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ANKASAM OUTLOOK

Are USA and China Shifting from a New Cold War to a New Understanding?

The meeting between US President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping before to the G-20 Leaders' Summit on Indonesia's Bali Island, as well as the remarks delivered at the press conference that followed, have already overshadowed the G-20 Summit. "I absolutely believe there need not be a new Cold War,"

President Biden said of China-US relations, prompting many capitals to wonder, "What did Biden want to say, what is the US trying to accomplish, what is the future of the US-China relations?" Because all the actors know that the course and outcome of the relations between the USA and China will largely determine the



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name and framework of the new international system and therefore the future of these countries. As a result, reading between the lines in both leaders' messages is critical.

To repeat, the key phrase here is certainly the "New Cold War." Biden's emphasis that this "New Cold War" would not be between China and the US is far more significant. Because there are only two parties in the "New Cold War" because the other actors defending the multipolar world and even waging power struggles with the US are null and void at this time. As a result, it is good to concentrate on the phrase that confuses and raises many questions.

Biden's statement that there will not be a "New Cold War" between China and the USA frankly brings to mind the following two questions: "Is the USA not ready for a war with China and trying to buy time? Or is the US actually delivering the message that it is willing to reach an agreement with China on the establishment of a controlled bipolar system, which directly implies that the US will share power with China and divide the world into spheres of influence?"

In fact, the question of the future between the USA and China has been on the agenda of both countries since 2009. In this context, between 2009 and 2013, the US began to see China as a "solution partner" with which it could act together in regional-global issues. And within this framework, it is seen that they first emphasized the search for a regional cooperation centered on the "Asia-Pacific", and then they brought up a "New Model Cooperation" targeting beyond the Pacific. As a result, all of these bring attention to the fact that a new era has begun since 2015.

In this light, it is worth noting that the Beijing government, which regards the US's pursuit of collaboration and the model it has proposed as a weakness, has upped its expectations of Washington, thereby raising the bar. Until the Russia-Ukraine War, it is seen that China has successfully implemented its policy of encouraging anti-US sentiment, isolating and weakening it economically and politically by constructing an "Alliance of Others" through large regional-global projects and soft power policies (such as Belt and Road) and "multipolar" rhetoric. So much so that it achieves successful outcomes not just in the framework of US-Asian powers, but also in the context of US-EU and even US-NATO relations through the discourse of "multipolarity."

As a result, it is seen that China openly demands from the US for a more "fair" and "new power sharing" in order to increase its global influence, and will not hesitate to resort to military force when necessary. In this context, Chinese President Jinping's announcement before the G20 Summit that Beijing will expand military training and ready for "any conflict" poses an unmistakable challenge to American unipolarity and hegemony. The emphasis on war, which had previously emerged as an attitude of resolve at the point of China's red lines (for example, the One-China Policy), is no longer limited with the words "any war."

As a result, the "China threat," which has presented itself since Obama's final term and continued with President Donald Trump and current President Joe Biden, is at the core of US foreign policy today. Moscow's loss of all forms of power as a result of the Russia-Ukraine War, as well as the growth of China in Russia's spheres of influence, have, honestly, forced Washington to a new assessment of threat and cooperation. In other words, China's desire for more from the United States, especially in the Pacific, has prompted Washington, which has never agreed to share its power and spheres of influence with another actor, to pursue a new policy. As a matter of fact, the results of the USA's new strategy targeting China's multipolar policy, especially through the Russia-Ukraine War, seem to be influential in President Biden's last speech.

Of course, it cannot be considered as a coincidence that this statement coincided with Xi Jinping's indirect messages about building a bipolar world between the USA and China. Therefore, Biden gives the message that he clearly sees China's determination and can cooperate with it. In response, Xi Jinping's assertion that China does not want to overturn the present international order, challenge, or replace the United States indicates that "it is ready," and recalls the 2009-2015 era and a domain sharing agreement.

As a result, the USA has two options against China, which has strengthened its power with the discourse of "multipolarity", tries to further consolidate this power in terms of spheres of influence and openly declares that it will not hesitate to resort to military force when appropriate. It seems that the US has chosen an option to put on its agenda: an approach based on sharing under the name of "Controlled Bipolarity". Because the US seems to be far from its goal of "Unipolarity" economically, politically and even militarily and cannot afford an open war with China. Therefore, we are talking about "Cold War 2.0." The United States, which has stated that it will continue the "Cold War" with China, which has replaced the Soviet Union, has chosen instead to go along with Beijing who protects the status quo against "revisionist forces" that threaten the world with nuclear weapons and violate the current political map in the name of preserving the status quo. While this demonstrates a shared opposition to multipolar world understanding, it is also significant in that it signals to a new sharing process.

So, what is the address of the place they will share? All the indicators are pointing to South Asia for the moment. Looking closely at the most recent regional-global developments, it is projected that the process that began with Myanmar (Burma) will deepen and extend along with other developments. Because neither actor wants another opponent, they are continuing to make advances toward the goal of establishing a controlled bipolar system, which they have agreed to call the "New Cooperation Model." As a result, this reality underpins the fact that the power struggle in the framework of the US-China relationship is transforming into a share struggle with each passing day. Biden has already said that.



