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ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Macron's 'European Political Community' Proposal: Searching for Change in the Old World

Russian President Vladimir Putin launched a war which he called "special operation" against Ukraine on February 24, 2022. The war has increased the vulnerability of security and energy in Europe. These vulnerabilities lead to the emergence of new searches in Europe. In this context, on May 9, 2022; on the Europe Day, French President Emmanuel Macron, who made a statement in the European Parliament,

proposed the creation of a different European political community beyond the European Union (EU), that will include the non-EU states. Macron stated that the solution lies in a newly formed organization while discussing Ukraine's possible EU membership because, in his words; "Even if Ukraine is now granted EU candidate state status, it will take years for them to become a real EU member." It is possible to evalu-



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ate Macron's statement within the framework of both the reality of war and the internal dynamics of France.

Europe, which is already experiencing difficulties because of the Covid-19 pandemic, has high-level tensions and increasing concerns due to the Russia-Ukraine War. Europe is experiencing the most important security concerns after the Cold War and feels the threat of Russia. After the war started due to the threat perception in question, the West began to impose sanctions on individuals and institutions in many areas, from banking to food and from technology to transportation. Even though frozen accounts or stopped natural gas pipeline projects are put into practice in order to block Russia's path, the developments affect the whole world due to inflation and increased living expenses. Especially because of the increasing oil and natural gas prices, it is not only Russia that is affected by the sanctions; Western states are also adversely affected. According to 2020 data, Russia is the second largest oil exporter and the largest natural gas exporter.[1] Therefore, sanctions are felt deeply especially in Europe and cause some contradictions. For example, Hungary, an EU member, opposes the EU's sanctions on Russian oil. Similarly, Bulgaria requested exceptions for the Balkan countries. Serbia, which is an EU candidate country, also opposes imposing sanctions on Russia. In other words, the EU cannot take a monolithic stance. In this context, it can be deduced that there is a distrust between countries and existing institutions.

In the context of EU-Ukraine relations, President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen announced that the union managers will give their opinions on Ukraine's membership in June 2022.[2] However, Ukraine's EU membership process is not of a nature that will result in the short and medium term. For example, Albania applied for membership in 2009, received the status of a candidate country in 2014 and still has not become a member. On the other hand, Serbia is in the same situation. [3] While this is the case, in the current conjuncture, Ukraine's EU membership application is a symbolic step rather than a concrete move. This can be characterized as a challenge as part of the stance taken against Russia.

Explaining that he will work with interested governments to implement this structure, Macron stated that he believes the said initiative is important for the stability of Europe.[4] In addition, emphasizing that the EU should not be the only organization in Europe due to its high level of integration and goals, Macron suggested the establishment of a parallel organization instead of lowering the standards of the EU for faster accession.[5]

On the other hand, the threats posed by the war to Europe require urgent solutions. The fact that EU membership is long and difficult, pushes some European countries to consider alternatives. Macron's proposal for a different European community through the example of Ukraine can be read in this outlook. French leaders stated that many countries such as Moldova, Georgia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, North Macedonia, and Serbia also want to become members. While expressing that EU membership is not the only way to ensure stability in Europe, Macron said that the proposed structure will offer European nations a new area for cooperation. In this context, EU candidate countries or potential candidate countries seem to be Macron's main target audience. Since the long wait in the candidate hall of the said countries creates boredom, they may desire to be accepted in one way or another, and they may welcome the idea to be a part of an important European leader's suggestion like Macron's.

Considering that the far-right candidate Marine Le Pen received over 40% of the votes in the French presidential elections held on April 24, 2022, and Macron actually won a bittersweet victory, it can be argued that the statements in question are a part of the image renewal initiative for Macron. In addition to being one of the pioneering countries in the establishment of the EU, also in France, there are a considerable amount of anti-European views. This is due to the fact that the EU is described as a disappointment and that those who support the Charles de Gaulle school, advocate more nationalistic ideas. [6] Former President of France, De Gaulle, who is the architect of France's 5th Republic Period, used the rhetoric of the leadership of France while expressing that Europe should be a unique superpower separate from the USA and the Soviet Union with the Fouchet Plan. In other words, Macron, inspired by his predecessors, wishes to renew France's long-standing leadership image. In fact, the EU perception of the French society has been shaped within the framework of Germany-France relations and the plans proposed by the French authorities for the EU. In short, Macron plays to the public opinion with his proposal to establish a new European organization and calculates that he will meet the social expectations.

In fact, Macron wanted to thrust to the forefront his own leadership and the French idea when he said "brain dead" for the North Atlantic Alliance Organization (NATO) in the past and in connection with this, he expressed that Europe should have its own defense organization. The present discussion reflects the same approach. On the other hand, the departure of former German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who was seen as the stabi-

lizing power of Europe, also created a leadership vacuum in Continental Europe. In this context, it can be said that Macron aims to fill the leadership "gap" with his European plan.

