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**U.S. EXPERT: AZERBAIJAN - NEXUS OF GEOPOLITICS IN REGION**

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Baku as a venue for a meeting between U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen. Joseph Dunford and Russian Chief of the General Staff Gen. Valery Gerasimov makes sense, as Azerbaijan is in the nexus of geopolitics among Russia, Iran and Turkey, Theodore Karasik, senior advisor to Gulf State Analytics, told Trend Feb. 17.

Gerasimov and Dunford met in Baku Feb. 16 and outlined vectors of joint work aimed at easing tensions and preventing military incidents.

In addition, Baku has good relations with NATO by participating in Afghan operations but it is also keenly aware of the Kremlin's interests and balances perfectly between the two, for now, opposite poles, the expert said.

The expert added that there are two topics for those important talks in Baku - first, the ability of the US and Russia to coordinate on the Levant to destroy the Islamic State (aka IS, ISIL, ISIS or Daesh) terrorist group and second - NATO-Russia relations.

Azerbaijan's energy plans are a subject that requires NATO-Russia attention in order to reduce misunderstandings in the near term, he said.

But there is a third topic - U.S. relations with Azerbaijan that is crucial, he added. Dunford pushed hard to show U.S. commitment to Azerbaijan across a number of fields from security to energy.

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Kaynak/Source: