to transport its goods to Central Asia through this short, alternative

route, and new routes will be created in tourism relations. The corridor will also provide an opportunity to connect Armenia with Russia and Iran by rail. Thus, although the occupying Armenia and Iran have been discussing the construction of the railway for up to 20 years, the fact that its cost requires at least 3 billion dollars makes it unaffordable for these two countries. However, the fact that there is already a railway line between Nakhchivan and Iran, passing through the territory of Nakhchivan, increases the potential of the Zangezur corridor even more.

In addition, the November 10, 2020 Declaration and the Shusha Declaration signed by the presidents of Azerbaijan and Türkiye on June 15 contain very clear statements about the opening of the Zangezur corridor. This is the result of the new geopolitical situation that arose after the Second Karabakh war. So, today the countries of the region are not only talking about the Zangezur corridor, which will connect Türkiye and Azerbaijan by rail and road, but they are also trying to create this corridor with practical works. Today, even if the revanchist forces in Armenia speak against the realization of the Zangezur Corridor, it is of great significance that this issue is reflected in the signed Joint Declaration on Alliance.

As our head of state said, the creation of the Zangezur corridor fully meets the national, historical and future interests of the Azerbaijani people today. So, just as Eastern Zangezur is our historical land, Western Zangezur is our historical land. In our historical lands, the state of the Republic of Azerbaijan has all rights, material and technical capabilities and political will to implement any project, including tourism-logistics projects. Seeing the future development of the region only in peace and mutual cooperation, the Republic of Azerbaijan has put forth all its strength to turn Karabakh, freed from occupation, and Eastern Zangezur as a whole into a center of international cooperation and tourism for the coming period. The works carried out from demining to the creation of energy and road infrastructure and smart

settlements in the liberated territories will ultimately provide the necessary conditions for the development of tourism in the region.

The infrastructural and logistics measures implemented by our country during the period after the liberation of Karabakh from the Armenian occupation have an important impact on the development of tourism not only in East Zangezur, but in the entire Karabakh territory. Thus, in addition to the Victory Road, which was built from Ahmedbeyli village of Fizuli district to Shusha city, road and other logistics facilities are being created in the directions of Lachin, Kalbajar, Jabrayil, Gubadli, Zangilan and Aghdam. In order for the tourists who will come to Karabakh to be able to use air, land, and railway facilities, the works carried out for about two and a half years create opportunities for the start of tourism trips. The construction of hotels for the stay of tourists, the creation of social and cultural conditions, as well as the selection of attractive elements will increase the number of travelers from different countries to Karabakh and Eastern Zangezur in the future.

For tourists who will travel to Karabakh and Eastern Zangezur, the first attractions here are, without a doubt, the tours organized by the type of Dark tourism. Although the territory of ancient Karabakh is rich in its rich natural and historical-cultural resources, the damages caused by Armenian vandalism to Karabakh, the acts of destruction, culturicide, ecocide, urbicide and looting here are among the elements that leave the deepest shocking impression in the memory of those who visit here. However, regardless of this, among the tourism routes that will be created in Karabakh and East Zangezur in the future, cultural-acquaintance, treatment-health, and ecotourism types of travel will undoubtedly prevail.

If we look at the country of origin of the tourists who will use the tourism routes in the direction of Karabakh and Eastern Zangezur, we can think that there will be tourists representing the brotherly country Türkiye and Turkic states. It can be noted that although the part of the Zangezur corridor passing through Armenia

does not fully meet the requirements for the life and comfortable travel of tourists, this will not prevent them from visiting places that have been inaccessible not only for travel enthusiasts, but also for the entire population of the region for a long time. That is why, with the liberation of Karabakh from the enemy's occupation, the creation of transport-logistics opportunities for tourist trips allows us to predict that trips along the Nakhchivan-Zangezur tourist route will become popular in the near future.

Summarizing all of the above, we can evaluate the transport and logistics issues on the Nakhchivan-Zangazur tourist route as follows:

- As in the former Soviet era, there is a great need to create new communications in Karabakh and Eastern Zangezur in the period after the Armenian occupation;
- If during the USSR these communication relations were of interest to only two countries - the USSR and Iran, now they are of interest to at least 6 countries according to the 3+3 format [60];
- Major works and logistics provision in the direction of Zangezur corridor in the direction of Nakhchivan-Zangezur fall to Azerbaijan, the leading country of the region;
- The Zangezur Corridor is an important part of the China-Europe corridor in the future and is an important connection chain for the Turkic world;
- One of the main issues will be the economic, cultural and tourism relations of all countries benefiting from the corridor in order to end the conflicts in the region and create lasting peace;
- Zangezur Corridor will be one of the best alternatives of existing communication and logistics connections in perspective as a project of the 21st century;

- The Zangezur Corridor will be the most successful formula for the peaceful return of our compatriots who were forced out of their historical lands to Western Azerbaijan.

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