But France's proposal is neither unique nor new. In 2018, Macron proposed a wider "single-centered interlocking rings" model and talked about a "new" system that represents countries with different integration levels. On the other hand, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson also announced his own "new" bloc. This bloc, which includes many Eastern European countries as well as Ukraine, is an alternative structure to the EU in the form of "European Commonwealth of Nations".[7] Johnson's proposal, with the motto of "countries with a stance that differs from the EU", came after Macron's proposal was openly rejected, and symbolized the escalation of the competition for leadership.

Johnson's idea seems to have a clearer goal than Macron's. First of all, Macron is one of the founding members of the EU, and the countries that are the target of this proposal will expect France to put the EU first. For this reason, countries that may favor Macron's proposal may not welcome being in the background. On the other hand, the United Kingdom, as the only country to leave the EU, can be seen closer to its potential to be the "pioneer" of such a structure. In this context, Macron should act by taking into account the factor of the United Kingdom in order to take the lead in his idea. Macron should come up with more comprehensive explanations in order to show that establishing a European community is serious and planned; it should be stated that this community will not be in the background and that will provide real benefits to the participants.

As a result, France is reviving the idea of "France, the leader of Europe", which became evident after the Second World War as a result of the developments both in its internal dynamics and in the region. France's proposal for a different European community can be considered as a solution attempt to both the criticisms of the EU and to the new European order. Macron, in order not to lose the actors he thinks are not suitable in terms of EU membership criteria; wants to offer them an alternative organization and use this situation for the French leadership. To achieve this goal, Macron must do much more than speak in general terms, he must present a real plan to the audiences he is addressing. On the other hand, countries should be convinced that the newly created community will be a benefit and they will not be left behind.

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ANKASAM ANALYSIS

The Energy Dilemma of Japan

The war between Russia and Ukraine broke out at the end of February, has not only changed the European geopolitical order but also transformed the rules of financial markets and the global energy game. In the first reaction to the war, European countries proclaimed their decision to halt energy imports from Russia. In this direction, the major objectives of the European Union (EU) countries have been to increase the diversity of energy sources and to ensure an accelerating transition to renewable resources.

Since the war, Japan has pursued a parallel

policy with the United States of America (USA) and European countries in imposing sanctions on Russia. In addition to admitting alleged war crimes committed by Russian forces in Ukraine, Japan announced in April that it would follow the EU and Group of Seven (G7) countries and ban Russian coal imports.[1]

In this context, Japan finds itself in an energy dilemma. Japan has one of the lowest rates of self-energy sufficiency in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) at 11.2% in 2020.[2] Japan, a re-



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source-poor island nation, is more vulnerable than any other country to changes in global energy markets created by the Russian-Ukrainian War. Besides, relations between Moscow and Tokyo, which were strained due to the Kuril Islands, further deteriorated after the war. Following Japan's participation in Western sanctions against Russia, the Kremlin has decided to withdraw from negotiations on the peace treaty between Russia and Japan on the disputed islands.[3] While Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida is clear about Russia's invasion of Ukraine and where Japan stands in its territorial integrity, it remains unclear how exactly he plans to address the new energy dilemma facing Tokyo.

Japan, which has limited resources, highly depends on Russia for its natural gas requirements. Finding alternative sources in the midst of the global crisis is also posing a challenge for Japan. Therefore, unlike Western countries, Kishida is more reluctant to experience a complete disengagement with Moscow. While Tokyo remains committed to supporting the ongoing joint liquefied natural gas (LNG) project with Russia in the Sakhalin Region, has announced its decision to phase out coal and oil imports which is a lesser dependent sector to Russia.[4]

The natural gas resources of Japan have largely been met through LNG imports. LNG is of critical importance as it provides 36% of the country's electricity according to 2021 data. Most of Japan's LNG supply depends on a long-term contractual arrangement. In this context, in order to ensure energy security, Japanese trading companies Mitsubishi Corp. and Mitsui & Co should continue their investments in Sakhalin-2.

By threatening the rights of Japanese and European investors, Russian President Vladimir Putin has announced Russia's plans to nationalize the "Sakhalin-2 Offshore Oil and Gas Project," the world's largest integrated, export-oriented first offshore oil and gas project in the Far East. [5] Almost all of the project's gas exports, most of which transferred to Japan, South Korea and China, are sold under long-term contracts.

This decision of Putin also increases the risk of Sakhalin-2 suspending the government's contractual shipment of LNG to Japan by reason of Tokyo's criticising the Kremlin for its decision to invade Ukraine. Therefore, Japan's stake in the project, and thereby its energy security, is in limbo. This decision of Moscow has brought Japan closer to losing a valuable fuel supply at a time when the country's electricity grid can least afford it.