ANKASAM OUTLOOK

The Changing Geopolitics of the Caspian and the Trans-Caspian Corridor: “What Kind of a Common Future in the Opportunities-Threats Dilemma”

Multidimensional crises experienced on a global basis have begun to bring new multidimensional threats and risks for the whole world. In addition to direct war, indirect warfare methods and practices (in more concrete terms, proxy and hybrid wars), beyond socio-economic problems for countries, cause a great

chaos in the international system with the political earthquakes that these will cause; therefore, if it cannot be prevented, it points to a great destruction for all humanity. Because the crises, which manifest themselves with energy security, bring many different security problems, including food and health, to the agenda.



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In this context, the issue of logistics and corridors/routes has become much more important for all actors in the construction process of the new international system. For this reason, it is possible that the “edge belt” weighted “power-building” “power-maintaining” approach until yesterday has been replaced by a new strategy that directly targets corridors/routes. As a matter of fact, we have been witnessing direct or indirect interventions in countries that have a key position on the north-south, east-west routes, including border belt countries.

As a result of these interventions, we see that many existing or potential corridors and routes (even under projects) are targeted, unsafe, and their costs are increasing day by day. While the increasing uncertainty and ongoing crises on these routes increase the burden of existing corridors, they also cause serious logistical problems for countries that depend on these corridors. This deeply shakes the economic-commercial based social-political balances of countries, especially inflation, all over the world.

Therefore, there is a need for new safe and short-distance alternatives that will respond to needs more quickly, with less cost, not only in terms of transport but also in terms of energy security. European countries, which are largely deprived of both of these issues, undoubtedly come first among those who feel the need. It is necessary to state here in advance; the effects of not only direct consequences of Russia-Ukraine’s war on their own countries in this pursuit of Europe, but also the effects of actors such as USA turning this war/crisis into an opportunity in every respect.

Trans-Caspian as Supply and Route in Energy-Logistics Security

Due to these sudden changes in international environment and increasing uncertainties, it cannot be considered as a coincidence that the Trans-Caspian region has come to forefront as a reliable “source/supply” and “route/corridor” point for the whole world, especially for Europe. This multidimensional search for security underlies the increasing interest of Europe, which has ignored this region until yesterday. Because, as partly mentioned above, the latest developments in the Eurasian geography are of great importance not only for the region in question, but also for the rest of the world, especially Europe.

On the other hand, what kind of results this “geopolitical interest” will bring with it will undoubtedly depend on common stance that the states of the region will put forward here. As it is known, Caspian stood out as one of the “addresses of insolvency” in new geopolitics until recent years that emerged after the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). The fact that a significant part of states of region have peacefully resolved their conflicts on basis of “friendship” in recent years, undoubtedly points to a new process not only for the riparian countries but also for the Trans-Caspian. Because the “crisis-weary” countries in the region want cooperation, not new problems, and they aim to achieve this in the interest of the whole world, especially their close circles, within the framework of a win-win understanding.

Caspian Countries Don’t Want “Irregular-Artificial Problems”

The states of the region are now very clearly aware of this: In today’s reality, routes and corridors are not only economic-commercial in the context of energy-transit transportation; It is also of great importance in terms of regional security, stability and therefore the construction/development of common development-welfare and cultural areas. As a matter of fact, it is observed that the search for cooperation of the member states towards the Trans-Caspian Corridor, that is, the Central Transport Corridor, starting from China and extending to Europe, has increased through both bilateral and multiple agreements. Because, as much as the region itself, this corridor is of great importance for South Asia, where China and even the Pakistan-India duo are at the center. This issue underlies the increasing interest of both countries towards Trans-Caspian via Trans-Afghan.

Another point that states of the region are aware of is this: The attempt to create new “unsolvable problem areas/issues” in Caspian through some artificial and inappropriate issues in an environment where existing problems in Caspian have been largely resolved cannot be accepted as goodwill. In this context, for example, the claim that the pipelines to be passed through the Caspian will cause an ecological problem in the Caspian is, frankly, tantamount to mocking and ignoring existing science-technology and practices. Because Hazar will not be first application area in this regard. To date, there are pipelines that have been passed under the sea in many

parts of the world, especially in Black Sea (Blue Stream and Turkish Stream) and Baltics (Nord Stream 1 and Nord Stream 2), are at project stage at point of passing, and they have not been addresses of an ecological problem until today.

In conclusion, we can say that “Resource Wars”, which have emerged as a result of an imperialist understanding from past to present, have a tendency to deepen in wider geographies together with “Corridor/Route Wars”, in this context we can say that Caspian region, as one of new addresses of power struggle, is seen as a potential crisis area and target for the said imperial powers. At this point, there are not many options for the “Caspian Basin States”. They will either be involved in the cooperation process together and accelerate it or they will stay out of it. Otherwise, with possible involvement of non-regional actors in crisis, a picture will emerge such as the “internationalization of the Caspian Problem” and therefore region’s drifting into much greater chaos, and frankly, this will be a development that no regional state would desire and it is definitely not in their interests.

