



ANKASAM bulletin

15 May 2022
ISSUE: 2022/19



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Journal of Regional Studies

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Design-String: Esra Karadağ



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

New Kazakhstan: President Tokayev and Foreign Policy

Introduction

The tragic events in Kazakhstan in January 2022 raise many questions about the future direction of the country. Especially Kazakhstan's foreign policy is a matter of great curiosity. In this context, the changes and transformations in Kazakhstan and the foreign policy understanding of President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev should be discussed.

In fact, it is obvious that Kazakhstan achieved many successes in the 30th year of its independence. The state-building process of Kazakhstan has been completed, the problems related to the disputed areas have been resolved, the country borders have been clearly drawn and registered by international law. In the heart of the Great Steppes, a magnificent and modern new capital has risen. Economi-



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cally, Kazakhstan has become an important member of the international market. The longest land borders at the center of the continent have become the guarantor of peace and security.

It is clear that foreign policy has made important contributions to these achievements of Kazakhstan. Founding President Nursultan Nazarbayev determined the foreign policy of the country as multi-vector. In the formation and development of this foreign policy understanding, which has become Kazakhstan's trademark, there is no doubt that experienced professional diplomat Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, who served as the country's foreign minister for many years (1994-1999 and 2002-2007), and later served as the Deputy Secretary General of the United Nations, played an important role. This policy means that balanced, pragmatic and constructive relations will be developed with regional and global powers. Over the past three decades, such a strategy has proven its effectiveness several times in the turbulent global geopolitical situation.

After being elected as President of Kazakhstan in 2019, Tokayev declared that he would attach importance to continuity in foreign policy. The "2020-2030 Foreign Policy Concept of the Republic of Kazakhstan" adopted in March 2020 is like the declaration of continuity in foreign policy. The President had elevated the position of Minister of Foreign Affairs to the level of Deputy Prime Minister, appointed a special representative responsible for foreign policy, appointed the Deputy Foreign Policy Deputy Head of the President's Office, thus demonstrating that he attached great importance to diplomacy. Appointments in this direction continued in the following period as well.

The President, who attended the extended meeting of the Board of Directors of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which was held for the first time in six years on November 18, 2021, emphasized the need to review foreign policy methods and develop systematic measures in the light of the current situation in the world. Tokayev stated that first of all, foreign policy should be carried out according to the understanding of "a state that hears the voice of the people". This is a foreign policy that serves the needs of the people and the national interests. Secondly, the need to stimulate economic diplomacy and make efforts to attract investment was underlined. Thirdly, it is important to strengthen Kazakhstan's leadership in Central Asia. Fourthly, it was instructed to establish equal and effective cooperation with the leading countries of the world and influential countries in the region, to create a new image of Kazakh diplomacy and to make a breakthrough in this field.

In this context, the article focuses on Tokayev's activities in foreign policy. In particular, Tokayev's efforts to continue his balanced and multi-vector foreign policy strategy are discussed. In this context, it is also mentioned how the Tragic January Events affected Kazakhstan's foreign policy.

January Events and Challenges in Foreign Policy

After the tragic January Events, some experts began to be skeptical of the future of Kazakhstan's multi-vector foreign policy. According to them, the entry of the CSTO peacekeepers into Kazakhstan opened up the possibility of Nur-Sultan's abandonment of multi-vectorism in foreign policy. However, it was soon realized that such an assessment that Kazakhstan's balanced and effective foreign policy would change was wrong. President Tokayev has signaled that Kazakhstan will not give up its multi-vector foreign policy, both with his appointments in the field of foreign policy and with his activism in this area.

The appointments by the Head of State in the field of foreign policy and his active actions in foreign policy played an important role in restoring the country's reputation. For example, for the first time, the administration of the Presidential Office of Kazakhstan was entrusted to Murat Nurtileu, a professional diplomat. Erjan Kazhanov, the new Vice President of the Presidential Administration and the President's Special Envoy for International Cooperation, is also an experienced diplomat who has worked in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In addition, the fact that Foreign Minister Mukhtar Tileuberdi remains in the post of Deputy Prime Minister shows that foreign policy will not change.

In January and April 2022, there was activism in all important areas of Kazakhstan's foreign policy. These events were in line with the "2020-2030 Foreign Policy Concept of the Republic of Kazakhstan". The important steps have been taken by Nur-Sultan to strengthen relations with the East (China and India, East Asian countries), neighboring countries (Russia and Central Asia), the Islamic and Turkic

World, the West and major international organizations in a record short time.

Regional Integration: Central Asia First

At the regional level, the foreign policy pursued by President Tokayev generally focuses on Central Asian countries. This attitude is also clearly stated in the document "2020-2030 Foreign Policy Concept". In fact, this is the continuation of Kazakhstan's policy since the 1990s. Upon Nazarbayev's suggestion, the Central Asian Union was established in 1994, but the signed agreements remained only on paper for some reasons. In 2007, Nazarbayev tried to revive this Union, but this attempt was also unsuccessful. Situations started to change as of 2017, and summits were held in Kazakhstan in 2018 and in Uzbekistan in 2018 under the name of "Central Asian Leaders Consultation Meeting".

In this context, Tokayev's participation in the Central Asian Leaders Consultation Meeting held in Turkmenistan on 6 August 2021 has given a new impetus to regional integration. At the summit, the President of Kazakhstan stated, "We need to strengthen our union and prevent unnecessary competition with each other. If we express our common stance on the most important international issues, we show our common approach to the world public opinion. Competition in the international arena contradicts our national interests."

The President noted at the expanded General Assembly meeting of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 18 November 2021 that Central Asia is a priority region for Kazakhstan. Emphasizing that it is a very important task to strengthen Kazakhstan's leadership in Central Asia, the President emphasized that "Kazakhstan has a special responsibility for the fate of Central Asia." This means that Kazakhstan will continue to follow an active policy for regional cooperation.

It should be noted that Tokayev's visit to Turkmenistan on October 25, 2021 is important in terms of both bilateral and regional cooperation. The signing of 20 agreements in various fields from trade to transportation, from agriculture to science during the visit is an indication that the relations between the two countries have reached a new dimension. The agreement on the demarcation of the Kazakhstan-Turkmenistan state border and the division of neighboring fishing areas, especially in the Caspian Sea, has a special place. Thus, the legal registration of the land and sea borders between the two countries was completed.

The active participation of Turkmenistan, which is the gate-

way of Central Asia to the Middle East, in regional integration projects is important for Kazakhstan. In this respect, Turkmenistan's observer status in the Organization of Turkic States (OTS) is considered a positive step by Nur-Sultan. Therefore, we can conclude that Tokayev's visit to Turkmenistan strengthened the strategic relations between the two countries and made significant contributions to regional integration.