Following these statements of the Kremlin, Tokyo announced that it would maintain its position in the Sakhalin-1 and Sakhalin-2 energy projects. In this context, this orientation of Japan can be explained for two reasons: First, Japan is much more dependent on foreign energy than the other G7 country and is not in a position to risk its energy supply. Second, Japan's withdrawal from these two projects would cost Japan more than it would Russia. In this framework, Japan's efforts to protect its shares in Russian oil and gas projects and its continued investment are the most reasonable options for the continuity of the energy supply.

However, after the G7 announced a cap on the price of crude oil exported from Russia, Kishida made a proposal that the upper limit would be placed at half the current price of Russian crude oil: [6]

"We have reached an agreement that the international community will establish a system in which the price of Russian oil will be capped at about half the current price, and the international community will not buy or allow the purchase of oil above that level."

Given that Russian oil is already sold at a generally high discount compared to its alternatives, a further discount of half would bring oil revenue closer to the level that Russia uses for its federal budget. Following Kishida's statement, the Kremlin criticized Japan for taking an "unfriendly stance" toward Russia and said it would hinder the development of economic relations between the two countries, including energy. Russia's former President Dmitry Medvedev has warned that global oil prices could exceed \$300-400 per barrel if the ceiling price proposals are implemented. As a result of these price fluctuations, Medvedev said, Japan "will not buy oil or natural gas from Russia, and therefore it will not be able to participate in the Sakhalin-2 LNG project." [7]

Following Russia's announcement, Japan faced the risk of losing its stake in Sakhalin-2, which is critical to the country's energy security. In this case, there are three scenarios in which Japan can ensure energy security:

First, it is possible to diversify the energy supply. However, this situation is unlikely to increase energy supplies to Japan in the short term due to the global natural gas market is already in the grip of supply shortages. The U.S. and Qatar, the world's largest LNG suppliers, are trading at record levels amid intensi-

fighting competition for gas, as they are being diverted to European markets. Furthermore, Sakhalin-2 is the closest LNG export facility to Japan, so importing supplies from new facilities will tie ships to longer journeys and cause extra congestion in supply chains that are already in danger. Depending on import volumes and currency levels, the extra costs to replace Sakhalin-2's LNG could increase by as much as 2 trillion yen (\$14.78 billion) per year. [8]

Secondly, it may be preferable to turn to sources other than natural gas. G-7 countries, including Japan, have taken steps to ban Russian coal shipments, which resulted in coal prices rising. Despite the high prices, turning to coal would not be a more sensible choice than LNG. On the other hand, the use of nuclear energy as an alternative source requires a change in the post-Fukushima safety rules that have traumatized the people of Japan. So, it does not seem possible for the public to support this situation.

The third and worst scenario would be Japan's failure to invest in the new operator in Sakhalin-2 and the termination of the contracts. Such a case may deal a sharp blow to Japan's energy security. Because the failure of LNG supplies will be a catastrophe due to the ongoing nationwide electricity shortage and the high electricity bills.

To sum up, Japan is struggling with congested electricity supplies due to extreme weather, the retirement status of old power plants, and delays in restarting nuclear reactors. Any disruption to LNG shipments threatens to further expand their grid, risking power outages in some parts of the country. In addition, experiencing the first scenario mentioned above and, buying alternative and "expensive" LNG sources will increase electricity bills for consumers and businesses, while deepening inflation woes. In this context, the most logical of the scenarios will be to supply LNG from Sakhalin-2 and accordingly achieve a calm dynamic in trade relations with Russia, especially in energy.

On the other side, Japan's efforts to calm its relations with Russia will create a contradiction among the G7 countries that have vowed to wipe Russia off the markets and will result in extra pressure on Japan. In such a case, Japan is expected to prefer either security of energy supply or cooperation with the G7 countries. However, just as the EU grants exemptions from sanctions to countries dependent on Russian energy such as Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic, Japan can get the approval of the G7 countries with the right approach. Thus, it will both ensure the security of the energy supply and allow it to follow the Western countries that acted as a bloc after the Russian-Ukrainian War.

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<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2022/03/08/national/japan-russia-belarus-sanctions-ukraine/>, (Date of Accession: 05.07.2022).

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<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1116602/japan-primary-energy-self-sufficiency-rate/> (Date of Accession: 05.07.2022).

[3] "Russia Halts Peace Treaty Talks with Japan Over Sanctions", Nikkei Asia, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/Russia-halts-peace-treaty-talks-with-Japan-over-sanctions> (Date of Accession: 05.07.2022).

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[8] "Russia move on Sakhalin-2 thrusts Japan into an energy dilemma", Asia Nikkei, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Business/Energy/Russia-move-on-Sakhalin-2-thrusts-Japan-into-an-energy-dilemma>, (Date of Accession: 07.07.2022).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Mullah Heybatullah Ahundzade's Messages of the Mullahs Meeting

The highest official in the organizational structure of the Taliban is the leader who bears the title of "Emir al-Mu'minin". In the Taliban regime, all political, military and religious forces are gathered in the leader. In this context, it is prevented from taking any decisions without the approval of the leader in foreign policy, domestic policy, economy and in every field. Because the Taliban believe in a theocratic state, that the leader is the shadow of God and that it is obligatory to obey him. In the Taliban understanding of the state, it is not possible

for the leader to be dismissed without being associated with Allah, except for his death or resignation. In other words, it is not possible to dismiss the leader and/or force him to resign because the leader's policies are not liked or not sufficient. The founding leader of the Taliban, Mullah Mohammed Omar, died in 2013, but the Taliban announced the death of the leader in 2015. After the announcement, Mullah Akhtar Muhammed Mansur took over the leadership instead of Mullah Omar. In 2016, Mullah Mansur was killed on the Iran-Pakistan border by the



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United States (USA) drone and he was replaced by Mullah Heybatullah Akhundzade. Since 2016, Ahunzade has been working as the Emir al-Mu'min of the Taliban.

The Taliban do not consider it appropriate for its leader to meet with the public and appear in the media for security reasons. Although the Taliban has once again dominated Afghanistan and established a government, the leader of the Taliban does not come together with the people and does not make a statement to the press. The fact that the Taliban leader is hidden leaves the Afghan people in doubt whether the leader is alive or not.

The Taliban called 3500 Mullahs from all over the country to Kabul and formed the "Mullahs Meeting". The Taliban officials stated that the meeting was suggested by the mullahs and the Taliban welcomed it and provided the conditions. The one-hour speech of Emir al-Mu'min Molla Heybetullah Ahundzade left its mark on the meeting. However, no visual sharing was made regarding the conversation. Because Akhundzade's views and statements form the basis of the domestic and foreign policy of the Taliban Government. In his speech, the leader of the Taliban made statements on the country's administrative system, domestic policy, foreign policy and economy. Akhundzade started his speech by talking about the victory of the Taliban and stated that "the success of jihad in Afghanistan honors not only Afghans but all Muslims". Afterwards, the leader commemorated the Afghans who lost their lives in the last 20 years and said, "If Muslims and Afghans died in our attacks, it was done to get these infidels out of the country and reach the current situation."^[1] In addition, the leader described the 20-year war as jihad and conveyed his thanks to those who supported them. As it is known, the Taliban have carried out suicide attacks in the last 20 years, causing the deaths of security forces and civilians. With these statements, the Taliban leader emphasized that the main reason for the deaths of civilians who lost their lives in the last 20 years is not the Taliban, but the occupation.

On the domestic policy issue, Akhundzade stated that the foundation of the Taliban Government is based on sharia and that the country will be governed in line with the recommendations of the mullahs. The leader argues that it is the main duty of the state to apply the shari'ah and to gain the approval of God.

Defining the 20-year war as an "Aqidah War", he stated that the main goals of the enemy against the Taliban are to end the sharia. Akhundzade said that with the Taliban's domination of Afghanistan again, talking about "sharia" and "invitation" in the country became liberal. In addition, Ahunzade described the Taliban Government as servants of the people, religion and Hanafi sect and defined it as a government established on the basis of "Pure Sharia". The Taliban leader added that the "pure Islamic state" promised to the people during the jihad process has now been implemented.

The leader of the Taliban claimed that security in the country would be ensured by sharia, obedience and justice, and stated that sharia should be applied first to the government itself and then to the people. He emphasized that obedience is behind ensuring security and in this context, the people must obey the district governor, the district governor to the governor, the governor to the ministers, and all state officials and the people to the Emirul-ul-Mumin.

He stated that the administration attaches importance to the constructive advice of scholars, but advised that it should avoid proposals that would weaken the Taliban Government. Akhundzade argued that the survival of the country will be ensured by justice and that justice will be provided by the just decisions of the scholars and the good practices of the government. Apart from these, Akhundzade used the phrase "Sultan is the shadow of Allah in the Islamic system and the subjects must obey him". With these statements, the Taliban leader addressed the Afghan people and stated that the foundation of the country was based on sharia and the advice of mullahs rather than the will of the people. Although the Taliban leader accused the old regime of being irreligious, it is known that in the last 20 years, the invitation has been free in Afghanistan and the laws of the state are based on Islamic rules.

As for his opponents, the Taliban leader said that the Taliban government is loyal to the general amnesty, that people who want to return to the country will be warmly welcomed, but those who wage war against the Taliban will be punished for the benefit of Islam, Muslims and the public.^[2] With this statement, the leader of the Taliban stated that he did not recognize any other option but to pledge allegiance to his opponents.

Regarding the economic problems, the Taliban leader pointed out that the administration of the country was in the hands of the Mullahs, and argued that if the mullahs and the subjects were united and security was ensured, the economic problems would be solved by themselves. He stated that there should be no expectations from the infidels for the restructuring of Afghanistan and that Afghan traders should achieve this. He also added that the Taliban Government ensured the transparent use of public resources by putting an end to corruption, bribery, bullying, ethnic conflict, nepotism and regional disputes. With these statements, the Taliban leader acknowledged that there are economic and social problems in Afghanistan, but also gave the message that the problems can be solved without the support of the international community.

The area that the Taliban leader emphasized the most was foreign policy. In this context, Heybatullah Akhundzade said, "Afghanistan is now a free and independent state, and even if the infidels drop atomic bombs, I will not give up on sharia and will not listen to their words." The leader of the Taliban, without mentioning any state, stated that he brought the most powerful state in the world to its knees, that some states were trying to overthrow the Taliban government, and that the mullahs and Taliban leaders should act in unison against the provocations and repel evil plans. In addition, the leader pointed out that they would surrender only to Allah and his suggestions and that they would not bow to any power other than God.^[3] With these statements, the leader of the Taliban claims that the legitimacy of the Taliban is the liberation of the country by fighting against the US and foreign powers. Akhundzade declared that he was aware of the aims of the enemies of the Taliban Government and would not compromise on the "Pure Islamic State", which was the main target of the Taliban. In other words, the leader of the Taliban states that he will not negotiate with the international community on a Sharia-based state, and that this is the red line of the Taliban regime.

Regarding neighboring states, the Taliban leader emphasized that they do not have bad will towards their neighbors and that they want goodness, security and peace because Islam commands it, and said that there is no threat to any neighboring state from Afghanistan. With this statement, the Taliban leader also gave the message that he was aware of the security concerns of neighboring states.

When the statements of the Taliban leader are evaluated, it is remarkable that he emphasized that he has the authority, but that he did not and will not take a step in line with the expectations of the international community. Clearly, the message was given that the foundation of the state is based on sharia and the will of the mullahs, and that the Taliban government will not back down in line with the wishes of the international community. However, as it can be seen, Afghanistan does not have the capacity to solve its problems by its own means. For these reasons, Afghanistan should be accepted as a part of the international community and the Taliban, who hold power in Afghanistan, should develop a policy taking into account the realities in order to keep its economy alive, to solve the humanitarian crisis and to implement infrastructure projects. Otherwise, it is not possible to say that the Taliban administration will be able to overcome the problems.

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ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Greek Lobbying in Greece and in the US

Lobbyism is one of the most effective elements of the determination of the domestic and foreign policy of the United States (US). Besides the President of the US, lobbyists directions take important place for decision making and evaluation of the personnel serves for important duties in the institutions and organizations in the decision-making mechanism on domestic and foreign policy, including the White House. In that sense, House of Representatives and Senate appears as another significant centers

for lobbying activities. That's why, every state allocates a budget for lobby firms and lobby activities somehow.

Like other states, Greece also give weight on lobbying activities in the US. In the latest period, especially after the President of US Joe Biden taken the power, it was felt that Greece's lobbying activities escalated. Thus, while US-Greece relations have gained a significant progress, Greece also escalated her initiatives on under-



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mining the US-Türkiye relations, which are in a crisis for a while. Greece is allocating new bases to the US in her territories, demanding F-35 fighter jets for herself, and trying to prevent the transfer of F-35 or F-16 fighter jets/modernization kits that Türkiye demanded from the US. This topic, which is far away from rational decision-making process, emerges as the most important trump of the Greek lobby in the US, and Greece.

As Newhouse highlights, the most influential lobby in the US is the lobbying activities that are carried out by the ethnic groups. In that sense, Armenians, Greeks, the Chinese, Indians, the Taiwanese, Ukrainian and the Japanese stand out.[1] In that perspective, Türkiye had to struggle with the Greek and Armenian lobbies, which have a dense ethnic population in the US.

The influence of the lobby of Greece over the President Biden can be seen in the reception that Biden gave for the honor of the visit of the President of Greece Kyriakos Mitsotakis to Washington.[2] Biden praised in the opening speech for Greek diaspora, While introducing Member of the Maryland House of Representatives politician John Sarbanes of Greek descend, he expressed that his father (the first Senator that has Greek descent of the US) has a great impact on himself and he learned too much from him.

