

## **Turkmen Party's Niazov Discusses Ethnic Issues**

Turkmenistan has more than enough problems. Will we make progress in solving them if the people begin to attend rallies? I must point out to their credit and as a tribute to their courage that the people do not pour out onto the streets and the representatives of more than 100 nations and ethnic groups living in our territory still live as a single harmonious family. Adversities are objectively a factor which bring the people closer together, and I do not doubt that in those areas where the reverse occurs those people who do not like renewal and perestroika have already been hard at work. . . . It is important to draw closer to Lenin's concept of nationalities policy, to restructure the Soviet federation and render it full-blooded. The task is to ensure that a totally healthy and constructive character is imparted to movements stemming from the heart of the people. We must make the national factor the motive force of perestroika rather than an obstacle and a brake on renewal.

*Source:* "Turkmen Party's Niazov Discusses Ethnic Issues," *Pravda*, November 17, 1989. Trans. Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS).