

## IRELAND AND TURKMENISTAN: SIGNIFICANT PARTNERSHIPS

### DRAGON OIL PLC

Dragon Oil Plc. has invested heavily in the Caspian Sea region's oilfields in Turkmenistan. It is registered as an Irish company, but the majority of its shares (52.64%) are owned by the Emirates National Oil Company (ENOC), which is a Dubai state-owned company. Dragon Oil Plc is the most important foreign-owned oil producer in Turkmenistan, and the founder of the country's first foreign-owned oil refinery. The company is listed in the Irish and London stock markets.

Dragon Oil Plc. has made a 'Production Sharing Agreement (PSA)' with Turkmenistan's government. The contract allows the dictatorship a giant share: of the forecast 651 million barrels due in the life of the agreement Dragon Oil are only netting 232 million of them. Along with a crashing cotton export economy, oil and gas are the only means for Turkmenistan to earn money and it is being aided and abetted by Dragon Oil. While the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) has suspended indefinitely public sector lending to Turkmenistan, the bank's web site states that it has "extended a US\$ 75 million loan to Dragon Oil, to support the commercial development of hydrocarbon reserves in the Turkmen Caspian Sea sector". The Dragon Oil project is the EBRD's first investment in the Turkmen energy industry.

Dragon Oil Plc's own website speaks openly about the company's collaboration with Turkmenistan, and defines the development and commercialisation of the Cheleken Contract Area in the Caspian Sea as the company's principal interest. The website also mentions that discussions will continue with the Turkmenistan government and other international operators concerning a joint gas export scheme. An article published on January 14th 2008 states that Dragon Oil Plc reached new record production levels, and received support from the president of Turkmenistan for its strategy to increase oil production as well as plans for the utilization of the contract area's gas resources. In March 2007 Dragon Oil Plc commissioned a new 50,000 b/d oil processing facility, which is the first phase of a project that will ultimately include both processing and storage capacity, and will allow Dragon to double the production level.

Dragon Oil Plc's link to the Ruhnama could be found in the United Arab Emirates. The company's Chairman of Board of Directors, Hussain M. Sultan, is mentioned in a Turkmenistan news article on a UAE delegation's meeting with the late president Niyazov. Collaboration, particularly on the energy sector was discussed during the visit, and UAE's Crown Prince Saud Bin Saqr al Qassimi expressed his appreciation on the translation of Ruhnama into many languages, including Arabic. The head of the UAE delegation, Crown Prince Ras Al Khaimah Sheikh Saud Bin Saqr al Qassimi, asked for Niyazov's permission to translate the sequel of Ruhnama in Arabic.

More information:

Dragon Oil company website  
<http://www.dragonoil.com/>

*Dragon Oil and Turkmenistan*  
<http://www.indymedia.ie/article/79122#comment210768>

*Turkmenistan – Dragon Oil in Cheleken*  
<http://www.entrepreneur.com/tradejournals/article/152080760.html>

*Dragon Oil Plc boosts Cheleken oil production*  
<http://energy.ihs.com/News/WW-News/news-2008/Dragon-Oil-Plc-boosts-Cheleken-oil-roduction-Turkmenistan.htm>

*Turkmenistan's rights record doesn't outweigh international investment interest*  
<http://www.eurasianet.org/departments/business/articles/eav053003.shtml>

*UAE, Turkmenistan Ink Agreement for Mutual Cooperation*  
<http://news.trendaz.com/index.shtml?show=news&newsid=861389&lang=EN>

*UAE delegation looks at opportunities for cooperation with Turkmenistan in oil and gas field*  
[http://www.turkmenistan.ru/?page\\_id=3&lang\\_id=en&elem\\_id=8176&type=event&highlight\\_words=UAE&sort=date\\_desc](http://www.turkmenistan.ru/?page_id=3&lang_id=en&elem_id=8176&type=event&highlight_words=UAE&sort=date_desc)

### EMEROL

Emerol is an Irish company, which has contracts in Turkmenistan worth tens of millions of dollars on rebuilding and modernising oil refineries.

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According to an article on the Washington Post website, the company published the Ruhnama in Lithuanian (one of the company's directors is Lithuanian, according to company registration documents filed in Dublin).

An article published in 2005 on the Turkmenistan State News Agency website states that Emerol has also sponsored the book's translation into Latvian.

More information:

Emerol company website

<http://emerol.net/emerol/news/>

*A Turkmen Tome Gets Foreign Aid*

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A45332-2005Feb22>

*Turkmen president's book "Ruhnama" published in Latvia*

[http://turkmenistan.ru/index.php?page\\_id=3&lang\\_id=en&elem\\_id=6838&type=event&sort=date\\_desc/](http://turkmenistan.ru/index.php?page_id=3&lang_id=en&elem_id=6838&type=event&sort=date_desc/)

*Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov inaugurates two new facilities at Turkmenbashi complex of oil refineries*

[http://www.turkmenistan.ru/?page\\_id=3&lang\\_id=en&elem\\_id=12480&type=event&highlight\\_words=emerol&sort=date\\_desc](http://www.turkmenistan.ru/?page_id=3&lang_id=en&elem_id=12480&type=event&highlight_words=emerol&sort=date_desc)

### **EquidaT**

EquidaT is a Kildare based equine consultancy company that aims to export the rare Turkmen Akhal-Teke breed out into the world. Akhal-Teke breed is one of the oldest horse breeds known by man, and is important in terms of equine genetics. The breed is particularly hardy and excels at endurance racing over distances of up to 160 kilometres.

In 2001 the company made an agreement with the government of Turkmenistan for the establishment of a DNA blood-testing laboratory in the country's capital Ashgabat. Previously it has not been possible to sell the breed for export, as no lineage has been established and there is no protocol between Turkmenistan and the European Commission for the movement of horses. According to the Managing Director of EquidaT, Tony Watkins, the contract the company signed is for the provision of equipment and personnel training. Initially Turkmen people will be brought to Kildare for training at the Irish Equine Centre, and then, following delivery of the equipment, Irish experts will travel to Turkmenistan to further train the personnel there.

The contract secured by EquidaT follows EU funded visits to Turkmenistan by company representatives who drew up an overall development programme for the government of the country to assist in the re-establishment of its horse racing and breeding industry. According to Tony Watkins, the equine industry is potentially huge for Turkmenistan, and if the country could internationalise its native breed there would be worldwide demand.

More information:

*Kildare Based Company Leads the Way in New Equine Testing Programme*

<http://www.kildarehorse.ie/newsletter/vol2-issue2/vol2-issue2-equidat.htm>

### **IRISH AMBASSADOR ACCREDITED TO TURKMENISTAN**

On March 4<sup>th</sup> 2008 Ireland's first ambassador, Justine Harman, was accredited in Turkmenistan. An article published by the Turkmen State News Agency stated that during a meeting with the Turkmen President Gurbanguly Berdimuhammedov, both sides agreed that science, education and tourism were promising areas of bilateral partnership, and emphasized the potential of cooperation in the energy sphere, agriculture and specifically horse-breeding. The Irish Ambassador also paid homage to the first president of Turkmenistan by laying flowers on Niyazov's family mausoleum.

More information:

*Ireland's first ambassador accredited in Turkmenistan*

[http://www.turkmenistan.ru/?page\\_id=3&lang\\_id=en&elem\\_id=12311&type=event&highlight\\_words=irish&sort=date\\_desc](http://www.turkmenistan.ru/?page_id=3&lang_id=en&elem_id=12311&type=event&highlight_words=irish&sort=date_desc)