Another element taking attention of the Greek lobby is that Greek American George J. Tsunis, who serves for the Ambassador of the US in Athens. Starting his duty in May, Tsunis' biography on the webpage of the embassy[3], clearly states that he has a fanatical Greek affiliation. Tsunis has written that he grew up with a deep Greek culture and his mother language is Greek, and this clearly reflects to his biography that he will work for the interests of Greece rather than the US interests. This employment clearly puts the effect of the Greek lobby, Biden's words in the reception that "I am not sure that when I was happier: the day I was elected as the President of the US, or the day I assigned Tsunis." States that the relations of Biden-Greek lobby and Greece. Also, Tsunis being founder member of the "Hellenic American Leadership Council" is a clear sign for which purposes he will serve as the Ambassador of the US.

Another effect of the Greek lobby was seen in the expression of Biden in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Summit that "the US benefits from selling F-16 to Türkiye." Thus, by 30 senators under the initiative of the Republican Senator Frank Pallone, a letter was written to Biden and it is demanded that not to sell F-16 to Türkiye. The senators have underlined that they will make their best effort to prevent the resell of the fighter jets.

The senators that signed to the letter besides Pallone are Karen Bass, Gus M. Bilirakis, Tony Cárdenas, Judy Chu, David N. Cicilline, Jim Costa, Mike Doyle, Anna G. Eshoo, Brian Fitzpatrick, Chuck Fleischmann, Louie Gohmert, Josh Gottheimer, Raúl M. Grijalva, Raja Krishnamoorthi, Susie Lee, Ted W. Lieu, Nicole Malliotakis, Carolyn B. Maloney, James P. McGovern, Grace Meng, Grace F. Napolitano, Chris Pappas, Donald Payne, Linda T. Sánchez, John Sarbanes, Jan Schakowsky, Adam B. Schiff, Brad Sherman, Albio Sires, Christopher H. Smith, Jackie Speier, David G. Valadao and Peter Welch.

It is seen in the list that Gus M. Bilirakis, Nicole Malliotakis, Chris Pappas, John Sarbanes are Greek based members of the House of Representatives. It is known that David N. Cicilline ve Carolyn B. Maloney are philhellenist (the lover of the Greek culture) American senators. In the Congress Maloney serves as the founder of "Congressional Caucus on Hellenic Issues" and co-chairman with Gus Bilirakis.

Tony Cárdenas, Judy Chu, Jim Costa, Mike Doyle, Anna G. Eshoo, Chuck Fleischmann, Ted W. Lieu, Nicole Malliotakis, Carolyn B. Maloney, James P. McGovern, Grace Meng, Grace F. Napolitano, Chris Pappas, Linda T. Sánchez, John Sarbanes, Jan Schakowsky, Adam B. Schiff, Brad Sherman, Albio Sires are Christopher H. Smith are the members of this commission with 136 members. Other signatory members are influenced by Greek diaspora somehow. The politicians in the regions where Greek diaspora are intense especially involves that issue.

It is thought that the number of the Greek Americans living in the US changes between 1,2 and 3,5 million. The places that Greek Americans live most are Chicago, Boston, and New York. Cleveland, Los Angeles, Washington D.C., San Francisco, Philadelphia, Detroit, Miami, Tampa, and Atlanta are the other places that the Greek lives the most. The politicians being candidate from those regions are influenced by Greek diaspora somehow.

On the other hand, Greek lobby was carried out by many organizations established by Greek Americans. In the US, The Hellenic American Leadership Council[4], American Hellenic Council of California[5], American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association[6] American Hellenic Institute[7] are the institutes that involve in lobbying activities. The significant part of those signatory politicians are related to those organizations.

However, it should be noted that lobbying activities are important and influence American foreign policy mostly. However, the reality of the foreign policy and the national interests of the US is more important than lobbying activities. Although its power, Greek lobby could not manage to prevent Türkiye's interests in the past as well. In recent period, although it is seen that their activities escalated under the Biden's administration, the most realist policy that Greece follows under the light of the lessons taken from the past, is solving the issues in the frame of International Law and cooperating with Türkiye.

[1] John Newhouse, "The Influence of Lobbies on U.S. Foreign Policy", Foreign Affairs, May/June 2009, Vol. 88, No. 3 (May/June 2009), s.73.

[2] Remarks By President Biden, First Lady Jill Biden, and Prime Minister Mitsotakis of Greece at a Reception Honoring Greek American Relations, Gr.USEmbassy, <https://gr.usembassy.gov/remarks-by-president-biden-first-lady-jill-biden-and-prime-minister-mitsotakis-of-greece-at-a-reception-honoring-greek-american-relations/>, (Date of Accession: 14.07.2022).

[3] U.S. Embassy and Consulate in Greece, <https://gr.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulate/athens/ambassador/>, (Date of Accession: 14.07.2022).

