

SLOVAKIA AND TURKMENISTAN: SIGNIFICANT PARTNERSHIPS

ETIF AND THE RUHNAMA'S CZECH TRANSLATION

Karol Tölgyesi, originally of Slovakian origin, is the General Manager of the Czech company ETIF, which specialize in chemical and construction work. ETIF were responsible for translating the Ruhnama into Czech, which Tölgyesi authorized specifically. In 2003, ETIF led a Czech consortium that offered a tender to reconstruct Maryazot, Turkmenistan's largest chemical complex. The consortium won the project, which carried a price tag of 210 million dollars.

"The main reason we translated the Ruhnama," he told us, "was because a lot of our personnel came to Turkmenistan and encountered the book. Because not all of them knew Russian, they expressed their interest in having a version of the Ruhnama that they could read. Of course, there was no specific economic advantage to be had for us." Tölgyesi later admitted another reason for the translation, however. He explained that ETIF had used the book to raise the company's profile and the profile of all the other Czech companies in Turkmenistan: "We saw the Ruhnama as a way to possibly foster cooperation and to better establish Czech companies in the Turkmen market."

For Tölgyesi, the human rights situation in Turkmenistan was a separate issue from the business done in the country. "I think that business is business, and human rights are human rights. Companies are, of course, more interested in business than in rights. Naturally, we're aware of the problems. In Turkmenistan, we've been trying to keep the economic and political things separate from each other."

More information:

Rukhnama book by Saparmurat Niyazov translated into Czech

http://www.turkmenistan.ru/?page_id=3&lang_id=en&elem_id=4983&type=event&highlight_words=czech&sort=date_desc

Turkmenistan to increase production of carbamide and ammonium nitrate

http://www.turkmenistan.ru/?page_id=3&lang_id=en&elem_id=4870&type=event&highlight_words=etif&sort=date_desc

SLOVAKIAN FOREIGN MINISTER'S VISIT TO TURKMENISTAN

In June 2008, the Slovak Minister of Foreign Affairs Jan Kubish headed a representative delegation in Ashgabat and held a meeting with the Turkmen president Gurbanguly Berdymuhammedov. According to an article published by the Turkmenistan State News Agency, Kubish spoke about his country's intense interest in co-operation with Turkmenistan, and added that the large-scale reform programmes created wonderful incentives to intensify the business contacts.

It should be noted, however, that the reforms made in Turkmenistan during Berdymuhammedov's rule have been surface-level, and in terms of freedom of speech and human rights violations everything has remained the same.

More information:

President of Turkmenistan received Slovak Minister of Foreign Affairs

http://turkmenistan.gov.tm/eng/2008/06/25/president_of_turkmenistan_received_slovak_minister_of_foreign_affairs.htm

Slovakian foreign minister intends to expand cooperation with Turkmenistan

http://www.turkmenistan.ru/?page_id=3&lang_id=en&elem_id=13086&type=event&highlight_words=slovakia&sort=date_desc