Kazakhstan's relations with Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan both in the context of Central Asia and in the context of the Turkic World have strategic importance as well. In this context, the visit of President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev to Kazakhstan on December 6, 2021 was very important in terms of bilateral relations and the future of the region. This was the first "state visit" since Mirziyoyev was re-elected President of Uzbekistan. In international politics, the first visit of an elected or a re-elected head of state is often important as it expresses the country's priorities. In this respect, Kazakhstan is the most important country for Uzbekistan in the region and in international politics. This is the result of Nur-Sultan's prudent policy to date.

The welcoming of Mirziyoyev at the Nur-Sultan airport by Tokayev himself showed that the relations between the two countries are not just a neighborhood, but a real brotherhood. During the visit, 22 documents were signed, the most important of which is the "Declaration of Allied Relations". In fact, Uzbekistan is the only country with which Kazakhstan has an alliance, apart from the Collective Security Treaty Organization.

It should be noted that important events took place in Kazakhstan's relations with Kyrgyzstan in the given period. On December 2, 2021, President Tokayev approved the "Agreement on Free Military and Technical Assistance between the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic". It is also worth noting that Kazakhstan has previously sent humanitarian aid in the form of grains and vaccines to Kyrgyzstan.

Thus, Kazakhstan continues its effective policy towards Central Asia. President Tokayev's activities in foreign policy prove this.

After the January Events, Kazakhstan's relations with its southern neighbors developed steadily. In this regard, it is worth noting a number of events at different levels. On January 20, Tokayev had a telephone conversation with the President of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev. On February 9, Tokayev received Nurdinjon Ismoilov, Chairman of the Legislative Council of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan, in Akorda. On the same day, the parliamentary delegation of Uzbekistan met with the Speaker



of the Assembly of Kazakhstan, Ertan Koshanov, and after the visit, an agreement was signed between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan on the establishment of the Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation Council. Two days later, on February 11, President of Uzbekistan Mirziyoyev received Prime Minister of Kazakhstan Alikhan Smailov. During the meeting, the parties discussed the implementation of the agreements reached by the leaders of the two largest countries of Central Asia at the summit in December last year.

Cooperation with other brother countries in the region continued at the same pace. On February 12, 2022, First Deputy Prime Minister of Kazakhstan Roman Sklyar met with President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov in Ashgabat. The sides exchanged views on expanding cooperation in transport and transit, trade, economic and agricultural fields.

Some international experts point to a joint photo taken by Central Asian leaders at the Winter Olympics in Beijing. Arkady Dubnov, a well-known expert on Central Asia, said, "With their joint photos, the leaders of Central Asia are trying to show the world that they can put their disagreements aside and reach

consensus... This gesture is an attempt to create a common Central Asian community. The leaders of the countries in the region are trying to make Central Asia the subject of international politics as a whole."

Turkic World Integration Process

Kazakhstan has given special importance to the Turkic World from the very beginning. The most important event in this direction during President Tokayev's term is the 8th Summit of the Turkic Council held in Istanbul on 12 November 2021. This visit of Tokayev, who visited Turkey for the first time in the capacity of President, was of particular importance. The President's suggestions at the summit were remarkable in terms of showing the continuity of Kazakhstan's policy in the Turkic World. Emphasizing the importance of Turkic integration, Tokayev said that the organization should attach special importance to economic, humanitarian and environmental cooperation.

It is worth reminding that the summit took place in the place where the late Prime Minister Adnan Menderes and his friends were tried and is now known as the Island of Democracy and

Freedom. As a matter of fact, in this context, Tokayev, as the President of Kazakhstan, thanked Adnan Menderes and the Turkish people for accepting the Kazakhs who took refuge in Turkey in the 1950s. This message aroused great repercussions in Turkish society. Later, in the city of Almaty in April 2022 and in the city of Turkistan at the beginning of May 2022, the streets were named Adnan Menderes.

After the January Events, Kazakhstan continues to cooperate with Turkic countries. In this context, it should be noted that Ankara supported Nur-Sultan as always. President Tokayev discussed the events with Turkish President Erdogan several times.

The OTS Council of Foreign Ministers held an extraordinary meeting on 11 January 2022 regarding the situation in the country, with the initiative of Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, which is the Term President of the Organization, and expressed their support for Kazakhstan. In addition, Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu visited Kazakhstan in February. Within the scope of the visit, the 7th planned meeting of the Kazakhstan-Turkey Joint Strategic Planning Group was held.

On 3-4 March 2022, Vice President of Turkey Fuat Oktay visited Kazakhstan. Receiving Fuat Oktay, Tokayev drew attention to the high level of bilateral relations in political, commercial, economic, investment, cultural and humanitarian fields and emphasized the need for further intensification of relations. Within the framework of Fuat Oktay's visit, the Kazakhstan-Turkey Business Forum was held and 11 agreements worth 500 million dollars were signed.

It is expected that Tokayev's visit to Turkey, which is planned to take place in May, and Erdoğan's participation in the 6th CICA Summit, which will be held in Nur-Sultan in October this year, will give a new impetus to the relations between the two brotherly countries. In fact, this reflects the strategic nature of the relations between the two countries.

It is expected that Tokayev's visit to Turkey as the President of Kazakhstan will take the cooperation of the two brotherly countries, which are celebrating the 30th anniversary of their diplomatic relations, to a new level.

Relations with Asian Giants

With its pragmatic foreign policy, Kazakhstan deepens its cooperation not only with brother countries, but also with neighboring countries. In fact, this policy strengthens the Turkic World as well. This policy continued in the same way after the January Events.

On January 25, 2022, President Tokayev attended the "Central Asia-China Summit" held in online format. The high-level forum was organized to mark the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Central Asian states and China. Shortly thereafter, on February 5, Tokayev, who was in Beijing to attend the opening ceremony of the XXIV Winter Olympic Games, met with President of the People's Republic of China, Xi Jinping. During the negotiations, special attention was paid to strengthening trade and economic ties.

It is useful to pay attention to a detail during the visit to China. Most of the invited heads of state stayed in hotels in the Chinese capital. Only the presidents of three countries were hosted in the historical "State Residence". These were Russian President Vladimir Putin, Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan and Kazakhstan President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev. This gesture from the Chinese side means many things.

Another Asian giant, India, is Kazakhstan's long-term partner. Two days after the above-mentioned "Central Asia – China" summit, on January 27, Tokayev attended the first "Central Asia – India" summit of heads of state, organized at the initiative of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Trade issues were also discussed during the meetings. In this context, it is worth noting that 80% of the trade volume between Central Asia and India is the share of Kazakhstan.