[4] Hellenicleaders, <https://www.hellenicleaders.com/>, (Date of Accession: 14.07.2022).

[5] A Message From Our Chairman, Americanhellenic, <https://americanhellenic.org/>, (Date of Accession: 14.07.2022).

[6] Ahepa, <https://ahepa.org/>, (Date of Accession: 14.07.2022).

[7] Ahiworld, <http://www.ahiworld.org/>, (Date of Accession: 14.07.2022).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Sri Lanka: First Stone of the Domino Wave

International Relations has recently faced a new global power struggle. The unipolar Atlantic Order formed after the Cold War was soon tested by Asia, triggering the start of a new era of turbulence. The rise of Russia and China, the emergence of the Indo-Pacific as a new region of dynamism, and the rising "Independent Europe" discussions in Western Europe have brought regional developments to a global dimension.

The tension between the global system and regional actors has activated the fault lines, and as a result, while some regions have increased their geopolitical importance, it has been seen that some regions have evolved towards in-

stability simultaneously. The Covid-19 outbreak, the withdrawal of the United States of America (USA) troops from Afghanistan and the recent Russian intervention in Ukraine have emerged as the most significant parameters that activate these dynamics. In today's "New Great Game", which we can also call the "Age of Anarchy", Sri Lanka was the first country to suffer this instability.

Undoubtedly, it should not be a coincidence that Sri Lanka, located in South Asia, one of the regions where global competition has been intensely experienced recently, showed managerial inadequacy and was labeled a "failed state." In addition, Sri Lanka, located at the



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center of the Indo-Pacific Region, which has the world's busiest maritime transportation lines, is a doomed country and this island with such vital geography could not be saved by the major players also reveals the severity of the coming storm and instability. It can be said that the reflection of the process that started with Sri Lanka on South Asia will be severe and rapid. Because South Asia draws attention as the geography that has received the least share of the economic activity and development movement that has started in the whole of Asia in the last 20 years.

The economic stalemate that started with the Covid-19 epidemic sharply reduced tourism revenues and remittances, which were hoped for by South Asian countries with fragile economies, especially Sri Lanka. For example, in such a process, Colombo's loss of approximately 5 billion dollars in tourism revenues and its deprivation of remittances, which provide resources of 6-7 billion dollars, is one of the reasons for the economic impasse in Sri Lanka.[1] Considering that South Asian countries have similar economic structures to Sri Lanka, it is highly probable that the coming crisis will directly affect the people. However, the wave of uncertainty and inflationary pressure that started with Russia's intervention in Ukraine turns the South Asian countries, which stand on a weak foundation, into dominoes that are resigned to their fate.

Another weakness of the South Asian geography is that the administrations in the region are based on weak dynamics, ethnic and religious elements have a strong position and political wills are deprived of the power of inclusiveness. As a matter of fact, the said weakness was clearly seen with the junta movement in Myanmar on February 1, 2021. The army, which carried out a coup against the elected government, put Myanmar into an environment of internal conflict. Despite the constructive attitude of a regionally powerful organization like ASEAN, the fact that order has not been established yet. This situation shows that Myanmar is under the influence of countries that struggle for global power as well as its internal dynamics. Moreover, the main actors who have influence on South Asian countries see unstable South Asian countries that are not under the control of the rival state as less costly, instead of taking steps for a stable South Asia dependent on them.

The increased risk factor brought about by great power competition is the most important reason for the situation in question. The most recent and concrete example of this struggle, which is also called the "Gray Zone Tactic", is taking place in Sri Lanka. Forces that do not want to be directly confronted follow the strategy of "Wait and intervene until the opponent can-

not win" instead of taking the initiative. Because the instability and transformation that came to the region looks like a tsunami with a socio-economic dimension. Due to the increasing competition in all geographies, the great powers that desire to use their resources sparingly want to escape the tsunami by paying a low price, which leaves the countries that have been collaborating with the great powers for years without foresight and helpless.

Sri Lanka, which has been seen as an important investment base for China for a long time and where many infrastructure projects take place, hoped to overcome the economic crisis with a new loan agreement from China and announced that it was negotiating for a loan support of 2.5 billion dollars, but did not reach an agreement.[2] The credit failure of the Rajapaksa family, who had good relations with China and perhaps overly trusted these relations, deepened the crisis and eventually caused Gotabaya Rajapaksa to resign from the presidency and leave the country. China did not take the risk of saving Sri Lanka, which you see as its most important stop on the Indian Ocean and followed the strategy of avoiding the incoming tsunami.

Although India, another actor in Sri Lanka, has lagged behind China in recent years, with the economic crisis, it sought ways to increase its effectiveness in Sri Lanka and sent aid to meet the needs of the people. In this way, Sri Lanka has been able to provide food and energy to the people, albeit partially, with the support of India in the recent period. However, despite the favorable conjuncture, India did not implement a rescue policy and took a position according to the atmosphere that would occur after the political tsunami.

