

Iran-Turkmenistan Relations: Cross-Border Ethnic Groups and Comprehensive Governance Strategies

WU Tongyu

Fudan University, Shanghai, China

This study delves into the bilateral relations between Iran and Turkmenistan, focusing on the multidimensional impacts of cross-border ethnic groups, cultural diplomacy, and energy cooperation. The research reveals that despite challenges in security cooperation, such as regional political ideological differences and uneven power distribution, Iran has adopted diverse strategies to enhance cultural identity, social cohesion, and promote economic cooperation. Iran actively seeks to repair relations with Turkmenistan by emphasizing shared historical and cultural backgrounds, particularly the presence of cross-border Turkmen ethnic groups. Specific measures include developing cultural tourism, organizing cultural weeks, and establishing commemorative days. In the economic sphere, the two countries have signed significant natural gas supply agreements, strengthening energy cooperation. Iranian leaders often emphasize “blood ties” and deep cultural connections in diplomatic statements, combining cultural diplomacy with practical economic cooperation. The study’s findings indicate that Iran’s initiatives have led to the reorganization of national space and social reconstruction in border regions, promoting changes in public policy. By integrating cultural identity, historical connections, and economic interests, Iran has adopted a sophisticated diplomatic approach, laying the foundation for more stable and enduring bilateral relations while contributing to regional stability and sustainable development.

Keywords: Iranian foreign policy, cross-border ethnic groups, Iran-Turkmenistan relations

Introduction

The Turkmen ethnic group in Iran represents a distinctive minority population, characterized by significant cultural, religious, and linguistic divergences from mainstream Iranian society. This group primarily inhabits the Torkamansahra region in northeastern Iran, with additional concentrations in the provinces of Golestan, Razavi Khorasan, and North Khorasan. The historical trajectory of the Turkmen people can be traced back to the ancient Turkic Empire. Following the empire’s disintegration circa the 7th century, the Turkmen diaspora ensued. The early 16th century witnessed a significant influx of Turkmen nomadic tribes into Iran, coinciding with the ascendancy of the Safavid dynasty and the proliferation of Shi’a Islam, thus establishing the foundation for the contemporary Iranian Turkmen community (Condill, 2021; Irons, 1969).

Presently, the Turkmen constitute approximately 2% of Iran’s total population. They predominantly adhere to Sunni Islam, particularly the Hanafi school, while maintaining their distinct linguistic and cultural heritage. Despite their peripheral geographical location, the Iranian Turkmen have sustained prolonged cultural exchanges

WU Tongyu, Ph.D., postdoctoral researcher, Fudan Development Institute; Center for Middle Eastern Studies, Fudan University, Shanghai, China.

and interactions with the central ethnic groups of Iran. It is noteworthy that the Iranian Turkmen share close cultural, linguistic, religious, and historical ties with neighboring Turkmenistan. This transnational kinship presents certain challenges to Iran's central government in terms of governance. However, the political aspirations of the Iranian Turkmen are primarily focused on the preservation of their cultural rights and social identity, rather than political separatism (Haghayeghi, 1990, p. 37; Price, 2005, pp. 305-306; Elling, 2013, p. 42). In the realm of international relations, the Iranian Turkmen often serve as a crucial link in strengthening ties between Iran and Turkmenistan. Cooperation between the two nations primarily concentrates on low-politics domains, maintaining a state of amicable neighborly relations. This unique geopolitical and cultural context renders the governance of Iranian Turkmen settlements a subject worthy of comprehensive examination. This study aims to explore how the Iranian government navigates the delicate balance between maintaining national unity and respecting and protecting the cultural rights of the Turkmen minority. Furthermore, it will investigate how this ethnic group can be leveraged to promote regional stability and development.

The subsequent sections of this paper will delve into the historical background, current demographic distribution, sociocultural characteristics, and political dynamics of the Iranian Turkmen community. This analysis will provide a foundation for discussing the challenges and opportunities in the governance of Turkmen settlements, as well as potential strategies for fostering inclusive development and social cohesion in these regions.