In this period, effective cooperation continued with East Asian countries besides China and India. For example, on January 26, 2022, Kazakhstan Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Shahrat Nurishev met with Japanese Ambassador Jun Yamada and on January 28, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea Ku Hong Sok. The meeting is dedicated to the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations with Kazakhstan. In the meeting with the South Korean ambassador, the terms "strategic partnership" were used.

On April 29, Japanese Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi paid an official visit to Kazakhstan and was received by Tokayev. After the meeting between the foreign ministries of the two countries during the visit, the “2022-2023 Action Plan” was signed. By the way, it is worth noting that the German Chancellor Olaf Scholz paid a visit to Japan on the same dates.

Likewise, Kazakhstan continues its cooperation with countries such as Iran and Pakistan. On February 2, President Tokayev and President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Ibrahim Raisi held a phone call and discussed various aspects of bilateral cooperation. On January 26, 2022, Deputy Prime Minister – Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan Mukhtar Tileuberdi had a telephone conversation with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Makdum Shah Mahmud Qureshi. The parties discussed not only cooperation in the political, commercial, economic and humanitarian fields, but also cooperation in the international arena between Kazakhstan and Pakistan. On March 22, 2022, the Kazakh delegation headed by Mukhtar Tileuberdi attended the 48th session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers held in Islamabad on “Partnership for Unity, Justice and Development”.

Thus, the country's Asian and Muslim partners expressed their support for Kazakhstan's swift recovery from the tragic events of January and the return of its foreign policy to its traditional direction.

Pragmatic Partnership with Russia

Russia and Kazakhstan, which have a common land border of seven thousand kilometers, have reliable and pragmatic relations. These reliable relations played an important role in overcoming the Aircraft Crisis between Russia and Turkey in 2016. The continuation of these relations between Kazakhstan and Russia is of strategic importance for Nur-Sultan.

In this context, President Tokayev's visit to Russia on February 10, 2022 also played an important role. 11 agreements were signed within the scope of the visit. Six of them are related to education, and the other five are related to cooperation in the field of economy and energy. All agreements are based on mutually beneficial partnership principles.

The most special part of Tokayev's visit to Russia was his visit to Kazan on February 11 and his meeting with Tatarstan President Rustem Minnikhanov. Many experts pointed out that the

President of Kazakhstan spoke Kazakh and easily understand with Minnikhanov. Two leaders discussed ways to expand cooperation in trade and economics, investment, cultural and humanitarian fields. Earlier, on January 24, 2022, Tokayev received Minnikhanov in the capital of Kazakhstan.

In the following period, telephone conversations between Tokayev and Putin continued.

On April 22, Kazakhstan Deputy Prime Minister – Minister of Foreign Affairs Mukhtar Tileuberdi paid a working visit to Moscow, and then, narrow and expanded formats were held with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. On the same date, the Kazakh Minister participated in the fifth meeting of the “Central Asia + Russia” foreign ministers format. On May 5, Lavrov published the article “Russia – Central Asia: 30 Years of Friendship and Cooperation” and emphasized the importance of cooperation with Kazakhstan.

Meanwhile, it is worth remembering that Kazakhstan did not take sides in the Ukraine Crisis and at the same time declared that it did not recognize the independence of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

Western Direction

Cooperation with the Western World is one of the priorities of Kazakhstan's foreign policy. In this context, the President of Kazakhstan carries out an active policy towards the EU and the USA. Western partners appreciated Kazakhstan's political reforms and efforts to respect human rights. Kazakhstan while maintaining its diplomatic stance, it states that processes in this direction are developing continuously and healthily in a balance between high international standards and national interests.

It was very important to explain the Western states objectively about the January events in the country and their reasons. This process has been successfully managed. During the counter-terrorism operation carried out with the participation of the CSTO peacekeepers on January 6, Foreign Minister Tileuberdi had a telephone conversation with the US Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken, on the initiative of the American side. The parties discussed current security issues at the global and regional level, as well as the situation in Kazakhstan.

Later, on January 10, on the initiative of the European side, Tokayev met online with the President of the European Council,

Charles Michelle. In addition to the domestic political situation in the country, the meeting focused on the further development of the strategic partnership between Kazakhstan and the EU. It should be noted that the EU remains Kazakhstan's main trading partner to this day.

On 19 January, Minister Tileuberdi paid a working visit to Belgium and held meetings with senior officials of this country and the EU. The main topic of the talks was to develop mutually beneficial, multi-faceted cooperation between Kazakhstan and the EU in all areas of bilateral relations. “The Advanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement”, which accelerated the development of relations between Kazakhstan and the European Union, was signed in March 2020.

Shortly thereafter, on February 7, President Tokayev received Finnish diplomat Teri Hakal, the EU's Special Representative for Central Asia, in Akorda. The Kazakh leader thanked EU President Charles Michelle for his support. The European diplomat noted that he fully supports President Tokayev's reform policy, as he is interested in the development of Kazakhstan, the EU's main partner in Central Asia.

Kazakhstan Deputy Foreign Minister Akan Rakhmetullin, who paid a working visit to the USA on February 10, 2022. He met with officials from the White House, Congress, the US State Department, think tanks, and a number of other institutions. In particular, the issues of deepening the bilateral and expanded strategic partnership in the “C5+1” format were discussed. Rakhmatullin also briefed the American side on the main aspects of the comprehensive political and economic reform program in Kazakhstan.

On February 11, Kazakhstan State Secretary Yerlan Karin met with Matthias Luttenberg, German Foreign Ministry Plenipotentiary Representative for Central Asia, Eastern Europe and the Caucasus, to discuss Kazakh-German cooperation. The parties noted the interest in further development of the multilateral partnership. On February 14, Tileuberdi met with the ambassadors of EU member states. European Ambassadors expressed their support to Kazakhstan and praised the ongoing reforms in the country, highlighting Kazakhstan's achievements in the field of human rights. The Minister also had a telephone conversation with Pekka Haavisto, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Finland. As a result, cooperation plans were agreed at the UN and OSCE.

International Organizations

It should be noted that after the January Events, Kazakhstan cooperated intensively with international organizations. During January-April 2022, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs actively worked in this direction. On 21 January, the Minister of Foreign Affairs paid a working visit to Vienna and met with the OSCE leadership. During the meetings, issues of further development of cooperation during the reforms in Kazakhstan were discussed.