The process that started in Sri Lanka is similar to the aftershock before the earthquake. Because the states of South and Southeast Asia, which are economically, politically and sociologically similar to Sri Lanka, stand on the brink of an economic and political crisis. In this sense, the Indo-Pacific line and thus rimland are open to new crises. A crisis that will spread throughout the region will destabilize land-based transportation corridors, increase the migration problem and deepen the economic depression.

[1] "Sri Lanka's China Ties Don't Detract from Special Relations with India: GL Peiris", The Hindustan Times, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/sri-lanka-s-china-ties-don-t-detract-from-special-relations-with-india-gl-peiris-101644253621408.html>, (Date of Accession: 04.04.2022).

[2] Uditha Jayasinghe, "Sri Lanka in Talks With China for \$2.5 Billion Credit Support -Chinese Official", U.S. News, <https://money.usnews.com/investing/news/articles/2022-03-21/sri-lanka-in-talks-with-china-for-2-5-billion-credit-support-chinese-official>, (Date of Accession: 04.04.2022).

ANKASAM IN PRESS

13 July 2022

ANKASAM International Relations Consultant Dr. Kadir Ertaç Çelik evaluated the current developments in foreign policy on Bengütürk TV.

14 July 2022

ANKASAM President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol evaluated the current developments in foreign policy in TRT Ankara Radio Agenda program.

14 July 2022

Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Studies (ANKASAM) President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol had a meeting with the delegation headed by Vice Admiral Abdul Aleem, Director General of the National Institute of Maritime Affairs (NIMA) in Pakistan. During the meeting held at Punjab University, cooperation issues between the two institutions were discussed. The meeting was also shared on NIMA social media platforms.

14 July 2022

The MoU, signed by ANKASAM President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol and PRCCSF Managing Director Khalid Temur Akram in Pakistan's capital city of Islamabad, was published on Pakistan's TN Media News website.

15 July 2022

ANKASAM International Relations Consultant Dr. Kadir Ertaç Çelik evaluated the current developments in foreign policy at TRT Arabi.

15 July 2022

ANKASAM President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol evaluated the current developments in foreign policy in TRT Ankara Radio Agenda program.

15 July 2022

ANKASAM International Relations Consultant Dr. Kadir Ertaç Çelik evaluated the current developments in foreign policy in the Bengütürk TV Report of the Week program.

15 July 2022

The MoU, signed by ANKASAM President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol and PRCCSF Managing Director Khalid Temur Akram in Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan, was published on the Worldİl News website.

15 July 2022

The MoU, signed by ANKASAM President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol and PRCCSF Managing Director Khalid Temur Akram in Islamabad, the capital of Pakistan, was published on International The News website.

ANKASAM IN PRESS

15 July 2022

The MoU, signed by ANKASAM President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol and PRCCSF Managing Director Khalid Temur Akram in Pakistan's capital city of Islamabad, was published in the Pakistan Observer newspaper.

15 July 2022

ANKASAM President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol's evaluations at the international conference themed "Significance of the Belt & Road Initiative in Regional Connectivity" held in Pakistan were published in Academia Mag, one of Pakistan's leading education journals.

16 July 2022

ANKASAM President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol's evaluations at the international conference themed "Significance of the Belt & Road Initiative in Regional Connectivity" held in Pakistan were published in Pakistan-based DAWN Newspaper.

16 July 2022

Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Studies (ANKASAM) President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol's evaluations at the international conference themed "Significance of the Belt & Road Initiative in Regional Connectivity" held in Pakistan were broadcast on Discover Pakistan Television.

16 July 2022

Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Studies (ANKASAM) President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol's evaluations at the international conference themed "Significance of the Belt & Road Initiative in Regional Connectivity" held in Pakistan were published on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor website.

16 July 2022

Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Studies (ANKASAM) President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol's evaluations at the international conference themed "Significance of the Belt & Road Initiative in Regional Connectivity" held in Pakistan were published in the Business Recorder Newspaper.

16 July 2022

Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Studies (ANKASAM) President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol's evaluations at the international conference themed "Significance of the Belt & Road Initiative in Regional Connectivity" held in Pakistan were published on the website of Punjab University.



The latest issue of the International Journal of Crisis and Politics Studies, an international peer-reviewed journal operating within the Ankara Center for Crisis and Politics Studies (ANKASAM), has been published. Academic Keys, ASOS Index, CEEOL, Cite Factor, DRJI, Index Copernicus, Ideal Online, Research Bible, Sindex and TUBITAK DERGIPARK databases are scanned by our journal can be accessed via the link below.

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JOURNAL OF REGIONAL STUDIES

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