

C6 - Item 167: OBSERVER STATUS FOR THE COOPERATION COUNCIL OF TURKIC SPEAKING STATES

Thank you Chair. As this is the first time my delegation is taking the floor, please allow me to congratulate you and the other members of the bureau on your election.

On the item under consideration to grant Observer Status to the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States (CCTS), my delegation maintains the serious reservations it expressed during the 67th session as to whether the criteria contained in GA Decision 49/426 are fulfilled, particularly that this “mechanism’s”¹ activities “cover matters of interest to the Assembly”. My delegation’s key concerns are the following:

- (a) The membership of this cooperation mechanism continues to be limited to its four founding member states. According to its constitutive documents, accession to it is in fact very restrictive.
- (b) The CCTS’ founding Declaration states that it will operate with the aim to enhance cooperation for all the Turkic-speaking states and develop contacts and public links among peoples of the Turkic-speaking countries. It is thus inferred that its operations include but are not limited to its member states. To this date, it continues to be rather unclear as to what those operations will be and in which areas of the world. In fact, the map on the official website of the CCTS continues to arbitrarily include part of my country Cyprus.
- (c) Furthermore, it is evident from its founding Declaration and the declarations of its annual summits since 2011 that CCTS includes in its sphere of interests a number of international issues, on which it pronounces itself but at no point has it clarified what its relevance is to those situations, nor what it sees or what it aims its role or involvement to be with regard to those issues. Amongst them is Cyprus. Yet, the Government of Cyprus has at no point been consulted with nor has it been associated with the CCTS.

Mr. Chair, membership of this body is very limited and accession is restrictive. At the same time, its operations are intended to be far further reaching than its membership and with unclear aims. Its approach on Cyprus for example, since its establishment and to this date, remains problematic as this body has repeatedly pronounced itself on the Cyprus problem in ways that fall outside SC and GA resolutions. It is our conviction Mr. Chair that any entity that seeks observer status to the General Assembly ought to at least operate in line with the latter’s resolutions and uphold them when pronouncing itself on a particular situation.

¹ Article 1 of the Nakhchivan Agreement: “ the Parties hereby establish a cooperation mechanism in the form of an international establishment [...]”

For the purposes of this debate, the fact remains that there is a concerning imbalance between the restrictive nature of CCTS and its projected areas of interest and therefore its potential activities.

For all the above reasons, my delegation's reservations remain as to whether CCTS covers matters that are of interest to the General Assembly and is thus, not in a position to consent to granting Observer Status to the CCTS at this time.

We do recognise Mr. Chair the efforts of the sponsor delegations of this item to consult with us and reflect on our concerns. Please allow me to express my delegation's readiness to engage further with the sponsors of this resolution.

We do favour however the proposal just made by the distinguished delegate of Armenia to have this item withdrawn from the Committee's agenda and encourage the sponsors of the resolution to seriously consider it. There needs to be real and sustained progress in order to address the specific concerns expressed during this Committee's work. For that, time is needed if we can at some point reach consensus without revisiting the same issues year after year.

It is important Mr. Chair, in view of all the applications before this Committee, to recall that observer status to the General Assembly is confined to those intergovernmental organizations whose activities cover matters of interest to the General Assembly.

Thank you Mr. Chair.