On 31 January, at the initiative of the OIC Secretariat, Tileuberdi had a telephone conversation with the Secretary General of the Organization, Hüseyin İbrahim Taha. Expressing his support to the people and administration of Kazakhstan, the Secretary General expressed his condolences to the families of those who lost their lives in the January events. It is obvious that the Islamic World is interested in Kazakhstan and closely follows the events in the country.

On 7 February, the Minister of Foreign Affairs also met with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) Regional Representative for Central Asia, Ryszard Comenda, to raise current issues in this area.

On February 15, Prime Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan Alikhan Smailov received Ambassador Kayrat Saribay, Executive Director of CICA. Saribay gave information about the implementation of the priorities of the Presidency of Kazakhstan in this structure, which will soon become a full-fledged organization. Having increased its effectiveness in recent years, the CICA is becoming one of the most important foreign policy instruments of Kazakhstan.

During the tragic events in January, Turkic cooperation institutions, in particular the OTS Secretariat, TURKPA, the International Turkic Academy, the Turkic Culture and Heritage Foundation supported Kazakhstan. On January 31, OTS Secretary General Baghdad Am-

reyev came to the capital of Kazakhstan and met with Minister Tileuberdi. On February 11, well-known statesman Ikram Adirbekov attended the three-day meeting of the OTS Elders Council. Thus, Kazakhstan's relations with the Turkic World remained up-to-date.

In this context, it would be useful to briefly mention the International Turkic Academy. Established in Nur-Sultan in 2010 with the initiative of Nazarbayev, the institution is responsible for the scientific integration among the Turkish states. The Academy, which received the status of "international organization" in 2014 has in intensive cooperation with international organizations such as UNESCO, ISESCO, COMSTECH, especially the UN. Hungary has observer status at the Turkic Academy while Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey are founding members. The membership process of Uzbekistan continues. Recently, Mongolia, Pakistan and Tajikistan expressed their interests in membership. In addition, the Academy has intensive cooperation with Tatarstan and Bashkortostan.

Kazakhstan supports the work of the Academy. In 2021, the Government of Kazakhstan allocated two buildings to the Academy. The State Secretary of Kazakhstan personally attended the opening of the new building on October 29, 2021. The reception of the President of the Academy, Darhan Kydyrali, by President Tokayev on March 11, 2022 and his meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs are the expression of the highest level support shown by the Kazakh side to the Academy.

On May 3, 2022, the President of Kazakhstan Kasım-Jomart Tokayev signed the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan on the Approval of the "Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Turkic Academy on the Terms and Conditions of Placement of the Turkic Academy" ratified by the Parliament of Kazakhstan. Thus, the Turkic Academy has become a full-fledged international organization whose main documents are recognized by the founding states and its rules are determined by special laws.

Conclusion

As a result, the events of the past months require a reassessment of many things. First of all, it is necessary to underline that President Tokayev successfully pursues Kazakhstan's multi-vector foreign policy. The balances were settled with the great powers and the independence of the country was preserved. Therefore, Kazakhstan will continue to occupy an important

place on the world map. For the international community, Kazakhstan is still an important country. Foreign partners support the country recovering rapidly after the crisis and the country's government quickly implemented the positive changes and restructuring originally planned.

In domestic politics, primarily the fight against corruption, the elimination of social injustice, the establishment of the rule of law and the provision of basic human rights will maintain their priority on the agenda. There is no doubt that work in this direction will continue in the future. Thus, Kazakhstan proves its commitment to international agreements.

In this context, it is noteworthy that President Tokayev announced the new package of reforms in his Address to the Nation on March 16, 2022. The rapid preparation of the amendments to the Constitution mentioned in the address and the announcement that a referendum will be held on 5 June 2022 reveal Tokayev's determination.

All necessary decisions are being implemented to revive the economy. This strengthens Kazakhstan's position in regional and global geopolitics. The attitude of the country administration shows that the measures taken are strategic and long-term, not tactical.

In the final analysis, Kazakhstan's multi-vector foreign policy will not change. The aim of President Tokayev is not only to "return to normal", but also to make a breakthrough in the development of the country and further strengthen its position in the world. This is in line with the "New Kazakhstan" discourse.



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

The Resignation of the Sri Lankan Prime Minister and the Possibility of a Temporary Government?

Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, known as the most powerful name in Sri Lankan politics, resigned on 9 May 2022.^[1] His spokesperson, Rohan Veliuita, was the first to share the news. His decision to resign came shortly after clashes broke out between Mahinda supporters and anti-government protesters. During the clashes, two people, including a member of parliament from the ruling party, were killed and hundreds of people were injured. In fact, Rajapaksa made his best efforts to retain power. However,

after the economic crisis in the country, public demonstrations and recent conflicts, he failed to maintain his power. As a matter of fact, Rohan announced that Mahinda had resigned to pave the way for the establishment of a "new coalition government".

Mahinda submitted his resignation letter to President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, who is also his brother. The people of the country have been protesting the massive corruption of the ruling



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party, money laundering abroad and the uncontrolled rise in commodity prices for the past few weeks. It has already been reported that the country went bankrupt due to foreign debt. In short, the country's economy collapsed due to foreign debt and widespread corruption. For this reason, the people of the country organized protest demonstrations with various demands, including the resignation of the government. The protests in question are still continuing.

According to international media reports, some of the protesters were shot dead near the capital, Colombo. Despite the nationwide curfew declared to stop the violence, the demonstrations did not end. In addition, Yoshitha Rajapaksa, the second son of Mahinda Rajapaksa and Chief of Staff, left the country with his wife. The Daily Mirror announced that they were passing through Bandaranaike International Airport to Singapore. According to the general opinion, Yoshitha was sent from the country by his father. Because it is a reasonable possibility that Mahinda will send her son and daughter-in-law safely abroad to prevent harm to his family.[2]

Mahinda's resignation paved the way for the formation of a new unity government. As a matter of fact, a call was made for the establishment of a provisional government. However, the opposition has not yet given a clear answer to this. As will be remembered, on May 6, 2022, the President of Sri Lanka suggested to his brother to resign in order to resolve the ongoing political crisis.