Iran's Border Governance in the Turkmen Region

Firstly, Iran's border governance in the Turkmen region, particularly in Golestan Province, focuses on three main strategies: enhancing economic capabilities, improving infrastructure, and bettering living conditions for border residents. Golestan Province, with its strategic location bordering Turkmenistan and Central Asian countries, has significant economic potential, primarily in agriculture and maritime resources. The government has prioritized the development of ports, trade routes, and marine industries to leverage these advantages. Infrastructure development, including the establishment of land ports, railways, and economic zones like the Atrak Special Economic Zone, aims to facilitate trade and attract domestic and foreign investment. These initiatives position Golestan as a crucial transit corridor connecting China, Russia, and Central Asia to the Persian Gulf. Additionally, the creation of free trade and industrial zones near borders and customs bases supports domestic industries and streamlines import-export processes. To improve border residents' living conditions, the government has implemented preferential policies for border villages, offering tax exemptions and foreign exchange facilities to encourage investment. Furthermore, skill training programs for border region conscripts in fields such as network security, e-commerce, and the Internet of Things aim to create sustainable employment opportunities. These multifaceted approaches demonstrate Iran's comprehensive strategy for border governance, balancing economic development with social stability in the Turkmen region.

Secondly, in governing the Turkmen region, Iran has implemented a sophisticated strategy that emphasizes national unity while simultaneously respecting ethnic diversity. This approach employs a multifaceted set of measures designed to reinforce the cultural identity, values, and economic status of the Turkmen population, while concurrently facilitating their integration into the broader Iranian national identity. The government has instituted a policy of multi-ethnic residential patterns across provinces, utilizing non-ethnically specific nomenclature in provincial designations. This is exemplified in regions such as Golestan Province and North Khorasan Province. Iran's leadership explicitly acknowledges the significant role of the

Turkmen in national security, according equal reverence to Sunni and Shia martyrs, thereby underscoring a unity that transcends ethnic and religious boundaries. Cultural celebrations serve as a pivotal mechanism in this integrative strategy. The shared observance of festivals such as Nowruz and Eid al-Adha, alongside Turkmen-specific traditions like equestrian competitions that reflect their profound horsemanship culture, fosters intercultural understanding.

Furthermore, Iran organizes national events showcasing diverse ethnic matrimonial ceremonies and customs, as well as art exhibitions and literary functions, to promote cultural comprehension and instill pride in Iranian heritage. To safeguard and develop cultural competencies, Iran has established specialized training centers in border provinces, conducting regular assessments of cultural and artistic skills. The government has also initiated private sector involvement in the management of cultural and artistic complexes, aiming to enhance service delivery and generate employment opportunities in these domains. Ethnic tourism is vigorously promoted as a dual mechanism for economic development and inter-ethnic understanding. The International Festival of Iranian Ethnic Culture, hosted in Golestan Province, has evolved into a significant cultural brand, showcasing Iran's rich cultural heritage. Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, these events persisted in virtual formats to maintain cultural continuity. The Iranian government posits that emphasizing cultural diversity and ethnic traditions engenders social and spiritual transformation, enhancing societal well-being and vitality. This approach has culminated in Golestan Province being designated as the "Capital of Ethnic Cultures" in Iran, reflecting the government's commitment to preserving and celebrating ethnic diversity within the framework of national unity (Official Website of the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, 2022). This multifaceted approach to governance in the Turkmen region demonstrates Iran's strategy of fostering national cohesion while respecting and promoting ethnic distinctiveness, potentially offering insights for similar multicultural contexts globally.

Thirdly, Iran's strategy for sustainable border security and development is implemented through the establishment of border cooperatives and the promotion of cross-border exchanges. These cooperatives serve multiple crucial functions: preventing illegal migration, strengthening livelihoods, guiding residents from smuggling to legitimate trade, ensuring supply of goods, improving living conditions, and combating inflation and rising food prices. Border cooperatives also contribute to diversifying residents' income, reducing dependence on single industries, enhancing confidence in the government, countering foreign propaganda, and fostering integration of minority ethnic groups with the nation. However, border regions face poverty due to their unique geographical locations. Recognizing the importance of economic satisfaction for border security, the Iranian government has refined policies, created job opportunities, and encouraged entrepreneurship to improve the border economy. Additionally, Iran emphasizes solidarity and empathy, highlighting the role of border residents and border guards in maintaining security.

Finally, Iran regulates border news reporting and has established specialized publications such as "Border Watch" quarterly and "Border News" television media. These initiatives aim to promote cultural identity, ensure accurate and fair news reporting, and reflect public concerns, while safeguarding national interests and social stability. This comprehensive border security strategy integrates economic development, cultural integration, and information management to achieve long-term stability. By addressing the multifaceted challenges of border regions, Iran seeks to create a sustainable security environment that benefits both the local population and the nation as a whole.

