By the end of 1921 Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan had all come under Bolshevik governance. In Moscow discussions went on with regard to the future representation of the three Transcaucasian states. It was decided that a Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic (TSFSR) would be constructed, which represented the three republics in Moscow, while they retained their own national governments. Only Georgia rebelled against the directives from Moscow. At least until 1923 there were still some other political parties that the Bolsheviks tolerated, but by 1923 and 1929, in all Transcaucasian republics, other political parties were abolished by decision of the authorities in Moscow.

Treaties between the Transcaucasian republics were centralized, and treaties between the Transcaucasian Federation and the RSFSR, later Soviet Union, were encouraged. In this period the fate of Nagorno-Karabakh and Nakhichevan was decided. In 1931 Abkhazia’s status was downgraded from a treaty SSR to ASSR.

At the political level nationalism was strongly discouraged because this could impede the realization of the Soviet Union, and politics were ‘cleansed’ of bourgeois elements. This resulted in the 1930s purges, which struck the Transcaucasus as hard as they did other parts of the Soviet Union.

_The Creation of the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic_

After all the Transcaucasian states had come under Soviet rule in May 1921, the declaration establishing the Transcaucasian Federation of 7 November 1921 underlined, apart from the ongoing goal of Sovietization, including the signing of common treaties, the possibility of unifying the economies of the three Transcaucasian republics.¹

¹ See _Istoriia Konstitutsii (v Dokumentakh) 1917–1956, O Federatsii Zakavkazskikh Respublik (Rezoliutsiiia Kavkazskogo biuro Ts.K.R.K.P.),_ 1957 and _O Federatsii_
In a secret French, but now declassified, report it is noted that an agreement had been signed between Turkey and Soviet Russia in which “the Bolsheviks have the right to occupy the portions of the Caucasus evacuated by the Kemalists, and it is anticipated that a further clause will assure Bolshevik reoccupation as far as the old Russian-Turkish frontier”.\(^2\) Another clause indicates that the Kemalist government will not enter into an agreement with the Western Powers without the consent of the government in Moscow. This means that Russia and Turkey would work closely together.

Elections in the three Transcaucasian Republics were held at the end of January 1922. Lenin issued a “Project on the Formation of a Transcaucasian Federative Republic” in which he recognized this Republic (Article 1), and instituted a Committee for Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, the Kavbiuro (Article 2).\(^3\) This Kavbiuro on 7 November 1921 “declared the necessity for the organization of a federative union of the republics of the Transcaucasus”.\(^4\)

The Federation would be based on a political, economic and military union.\(^5\) The agreement to federate was accepted by the plenipotentiaries in the Central.

Executive Committees (CEC) of the Transcaucasian republics in Tiflis on 12 March 1922. A Treaty of Alliance between the Azerbaijan, Armenian and Georgian SSRs establishing the Federative Union of Socialist Soviet Republics of the Transcaucus was signed.\(^6\)

1. The TSFSR Soviet would have jurisdiction over:
2. military affairs;
3. finances;
4. foreign affairs;

---

\(^1\) Republik Zakavkhaz’ia (Iz rezoliutsii II kraevogo Zakavkazskogo partiinogo soveshchaniia), pp. 308–310.

\(^2\) The report is dated 22 June 1921, and an extract is found in Burdett, Caucasian Boundaries, 762.

\(^3\) O Federatsii Republik Zakavkaz’ia (iz rezoliutsii II kraevogo Zakavkazskogo partiinogo soveshchaniia), p. 311.


\(^5\) Stated in the Preamble.

\(^6\) A translation of the text can be found in Foreign Office 371/7728, Moscow to Foreign Secretary, 14 August and 5 September 1922, forwarding Treaty of Alliance of Transcaucasian Socialist Soviet Republics of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia of 12 March 1922, and in Burdett, Caucasian Boundaries, 799 and 804–805.