In summary, Sri Lanka is now officially bankrupt as it has built an economy dependent on foreign debt. The country has 5.1 billion loan debt. It does not seem possible to repay this loan. Moreover, there has been a shortage of electricity in the country for months. There are extremely price increases for food, fuel and medical equipment. Therefore, although some products are available in the market, their prices increase rapidly. Under these circumstances, it is normal for ordinary people to experience distress. As a matter of fact, due to the public movement, some members of the ruling party, legendary former cricketers, doctors and 24 former ministers who resigned from the cabinet reacted to the situation. Protesters have been protesting in front of Gotabaya Rajapaksa's office since April 9, 2022. Pro-government groups attacked the tents here.[3] Mahinda Rajapaksa, on the other hand, did not resign until the aforementioned events. On the contrary, he said that the people should act cautiously. While the aforementioned developments are taking place; Jul-

ie Chung, Ambassador of the United States of America (USA) to Sri Lanka, demanded that the violence be fully investigated and that those responsible for the violence be arrested and brought to justice.[4]

As a result, Sri Lanka is facing its worst economic crisis since independence in 1947. Demonstrations have been held in various cities of the country since 9 April 2022 to protest the shortage of imported food, fuel and medicine. At this point, it should be noted that; holding new parliamentary elections is not a permanent solution either. Because the power in the hands of the President attracts the reaction of various sections of the people. In this context, the Sri Lanka Bar Association (BASL) proposed the establishment of a temporary government for 18 months.[5] However, the fact that the President has wide powers makes it difficult to solve the problems.

[1] "Mahinda Rajapaksa: Sri Lankan PM Resigns Amid Economic Crisis", BBC, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-61381536>, (Date of Accession: 09.05.2022).

[2] "Yoshitha Rajapaksa Leaves the Country", Daily Mirror, https://www.dailymirror.lk/top_story/Yoshitha-Rajapaksa-leaves-the-country/155-236598, (Date of Accession: 09.05.2022).

[3] "Sri Lanka Prime Minister Resigns Amid Economic Crisis", DW, <https://www.dw.com/en/sri-lanka-prime-minister-resigns-amid-economic-crisis/a-61728550>, (Date of Accession: 09.05.2022).

[4] "US Envoy Condemns Violence Against Protestors in Sri Lanka", Ani News, <https://www.aninews.in/news/world/asia/us-envoy-condemns-violence-against-protestors-in-sri-lanka20220509193246/>, (Date of Accession: 09.05.2022).

[5] "Sri Lanka's Opposition Rejects President Rajapaksa's Offer to form Interim Government", Economic Times,

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ANKASAM ANALYSIS

DAESH's Strategy for Afghanistan

Due to terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the United States of America (USA) decided to invade Afghanistan in the name of the fight against terrorism and this occupation lasted for 20 years. During the US withdrawal, the Taliban declared to the world that they are the victorious side of the 20-year war by dominating Afghanistan. In the process in question, the intelligence agency of the deposed regime of Afghanistan announced that 21 terrorist organizations were active in the country. One of the

terrorist organizations operating in the country is the so-called Emirate of Khorasan (ISKP) of the State of Iraq and Sham (DAESH).

Within the scope of the caliphate ideology DAESH declares the old Khorasan geography as the so-called Khorasan Emirate and the organization has considered the war and instability situation of Afghanistan as an opportunity. In this regard, they tried to strengthen its position in the field. Initially, ISKP tried to incorporat-



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ed into Taliban commanders, fighters of Al-Qaeda, Uzbekistan Islamic Movement and East Turkestan Islamic Movement. As it known, the founding leader of the Taliban, Mullah Mohammed Omar, died in 2013 and an death announcement of him was shared publicly in 2015. This notice has led to certain divisions within the Taliban and some commanders of this movement joined ISKP such as Abdulrauf Hadim, one of the famous commanders of the Taliban, declared his loyalty to DAESH.

Although some of the commanders of the Taliban joined the ISKP, the leaders of the Taliban never paid allegiance to DAESH. DAESH follows an aggressive and revisionist policy by dividing the world into two Darul Islam and Darul Kufr, rejecting the understanding of the nation-state. For this reason, regional states, especially Russia, China and Iran, have described ISKP's presence in Afghanistan as a threat to their territorial integrity and national security.

The aforementioned states have started to get closer to the Taliban for border security purposes. Because, unlike DAESH, the target of the Taliban is to establish an "Islamic State" in Afghanistan, whose borders are internationally recognized. Therefore, during the occupation period, the security forces of the overthrown regime of Afghanistan in the cities and the Taliban in the countryside prevented ISKP from getting stronger. Therefore, ISKP could not have a significant impact and found no concrete response from the Afghan people, apart from the attacks on the mosques of the Shiites and the killing of innocent people. Therefore, it was seen that many DAESH members surrendered. However, ISKP saw an opportunity as the Taliban released the criminals in prisons within the scope of the general amnesty declared after dominating Afghanistan in August 2021.

In this context, during the period when the USA completed its withdrawal from Afghanistan, DAESH carried out a suicide attack near Kabul Airport and killed 13 American soldiers and 170 Afghans. Afterwards, they carried out terrorist acts that attacked Shiite mosques in Afghanistan's Kunduz and Kandahar provinces, causing hundreds of people to die. In addition, DAESH murdered a traffic police officer in Afghanistan's Kunduz province and carried out attacks against Taliban soldiers in other provinces.

In the early winter months of 2022, it was seen that DAESH stopped its attacks and focused on recruiting personnel. In this context, ISKP, rather than religious arguments used situations such as unemployment and deficit as a propaganda tool. Because in Afghanistan, where the humanitarian crisis has been getting deeper day by day, it is not surprising that people join DEASH in order to receive salaries of hundreds of dollars. Therefore, one of the prerequisites for being successful in the fight against DAESH is to ensure the end of the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan.

With the spring months of 2022, it is seen that DAESH has increased its attacks again. In this context, ISKP attacked Shiite mosques in Kabul and Mazar-i-Sharif and clashed with Taliban soldiers in various cities. In addition, DAESH also claimed that they attacked Uzbekistan in a statement they published.

It should be noted that DAESH is a terrorist organization that has been defeated in Syria and Iraq. For this reason, they are trying to make this country the center of the organization by taking advantage of the power vacuum in Afghanistan. Because Afghanistan is the heart of the ancient Khorasan geography. Therefore, the organization believes that they can reach Iran, Central Asian republics, Russia and China through Afghanistan.

In line with this aim, ISKP develops new strategies and tactics. In this context, ISKP's main strategy is to open up for discussion the issues that the Taliban proudly voiced and described as success in the eyes of the international community. As it is known, the Taliban stated that after dominating Afghanistan, security was ensured throughout the country. Likewise, within the framework of the Doha Agreement, the Taliban declared that they would not allow the use of Afghanistan's territory by terrorist organizations. In this context, the message given by ISKP through its attacks is that the Taliban show weakness in ensuring the security of the country.