Iran's Diplomatic Relations With Turkmenistan as a Neighboring Country

To begin with, Iran and Turkmenistan's neighborly relations are rooted in deep historical, cultural, and religious ties, which have been continuously developing since Turkmenistan's independence in 1991. Iran, as the first country to recognize Turkmenistan's independence, has consistently supported its policy of permanent neutrality and engaged in cooperation across multiple sectors. Leaders of both nations have repeatedly emphasized the importance of their relationship, describing it as "brotherly friendly countries" that goes "beyond that of two neighboring countries". Successive Iranian presidents have prioritized friendly relations with Turkmenistan, emphasizing shared cultural, historical, and religious foundations. The two countries have consistently advanced bilateral relations through regular meetings, cooperation agreements, and memoranda of understanding. Iran emphasizes maintaining good empathy with Turkmenistan to sustain mutual trust and engages in constructive interactions based on the principle of good neighborliness (Tasnim News Agency, 2019). In recent years, both countries have accelerated efforts to establish closer political partnerships, such as signing the "Cooperation Program for 2021-2022" (The Website of the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, 2020a). Following the inauguration of Iran's new President Raisi, expanding relations with neighboring countries became a key foreign policy agenda, further elevating the status of Iran-Turkmenistan relations. Iranian leaders annually express congratulations on Turkmenistan's Independence Day, affirming the traditional friendship between the two countries and appreciating Turkmenistan's efforts for regional peace, stability, and development (The Website of the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, 2021). This ongoing diplomatic interaction and mutual support demonstrate the determination of both countries to deepen cooperation based on mutual respect, equality, and common interests, jointly addressing regional security challenges.

Bilateral security cooperation between Iran and Turkmenistan is a crucial component of their relationship, particularly in maintaining border stability. The two countries share approximately 1,205 kilometers of border, with Turkmenistan serving as Iran's vital gateway to Central Asia, holding significant geopolitical security importance for Iran. To ensure border security, Iran has implemented multifaceted measures: firstly, focusing on balanced and comprehensive development in border areas with appropriate fund allocation (Tasnim News Agency, 2014), in addition, enhancing border security, safeguarding information security and intelligence work, and preventing external forces from exploiting cross-border ethnic groups to threaten border stability. Furthermore, Iran actively engages in defense and security cooperation with Turkmenistan. In 2014, the Iranian Defense Minister's first official visit to post-independence Turkmenistan marked a new phase in defense cooperation between the two nations. Iran emphasizes that such cooperation contributes to regional and global peace and security. Iranian officials frequently stress that the border between the two countries is a "border of peace and friendship", and appreciate Turkmenistan's stance of not allowing its territory to be used against Iran during regional political and security crises. This comprehensive security cooperation strategy not only strengthens bilateral relations but also contributes to regional stability, demonstrating the determination and mutual trust of both countries in addressing common security challenges. The approach reflects a shared commitment to maintaining peace and security along their shared border and in the broader region.

In the relationship between Iran and Turkmenistan, activating the economic potential of the border regions is a crucial aspect. Their relationship is built on a foundation of geopolitical interests, economic benefits, and cultural connections, with the cultural identity of cross-border ethnic groups creating a positive impact on bilateral relations. Iran has implemented various measures to strengthen economic ties with Turkmenistan:

establishing mechanisms such as the Joint Economic Cooperation Committee to provide a platform for regular exchanges; expanding economic connections, focusing on developing cooperation in areas like natural gas, electricity, and cross-border trade; and solidifying bilateral relations through trilateral cooperation, such as the Iran-Turkmenistan-Azerbaijan gas swap agreement (Tasnim News Agency, 2018). Furthermore, Iran has fostered mutual trust by establishing cooperation platforms to resolve economic disputes and prevent conflicts from escalating. The two countries have signed numerous cooperation agreements in fields including energy, transportation, agriculture, and industry, reflecting their willingness to deepen cooperation. Iran has also actively provided technical assistance and experience sharing to Turkmenistan, such as in higher education and industrial sectors. Overall, through multi-level and multi-field economic cooperation, Iran has not only promoted economic development in border regions but also strengthened its strategic ties with Turkmenistan, contributing to regional stability and prosperity.

Strengthening infrastructure connectivity and further opening border ports are key strategies for deepening relations between Iran and Turkmenistan. Both countries are committed to constructing and improving transportation networks, including roads, railways, and waterways, to facilitate the movement of goods and people. The Iran-Turkmenistan-Kazakhstan railway, which began operations in 2014, is a significant outcome of these efforts and is expected to substantially increase cargo volume. Additionally, a new automobile bridge opened at the border in 2020, further enhancing connections between the two countries. Iran also utilizes Turkmenistan as a gateway to Central Asia, expanding its exports to other countries in the region. The two nations also collaborate on water resource management, as exemplified by the dam project in Razavi Khorasan Province.

To promote local economic and trade cooperation in border areas, both countries have implemented various measures. They encourage private sector participation, especially in industries such as metallurgy and agriculture. Border provinces organize agricultural and trade exhibitions to stimulate local economic exchanges (Reuters, 2021). In 2022, the two countries also developed joint entrepreneurship and employment development plans. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Iran and Turkmenistan strengthened their cooperation in healthcare, providing mutual assistance and sharing experiences (The Website of the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, 2020b). The leaders of both countries emphasized the importance of restoring economic cooperation to pre-pandemic levels while ensuring compliance with health protocols. Overall, these efforts aim to deepen economic and trade cooperation between the two countries, promote development in border regions, and strengthen mutual assistance in facing common challenges.

The establishment of cross-border ethnic ties serves as a crucial strategy for deepening relations between Iran and Turkmenistan, rooted in their shared historical and cultural commonalities. The inherent kinship, historical connections, and cultural origins act as fundamental drivers in bridging the relationship between the two nations. Notably, the Turkmen population in Iran's Golestan and North Khorasan provinces plays a pivotal role in fostering cultural exchanges. To formalize their cultural cooperation, Iran and Turkmenistan have signed a memorandum of understanding, which facilitates regular cultural events such as annual cultural weeks, Silk Road summits, and Nowruz celebrations. These initiatives aim to promote mutual understanding and appreciation between the two societies.

Cultural and artistic festival exchanges form a significant component of this strategy. The annual Turkmenistan Cultural Days in Tehran and the joint Nowruz celebrations at border crossings exemplify these efforts. Nowruz, in particular, occupies a special place in Iran-Turkmenistan relations, serving as a platform for

Iran's "Nowruz diplomacy" (Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, 2018). Both countries are committed to preserving shared cultural heritage. This commitment is evident in the preservation of sites such as the mausoleum of the renowned Turkmen poet Makhtumkuli Faraghi and the footprints of Imam Reza in Turkmenistan. These sites not only hold cultural significance but also serve as symbols of the countries' shared history and mutual respect. Cross-border tourism cooperation represents another vital area of collaboration. The two nations are jointly managing and developing new tourism products to enhance the appeal of cultural attractions. This approach not only boosts economic ties but also facilitates people-to-people interactions.

Youth cultural exchanges and media cooperation have also gained prominence in bilateral relations. The signing of a memorandum on sports cooperation and the expansion of academic exchanges between technology companies in both countries underscore this trend. Furthermore, negotiations between the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) and Turkmenistan on bilateral media interactions, including joint television productions, highlight the growing importance of media collaboration (Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, 2019). These multifaceted cultural exchanges and cooperative initiatives serve to strengthen mutual understanding and friendship between the peoples of Iran and Turkmenistan. Moreover, they lay a solid foundation for political and economic cooperation, helping to mitigate differences, enhance mutual trust, and promote comprehensive development of bilateral relations. By leveraging cultural diplomacy, both countries aim to expand their influence, facilitate cultural integration, reduce disparities, and prevent regional policy divergences, ultimately fostering a more robust and multidimensional partnership.

Analysis of Iran's Comprehensive Governance

The cross-border ethnic ties between Iran and Turkmenistan serve as a crucial strategic element in deepening bilateral relations, rooted in shared historical and cultural origins and ethnic affinities. This relationship unfolds across multiple dimensions, encompassing interactions at national, regional, and border provincial levels. Iran employs cultural and educational initiatives to foster mutual trust and understanding, thereby establishing a foundation for broader bilateral engagement. The shared cultural identity of cross-border ethnic groups emerges as a key factor in advancing Iran's strategic interests, with Iran establishing cultural institutions that serve as vital bridges and sources of expertise for collaborative partners.

