

Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic

Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic Закавказская демократическая федеративная республика	
<p>Flag</p>	
<p>Russian Transcaucasia immediately prior to the formation of the Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic.</p>	
Capital	Tbilisi
Language(s)	Georgian, Armenian, Azerbaijani
Government	Republic
Historical era	Interwar period
- Independence	February 24, 1918
- Georgia declares independence	May 26, 1918
- Armenia and Azerbaijan declare independence	May 28, 1918
- Disestablished	May 28, 1918
Currency	Transcaucasian ruble

The **Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic** (TDFR, Закавказская демократическая Федеративная Республика (ЗКДФР), Zakavkazskaya Demokraticeskaya Federativnaya Respublika (ZKDFR), also known as the **Transcaucasian Federation**) (February 1918 – May 1918), was a short-lived state composed of the modern-day

countries of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia in the South Caucasus.

History

After the February Revolution, the Russian Provisional Government installed the Special Transcaucasian Committee (особый Закавказский Комитет (ОЗАКОМ), *osobyu Zakavkazskiy Komitet (OZAKOM)*) to govern the area.

Sejm

In November 1917, following the October Revolution, the first government of the independent Transcaucasia was created in Tbilisi. The "Transcaucasian Commissariat (Sejm)" and "Transcaucasian Committee" existed for a couple of months following the Bolshevik seizure of power in St. Petersburg. The Sejm was headed by a Georgian Social-democrat (Menshevik), Nikolay Chkheidze.

On December 5, 1917, this new "Transcaucasian Committee" gave the endorsement to the Armistice of Erzincan that was signed with the Ottoman command of the Third Army.

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On February 10, 1918, the Sejm gathered and made the decision to establish independence. On February 24, 1918, The Sejm proclaimed the "Transcaucasian Democratic Federative Republic".

On March 3, 1918, the armistice of Erzincan followed up with the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk marking Russia's exit from World War I. In the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, the Ottoman Empire regained Batum, Kars, and Ardahan.

Between March 14 and April 1918 the Trabzon peace conference was held between the Ottoman Empire and a delegation of the Sejm. On April 5, the head of the Transcaucasian delegation, Akaki Chkhenkeli, accepted the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk as a basis for more negotiations and wired the governing bodies urging them to accept this position.^[1] The mood prevailing in Tbilisi was very different. Tbilisi acknowledged a state of war between itself and the Ottoman Empire.^[1] Shortly after, the Third Army began its advance and took Erzerum and Kars.

On May 11, 1918, a new peace conference opened at Batum.^[2] At this conference the Ottomans extended their demands to include Tiflis as well as Alexandropol and Echmiadzin, where they wanted to build a railroad to connect Kars and Julfa with Baku. The Armenian and Georgian members of the Republic's delegation began to stall. Beginning on May 21, the Ottoman army moved ahead once again. The conflict led to the Battle of Sardarapat (May 21–29), the Battle of Kara Killisse (1918) (May 24–28), and the Battle of Bash Abaran (May 21–24).

On May 26, 1918, Georgia (Democratic Republic of Georgia) declared independence; two days later, on May 28, Armenia (Democratic Republic of Armenia) and Azerbaijan (Azerbaijan Democratic Republic) followed suit, dissolving the federation. The day is commemorated by both countries as Republic Day.

Military

Following the Russian Revolution, the breakup of the Russian Caucasus Army left the Caucasus virtually undefended against the advancing Third Army. The Armenians, Georgians, and Azerbaijanis made an attempt to establish regional military unity. The three nationalities placed their military forces under the command of the "*Military Council of Nationalities*".

The forces under the "Military Council of Nationalities" consisted of Armenian military units that had been formed during the course of World War I, Georgian forces raised by the Provisional Government, and Azerbaijani troops that had been raised independently without any central sanction.

The "Military Council of Nationalities" was short-lived. On May 28, 1918, Georgia signed the Treaty of Poti with Germany, and welcomed the German Caucasus Expedition, seeing the Germans as protectors against the havoc in post-Revolution Russia and the Ottoman military advances.^[3] Azerbaijan sided with the Ottoman Empire. Each

Nationality then went alone to try to defend itself.

Legislature

- 32 Social Democratic Menshevik party,
- 30 Musavat party,
- 27 were of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation. (R. Zorian, H. Ohanjanian, H. Zavrian, H. Kachaznuni, S. Tigranian, Al. Khatisian, Kh. Karchikian, M. Haroutiunian)

References

- [1] Richard Hovannisian "The Armenian people from ancient to modern times" Pages 292-293
- [2] Ezel Kural Shaw History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey. Page 326
- [3] Lang, David Marshall (1962). *A Modern History of Georgia*, p. 207-8. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson.

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