In addition, ISKP is trying to gather the radical groups in Afghanistan under its own roof and wants to reach the opponents of the relevant countries by attacking the regional states. This is one of the main reasons why DAESH claims to have launched an attack on

Uzbekistan. At the same time, this propaganda aims to convey the message that the Taliban administration cannot prevent the use of Afghanistan territory by terrorist organizations. Thus, DAESH is trying to prevent regional states from developing cooperation with the Taliban. Because one of the reasons why Central Asian republics establish de facto relations with the Taliban is the concerns of these states regarding border security.

The most striking target of ISKP is to disrupt the relationship between the Taliban and the Shiites through its attacks against the Shiites, thus starting a sectarian war in Afghanistan. Because the Hazaras are the leading groups that have not joined the Taliban in the last 20 years. In this sense, the Hazaras are the most distant identity group from the Taliban. Therefore, ISKP pushes the Hazaras to fend for themselves through its attacks on Shiites, and by describing itself as the protector of Sunnis, it activates the dynamics of the sectarian war. Moreover, the attacks may lead Shiites to adopt the perception that the Taliban cannot protect them. As a matter of fact, parallel to the developments experienced, the Iranian influence on the Hazaras is increasing and the Tehran administration is perceived as protective. This indicates that a possible sectarian war may turn into a regional proxy war. At this point, it would not be surprising if Iran took advantage of the Fatimiyyun Brigade, which was used in the Syrian Civil War and consisted of Afghan Shiites.

Looking at ISKP's attacks, it is understood that one of the aims of the terrorist organization is to prevent the operation of Afghanistan's mines and to undermine Afghanistan-based economic projects. It can be said that China is willing to invest in Afghanistan's mines. Turkmenistan is also trying to sell natural gas to South Asian states via Afghanistan within the scope of the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) Natural Gas Pipeline Project. Uzbekistan also plans to reach the world via South Asia, the Middle East and international maritime routes through the railways project that includes Afghanistan. If these projects are realized, Afghans will be provided with job opportunities and billions of dollars will enter the Afghan treasury. ISKP, on the other hand, thinks that an insecure and unstable Afghanistan would be in its own interest. For this reason, it tries to destabilize the country through terrorist attacks it organizes.

Finally, it can be said that ISKP is considering earning income through drug trade by maintaining control in Afghanistan. Because Afghanistan is the country that produces the most drugs in the World. As it will be remembered, the Taliban banned the cultivation and trade of drugs in Afghanistan with a decision they took. However, drugs are an important source of financing for terrorist organizations. Therefore, ISKP plans to continue its activities on the basis of the income it will generate by forcing the people in various regions to produce drugs.

As a result, ISKP's actions are a serious threat to Afghanistan, the states of the region and even to the whole World. Because this threat has the possibility of turning Afghanistan and its immediate surroundings into a geography where proxy wars are experienced. Elimination of this possibility requires cooperation processes to be carried out between the states of the region and projects that will end the economic and humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan. In fact, it is seen that this approach is at the basis of the de-facto relations between the Taliban and the neighboring states of Afghanistan.



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Searching for a Solution on the Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan Border Issue

During the Soviet Union, the borders of the Central Asian countries that formed the union were drawn artificially. This situation led to border uncertainties that led to different conflicts between the states that gained independence after 1991. The issue known as the problem of exlaves and enclaves in the literature is also inherited from this period. Despite this, most problems have been resolved through negotiations between the countries of the region. However, the Fregana Valley, which is located in the territory of Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and

Tajikistan, continues to be a region of border conflicts.

The situation was further aggravated by the existence of eight enclaves, six of which are in Kyrgyzstan (four Uzbek and two Tajik enclaves) and two in Uzbekistan (one Kyrgyz and one Tajik enclave).[1] In addition, the fertile lands of the Fergana region are of great importance for the Central Asian states, which are agricultural countries. Therefore, no one is willing to compromise.



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Uzbekistan has resolved its border problems with both Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan through negotiations. However, the border conflict between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan sometimes leads to bloody conflicts. As it is known, Fergana Valley is the most populated settlement in this region. The community in the valley has a low standard of living. The inhabitants of the valley are mainly engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry. But water resources are insufficient.[2] This increases the risk of conflict. There are tensions between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan from time to time. In 2020 alone, 7 armed conflicts were recorded.[3] The largest scale of these armed conflicts took place in April 2021 and caused loss of life and property. There is still unrest in the region. In the said armed conflict, 154 Kyrgyz citizens were injured, 36 people, including two children, died. Tajikistan authorities announced that there were 19 dead and 87 injured. [4]

Similarly, in December of 2021 and January of 2022, there were clashes with the wounded on both sides. In addition, an armed conflict took place on April 12, 2022. Despite this, the states parties do not want the conflicts to lead to a comprehensive war. That's why, after each conflict, representatives of both sides came together to achieve a ceasefire; however, the ceasefire attempts did not bring a result that would lead to an agreement that would result in lasting peace in the medium and long term.

Lastly, on April 12, 2022, President of Tajikistan Imamali Rahman visited the city of Isfara, which borders with Kyrgyzstan. Rahman, who met with the local people during this visit, touched upon the border disputes with Kyrgyzstan, emphasized the need to live in peace with neighbors and called on the people of the region to "not be carried away by feelings-ambition". Rahman stated that determining the border is an important issue; stressed the importance of diplomacy. In this context, Rahman stated that more than 170 meetings have been held between intergovernmental commission delegations and working groups since 2022, and that 663 km of the 987 km border between the two states; that is, 68% of the limit has been decided. However, Rahman also stated that the process is a complex issue that takes time and said:[5]

"I remind once again the residents of Isfara that they should live and work with their neighbors in an atmosphere of mutual understanding and good neighborliness, communicate with them and cooperate in a friendly way, be tolerant and not give in to feelings."

On the other hand, President of Kyrgyzstan Sadir Caparov, who stated that she would solve the border problem with Tajikistan

until the end of her term of office, made the following statement:[6]

"The 600 km problem of the disputed border has been resolved, about 300 km remain. The problem is gradually being resolved. Slow pace is not only from us; originates from both sides. The border issue, which has not been resolved for 30 years, will not be resolved in a month. There are areas of contention. A wall is out of the question until both sides have resolved the disputed points. Those who do not understand the subject say that the wall construction would be the better solution. As soon as the controversial points are resolved, both sides will start building walls. Border points will be open. The trade will begin. Relations with Tajikistan will be like our current relations with Uzbekistan."

The border issue in question is not just an issue between two countries; it is also a complex issue involving external actors such as Russia, China, the United States (US) and the European Union (EU), which includes components such as regional security, the water problem and drug trafficking. Among the mentioned actors, Russia comes to the fore because it is the source of the problem. As a matter of fact, as in the cases of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Moldova, Georgia and Ukraine, Russia artificially created border conflicts in order to open up a space for its own intervention and sovereignty. Therefore, Moscow is not in favor of solving the aforementioned issues through negotiations.