Despite the inherent sensitivity of cross-border ethnic issues, Iran mobilizes its moderate Sunni Turkmen ethnic elites, leveraging their linguistic and cultural advantages to facilitate exchanges. Concurrently, Iran navigates religious sensitivities by centering its approach on cultural institutions, emphasizing the unique appeal of Iranian history, festivals, literature, and other cultural elements to enhance its cultural influence and national reputation. This methodology contributes to the development of robust partnerships capable of sustaining effective cultural relations even in challenging environments.

Through cross-border economic and cultural exchanges, Iran aims to cultivate regional identity, strengthen centripetal forces, and ameliorate relations with neighboring countries, thereby laying the groundwork for long-term cooperation. Historically, despite the influence of Russia and the Soviet Union in Central Asia, Iranian culture maintained a degree of influence. Turkmenistan's post-independence pursuit of national self-determination presented Iran with new opportunities to expand its influence.

Nevertheless, significant cultural differences persist between the two nations, encompassing sectarian identities, linguistic and cultural disparities, and modern state identities. In response to these challenges, Iran has

adopted a pragmatic diplomatic strategy, eschewing revolutionary exportation in favor of a more comprehensive approach that leverages the ethnic, linguistic, and cultural advantages of cross-border ethnic groups to create avenues for bilateral cooperation. This method transcends religious and ideological boundaries, utilizing cultural diplomacy more holistically to enhance emotional identification among cross-border ethnic groups, thereby promoting comprehensive development of bilateral relations.

This multifaceted approach to cultural diplomacy not only mitigates potential sources of tension but also capitalizes on the shared heritage and cultural resonance between Iran and Turkmenistan. By emphasizing common cultural elements while respecting differences, Iran seeks to create a robust framework for sustained cooperation that can withstand geopolitical fluctuations and ideological disparities. The strategic use of cross-border ethnic ties as a diplomatic tool illustrates the complex interplay between cultural affinity, national interests, and regional dynamics in shaping Iran's foreign policy approach towards Turkmenistan and the broader Central Asian region.

Since Turkmenistan's independence, Iran has consistently endeavored to project its image as a regional power and underscore its historical and cultural identity, striving to demonstrate its significant potential in assisting newly independent post-Soviet states. Iran recognizes the intricate relationship between the living standards of border residents and the security of both nations' frontiers. Through diplomatic efforts, Iran aims to eliminate obstacles, prevent the politicization of economic issues, and establish a foundation for deepening cooperation.

Iran has adopted a multifaceted strategy to promote a positive economic cycle both internally and externally:

(1) Leveraging cross-border economic cooperation to enhance the economic development of border provinces. This approach fosters mutually beneficial cooperation, promoting socio-economic development in border regions and addressing common challenges.

(2) Supporting border tourism cooperation by utilizing cultural heritage and historical attractions to elevate living standards and satisfaction among the populace, generate employment opportunities, and stimulate the growth of creative industries.

(3) Actively resolving conflicts with Turkmenistan, particularly in energy cooperation, by emphasizing the profound cultural and historical ties between the two nations to mend relations.

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian has emphasized the importance of eliminating trade barriers and strengthening cooperation across various sectors, particularly in transportation and energy. Through these measures, Iran has not only improved the economic conditions and energy supply in its northeastern Turkmen region but also stabilized regional public sentiment while repairing its relationship with Turkmenistan.

This comprehensive strategy has both reinforced human bonds and stabilized Iran's northeastern region through economic interaction and cultural interdependence. Consequently, it has created favorable conditions for the long-term development of bilateral relations. By improving the domestic situation in the northeastern Turkmen region and enhancing economic and political relations with neighboring Turkmenistan, Iran has effectively utilized the natural and human resources of the Turkmen region to significant effect.

The relationship between Iran and Turkmenistan is characterized by complexity due to the presence of cross-border Turkmen ethnic groups, rendering social stability in border regions a critical factor in bilateral relations. The two nations share extensive land and maritime boundaries, which not only present security challenges but also involve multifaceted issues such as cross-border ethnic activities and geopolitical interests. Particularly in

terms of transit points, the Caspian Sea, and border legal regimes, both countries face intricate situations requiring mutual coordination.

Concurrently, Turkmenistan's internal challenges and potential regional tensions in Central Asia influence bilateral relations. The presence of the United States and Israel in Turkmenistan, along with Turkmenistan's secular political system and its approach to handling Islamic fundamentalism, has become factors affecting bilateral relations. These elements not only have the potential to precipitate bilateral or multilateral tensions but also expose Iran's national security to the influence of multiple external geopolitical domains. Nevertheless, Iran's territorial space plays a complementary role in Turkmenistan's geopolitical strategy, serving an important function in absorbing and managing long-term instability factors. Consequently, ensuring social stability in border regions is not only crucial for bilateral relations but also key to maintaining regional balance and security.

Iran must adopt a cautious and balanced approach in addressing these complex issues, simultaneously safeguarding national security interests, fostering friendly relations with Turkmenistan, and considering broader regional dynamics and international influences. This necessitates a nuanced diplomatic strategy that navigates the intricate web of ethnic, political, and security considerations while promoting regional stability and cooperation. Iran recognizes the crucial role of cross-border ethnic integration in fostering relations with Turkmenistan, particularly considering the shared Turkmen population and their common historical and cultural background. To this end, Iran has implemented a multifaceted strategy to enhance cultural identity and social cohesion. By cultivating ethnic cultural competence, reinforcing historical consciousness, and promoting cultural exchange, Iran strives to strengthen national identity. The development of cultural tourism not only facilitates inter-ethnic understanding but also reaffirms the significance of national culture. Iran actively develops its cultural assets as a comparative advantage in the international cultural arena.

The establishment of cultural and educational personnel in Turkmenistan and the organization of cultural weeks provide opportunities for interaction among different ethnic groups while allowing neighboring populations to familiarize themselves with Iranian culture. Through the establishment of commemorative days, thematic tourist routes, and celebrations of shared holidays, Iran both showcases its cultural distinctiveness and creates platforms for cultural exchange. These initiatives aim to enhance domestic ethnic unity, lay the foundation for broader integration between the two countries, and simultaneously promote cooperation in cultural, educational, and scientific domains. Iran's efforts are directed towards creating an environment that respects diversity and strengthens cohesion, thereby contributing to regional stability and the improvement of bilateral relations. This approach reflects Iran's strategic understanding of the importance of cultural diplomacy in navigating complex geopolitical relationships and fostering regional cooperation.

Conclusion

Overall, Iran has proactively sought to repair relations with Turkmenistan by emphasizing the historical and cultural proximity of the two nations through their cross-border ethnic groups. This approach aims to avoid confrontation with Turkmenistan by prioritizing matters of national interest and socio-economic development. Iran underscores the importance of joint governmental committee activities in strengthening bilateral partnerships. As previously noted, when economic disputes arise, both countries often resort to leveraging cultural and historical commonalities to restore relations.

In 2024, a significant development in this bilateral relationship occurred recently when Turkmenistan and Iran signed a contract for the delivery of 10 billion cubic meters of Turkmen gas annually, which Iran plans to

subsequently ship to Iraq (The Associated Press, 2023). This agreement, announced by Turkmenistan's foreign ministry, includes plans for Iranian companies to construct a new 125-kilometer pipeline to Iran, expanding Turkmenistan's delivery capacity. Turkmenistan aims to increase its gas supplies to Iran to 40 billion cubic meters per year, a move that could significantly impact regional energy dynamics (Official Website of the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, 2024).

This deal is particularly noteworthy given Iraq's recent experiences with disruptions in Iranian gas supplies, which historically accounted for about 40% of its imports. For Turkmenistan, heavily reliant on revenue from its vast gas reserves, this agreement represents a crucial economic opportunity. It also aligns with Turkmenistan's broader strategy of diversifying its gas export routes, with China being its main customer and ongoing plans for a pipeline to supply Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India.

In discussing Iran-Turkmenistan relations, Iran primarily emphasizes the ethnic and cultural attributes shared by both nations. Through Iran's good-neighborly foreign policy, both countries are expected to emphasize drawing inspiration from their rich cultural and shared historical background to embark on a new chapter of mutual friendly cooperation in cultural, economic, and political domains. This approach aims to reach consensus on critical issues of global and regional concern, ensuring universal peace and security, and achieving sustainable development goals.

This strategy reflects Iran's sophisticated understanding of the role of cultural diplomacy in navigating complex geopolitical relationships. By leveraging shared ethnic and cultural ties alongside significant economic partnerships, Iran seeks to build a foundation for stronger bilateral relations that can withstand political and economic challenges. This approach not only serves to mitigate potential conflicts but also creates opportunities for deeper cooperation in various sectors, particularly in the crucial energy sector. The emphasis on cultural and historical bonds, combined with tangible economic cooperation, provides a stable base from which to address more contentious issues, potentially leading to more robust and resilient bilateral relations in the long term.

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