In addition to external factors, the unwillingness of the administrations of both countries to make concessions makes the solution of the problem difficult. Despite this, the statements of the parties that draw attention to the importance of dialogue and reflect the will for a solution are very important. Because neither side is at war; It clearly shows that it wants peace.

[1] Ermek Baisalov, "Territorial Disputes in Central Asia on the Threshold of the 30th Anniversary of Independence", Cabar Asia, <https://cabar.asia/ru/territorialnye-spyry-v-tsentralnoj-azii-na-poroge-30-letiya-nezavisimosti>, (Date of Accession: 21.04.2022).

[2] Ibid.

[3] Temur Umarov, "Konflikt bez posrednikov. Kto vyigral ot voyni na granitse Kirgizii i Tadjikistana", Carnegie Moscow, <https://carnegie.ru/commentary/84454>, (Date of Accession: 21.04.2022).

[4] "Konflikt na tacikisko-kyrgyzskoy granitse: odin pogibshiy, 17 ranenih", Radio Ozodi, <https://rus.ozodi.org/a/31674519.html>, (Date of Accession: 25.04.2022).

[5] "Emomali Rahmon prizval jiteley Isfary mirno jit s sosedyami i 'ne poddavatsya emotsiyam'", Radio Ozodi, <https://rus.ozodi.org/a/31807154.html>, (Date of Accession: 27.04.2022).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

How Africa was Affected from Russo-Ukrainian War

The war, which started with Russia's attack on Ukraine on February 24, 2022, still continues. In response to these attacks of Russia, the European Union (EU) and the United States of America (USA) also wanted to create a deterrent effect by taking new sanction decisions. Undoubtedly, these sanctions will seriously affect the whole world. Because the sanctions applied or to be implemented will have many economic, political, and social effects. Although it is still early to fully determine the impact of the war on

the crises in Africa, it can be said that the reflections of the war will be multidimensional. In this context, the answer to the question of how sanctions will affect African countries should be examined in this article.

First of all, it can be stated that the impact of the sanctions on Africa will be in political, diplomatic and military dimensions, especially in the economy. Because, from an economic point of view, the fact that the sanctions started to af-



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fect the whole world is one of the most concrete indicators of this. Moreover, the economic dimension has effects on both a continental and a national basis. Because each of the 54 countries in Africa has economic income and expense branches for different reasons. In this respect, the effects will be different for each of the African countries. For example, the oil and natural gas in Nigeria can lead to a positive change for Nigeria with this war and contribute to the country's economy.

Moreover, the issue is not just about sanctions. Because war also has affected the world. In both diplomatic and economic terms, some effects have begun to be felt in Africa as well as in the whole world. Because the Moscow administration signed nuclear and military cooperation agreements with several African countries and sold weapons to these countries. Thus, in recent years, Russia has begun to advance its relations with African countries. However, with the war, some reservations of African countries and the effects of the war on the continental countries have also emerged. For instance, Egypt makes 75-80% of her wheat imports from Russia and Ukraine. However, due to the situation caused by the war, Egypt has to make changes in her import plan. In addition, if it acts slowly in this change in the import plan or has difficulty in finding another country to replace, it seems inevitable that the already increasing food prices in the country will increase.

Africa's wheat import increased by 68 percent between 2007-2019 and reached 47 million tons.[1] Most of the imports in question are made from Russia and Ukraine. Russia and Ukraine are the main suppliers of grain varieties such as wheat, barley, and oilseeds on the continent. These two states supply about 30 percent of the world's wheat. In addition, Russia is the world's third largest natural gas and oil producer on her own. Therefore, some continental countries importing oil and natural gas from Russia and African countries purchasing grain from both countries will face a problem arising from price increases soon.

Access to these grains is reduced or prevented due to war. This situation will seriously affect countries importing from Russia and Ukraine in Africa, especially Egypt, Morocco, Algeria, Kenya and Libya. It is known that droughts have been increasing in North Africa for decades and countries in this part of the continent lack the industry capability to support the people with local foods. For this reason, the countries in question have become more and more dependent on grain imports from Ukraine and Russia to protect their citizens. Therefore, the obstacles and restrictions brought by the war situation and the problems in the

supply chain will hit the grain imports from these two countries in Africa, and thus there will be price increases in many food products.

It is known that countries such as Ghana, Kenya and Nigeria consume a lot of wheat and most of this wheat is imported. Therefore, increases in grain products will deeply affect such countries. This means high inflation. On the other hand, it can be argued that oil exporting countries such as Angola and Nigeria will be less affected by the increase in commodity prices due to the increase in oil prices despite their low production. Because it is predicted that a balance will be formed in the import-export figures of the mentioned states.

This Russian attack on Ukraine has the potential to increase hunger and poverty in Africa in the short and medium term. This further exacerbates the challenges posed by the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, if the war continues, the poverty of citizens in Africa will increase. In addition, due to the removal of Russia's big banks from SWIFT, there will be various difficulties in payments.

Several other countries could similarly benefit from Europe's energy diversification, including Senegal, where 40 trillion cubic feet of natural gas was discovered between 2014 and 2017 and production is expected to begin in 2022.[2] Nigeria, which is currently a supplier of liquefied natural gas to many European countries, also enters the Trans-Saharan Gas Pipeline with Niger and Algeria to increase its exports to European markets. On February 16, 2022, these three countries signed an agreement to develop the pipeline, which is estimated to cost 13 billion dollars. [3] Europe, which is in search of new oil and natural gas suppliers to the pipeline, is likely to be an important financier.

In addition to natural gas, more sanctions against Russia could also benefit other natural resource exporters in the region. South Africa, for example, is the world's second largest producer of palladium, a critical input for automobiles and electronics, after Russia, and may therefore face increased demand because of international sanctions against Russia. Similarly, the currency of South Africa, a major exporter of gold, is strengthening because of rising global prices of the precious metal.

While most of the attention focuses on the effects of war on Trans-Atlantic relations; The occupation of Ukraine also puts African countries to an important test through pan-African solidarity. In recent months, institutions aiming to represent this

solidarity, from the African Union (AfB) to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), have led heads of state to discuss how to deal with the wave of coups in the Sahel and rising insurgency across the continent.

In addition to all these, Russia accounts for only 2–3 percent of Africa's trade with other states. Only 0.5 percent of the investment from Africa and only 2 percent of the export to Africa is made by Russia. Considering these data, it is understood that Russia is not a global investor or a leading economy in Africa. This means that the impact of the sanctions on the continent will be limited. Because the economic impact of Africa will have a course related to the increase in commodity prices in widely consumed grain products such as wheat and corn and oil prices.

In political and diplomatic terms, many countries, political actors, and governments in Africa mostly avoid clear harmony with Russia or Ukraine/West and seem not to have determined their sides for now. Apart from this, in the United Nations (UN) General Assembly's decision to condemn Russia, 27 out of 54 African countries voted against Russia; surprisingly, 17 countries abstained, voted in favor of Eritrea, and the remaining states did not vote at all. Some of the abstaining countries are those with which Russia has signed various agreements or where Wagner forces are present. In addition, states that do not want to be with or against both sides have made a strategic move according to themselves by not participating at all. Otherwise, they could be criticized by Russia and the West, or their investments could be jeopardized.

There are several reasons for the high number of abstaining, dissenting votes and non-participants at this point. The first reason is the nostalgic respect for the support given by the Soviet Union to the independence struggles of some South African states, especially the Republic of South Africa. Another reason is the unwillingness of African states to be drawn into the apparent possible resurgence of the Cold War. Because many African countries were at the point of proxy-satellite actors during the Cold War and they were adversely affected by this situation. Another reason is Russia's increasing influence in Africa in recent years. This is due to the various agreements signed between many African countries and Russia in recent years, and the presence of Wagner forces in more than ten countries.

When examined militarily, we come across Russia's arms deals with African countries and, more importantly, the Russian private military company Wagner, which has activities in many places outside of Africa. How will the Russia-Ukraine War and therefore the sanctions imposed on Russia affect Wagner's situation in Africa?

Russia's isolation from the rest of the world could bring it closer to countries like Mali, the Central African Republic, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, which are excluded from most of Africa. However, rising food prices come at a politically sensitive time for many countries. In Africa, there will be elections in 2022 and 2023 in many countries such as Angola, Kenya and possibly Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Therefore, there may be a situation where existing governments in Africa can secure themselves so that they can continue and be re-elected. In this case, Wagner forces could provide 'protection' to governments in other countries as well as in the Central African Republic. In this case, the influence of Wagner and therefore Russia will increase in some countries.

The last success of Wagner, who has made an agreement with the Mali Government and allegedly started operating in this country, was that the French Ambassador and French media channels left Mali and the French President Emmanuel Macron withdrew the French troops from the country in February 2022. This development indicates that the effect of Western security aid on African states has diminished. For this reason, Wagner has begun to be accepted as an effective method to solve political and military problems in the future. This can be understood from the increasing Wagner effect in African states. Due to the effects of the sanctions and the Russian-Ukrainian War on the entire world economy, the food shortages and food shortages that may be experienced in Africa, as well as the upcoming elections and political instability, may unleash a storm as more African leaders reach Wagner forces for support.

As a result of the sanctions imposed on Russia, the Russian ruble depreciated greatly against the dollar. In this context, the sanctions imposed on Russia will have an effect up to a certain point; however, it is thought that the effect will not be much in the medium and long term. Because a significant level of natural gas and oil sanctions against Russia have not been implemented yet. In other words, a way out has been left for Russia. China's implicit support is also an indication that Russia's influence will not be long-term. However, apart from all these, when it comes to the effects on Africa, it is possible that many of the African states will be affected by the sanctions. Because the increase in food, oil and natural gas prices and supply problems will make food security difficult, cause an extraordinary increase in the prices of many products, especially food, and therefore lead to high inflation in many African states.

In addition to all these, Africa is divided into two, politically and diplomatically. While one side is close to the West, voting against Russia; the other party abstains or takes care to stand by both parties by not even participating in the voting. In fact, this situation reveals the increasing Russian influence in Africa. In military terms, whether Wagner's influence in Africa will increase in the future will vary depending on the course of the Russia-Ukraine War and the size and effect of the sanctions. If natural gas or oil is added to a possible package of additional sanctions, or if the sanctions affect Russia more than previously thought, Wagner forces' resources may be cut short, which could reduce Russia's effectiveness in Africa.

In conclusion, the Russia-Ukraine conflict has once again highlighted the urgent need for policy and investment options to build sustainable, resilient, and inclusive food systems on the African continent. Because war increases structural weaknesses and vulnerabilities, including poverty and inequality.

[1] Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko-Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, "Africa Nutrition Year: Impact of Russia-Ukraine Conflict on African Food Systems", African Union Development Agency, <https://www.nepad.org/publication/africanutritionyear-impact-of-russia-ukraine-conflict-african-food-systems#:~:text=Africa's%20wheat%20imports%20increased%20by,wheat%20and%20sunflower%20to%20Africa>, (Date of Accession: 25.04.2022)

[2] Seth Onyango, "Ukraine Crisis: Could Africa Become Europe's Next Gas Station?", How we made it in Africa?, <https://www.howwemadeditinafrica.com/ukraine-crisis-could-africa-become-europes-next-gas-station/i40820/>, (Date of Accession: 26.04.2022)

[3] Kester Kenn Klomegah, "Europe Abandons Russia's Energy-Can Africa Become Reliable Alternative Supplier?", Modern Diplomacy, <https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2022/04/25/europe-abandons-russias-energy-can-africa-become-reliable-alternative-supplier/>, (Date of Accession: 30.04.2022).

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9 May 2022

Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Studies (ANKASAM) President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol spoke to Azerbaijan State Television AZ TV about the normalization process between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

9 May 2022

Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Studies (ANKASAM) President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol was a guest of the Birinci Sayfa program hosted by Cengizhan Cevahiroğlu on TRT Haber.

11 May 2022

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

12 May 2022

Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Studies (ANKASAM) President Prof. Dr. Mehmet Seyfettin Erol wrote an article titled "Developed Strategic Partnership Between Turkey and Kazakhstan in a Changing Global Geopolitics" for Egemen Kazakhstan, Kazakhstan's leading newspaper.



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.

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CRISIS AND POLITICAL STUDIES VOLUME VI, ISSUE I

JOURNAL OF REGIONAL STUDIES

The latest issue of the Journal of Regional Studies, an international peer-reviewed journal operating within the Ankara Crisis and Political Research Center (ANKASAM), has been published. Our journal is scanned by Academic Keys, ASOS Index, CEEOL, Cite Factor, DRJI, Index Copernicus, Ideal Online, Research Bible, Index and TUBITAK DERGIPARK databases. You can reach our journal via the link below.

ANKASAM JOURNAL OF REGIONAL STUDIES VOLUME VI, ISSUE I.