Therefore, at this point, it is necessary to accelerate the solution process originating from the Caspian, and at this point, develop and strengthen the multidimensional understanding of constructive cooperation towards the Trans-Caspian Corridor, namely the Middle Transport Corridor, and make this corridor functional as soon as possible. The actor (or actors) in question must now understand that some efforts and searches to prevent the “strong will” that manifests itself in this context in region will not yield any results. Concrete examples of this have been seen recently. Therefore, to express once again, the actor who insists on point of no solution in Caspian is doomed to be alone in this new process, in changing geopolitics. Therefore, in the context of the Trans-Caspian Corridor, the actors will either be involved in this cooperation process or face the losses of being excluded. Because the region is tired of no solution and radically rejects the understanding of “no solution is the solution”.



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Kyrgyzstan’s Appeal to the CSTO Regarding the Border with Tajikistan

On 19 October 2022, Kyrgyzstan Defence Minister Baktybek Bekbolotov proposed a plan for resolving border disputes with Tajikistan. Calling for the deployment of the contingents of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) to the Kyrgyz-Tajik border, Bekbolotov stated: [1]

“In the meeting, we had with the CSTO Secretary General Stanislav Zas, I offered to send a small contingent telling him that there will be no peace between us (Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan) until a third judge stands between us.

To resolve the conflict, I proposed the deployment of a small CSTO contingent in our disputed territories. This will serve to supervise the ceasefire and withdraw heavy equipment from the state border.”

Bekbolotov explained that if this proposal is actualized, the problem of determining the political border will be solved. On 18 October 2022, CSTO Secretary General Zas met with the



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President of Tajikistan, Emomali Rahmon in Dushanbe, and the parties discussed the military and political situation in the region, especially the strengthening of security measures at the Tajik-Afghan border. The meeting was held within the framework of the high-level conference on International and Regional Border Security and Management Cooperation to Counter Terrorism held in Dushanbe on 18-19 October 2022.

At the conference, Rahmon declared that due to the transfer of foreign fighters from the Middle East, various terrorist organizations in Afghanistan have strengthened their positions and that this situation poses a serious threat to the countries of the region. During the Rahmon-Zas meeting, issues such as the development of cooperation with Tajikistan within the framework of the CSTO were discussed. The President of Tajikistan evaluated the CSTO as an important factor in ensuring the security and stability of the region.^[2]

As it is known, the primary security threat for Tajikistan comes from the southern borders. Speaking for Kyrgyzstan, border conflicts with Tajikistan have caused security problems in recent years. Tajikistan has serious external support in the fight against the threat posed by Afghanistan. Dushanbe feels more secure against threats from its neighbors owing to its cooperation with the CSTO, including bilateral agreements. Kyrgyzstan, on the other hand, cannot get the support it expects from the CSTO regarding its national security issues.

Securing the Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan border is as important for Dushanbe as it is for Bishkek. While Dushanbe has focused all its attention on the southern borders, it may have to face instability on both the southern and northern borders in case of conflicts on the northern borders. In addition, although Tajikistan has a problematic relationship with the Taliban, it is thought that the Taliban will not engage in a war with Afghanistan's northern neighbors in the current conjuncture. Therefore, the primary concern for the countries of the region is the strengthening of radical groups in Afghanistan.

As can be predicted, in such a case, the conflicts on the Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan border may turn into a major problem for the CSTO. In other words, Bishkek wants CSTO to prioritize not only the

southern borders of Tajikistan but also the conflicts in the Fergana Valley.

The border conflicts that Kyrgyzstan has with Tajikistan both cause great damage to the country's economy and discredit the Kyrgyz Government in the public eye. If Bishkek steps back in border conflicts, Kyrgyz public opinion will see this as a defeat. Refusing to back down and retaliating leads to a further increase in conflicts and thus an increase in casualties. In addition, the escalation of conflicts may cause two problems that pose an even greater threat. The first is the risk that the border conflicts will turn into an extensive war. The second is the possibility of turning Tajikistan into a long-term enemy.

The Government of Kyrgyzstan is aware that there will be problems in terms of economic development and integration into the international economy as long as border problems with its neighbors continue to exist. Kyrgyzstan, which has difficulty securing its southern borders on its own, tries to do this through the CSTO. According to the Bishkek administration, the deployment of the CSTO peacekeeping force at the border will also reduce the cost spent on defense.

While Kyrgyzstan wants to solve its problem through the CSTO, a new opportunity arises for the organization as well. Bishkek has entered the process of losing its dignity in the eyes of the members of the CSTO. Kyrgyzstan declared that the CSTO should be restructured and that the organization does not serve its interests. In addition, Armenia has reached the point of separation from the alliance. Although Kazakhstan actively operates within the CSTO, it experiences insecurity due to its relations with Russia.

In this context, Kyrgyzstan's proposal to deploy the CSTO on the border with Tajikistan will lead the alliance to adopt a new mission and role and increase the confidence that it is operational again. Bishkek's proposal is viewed as a positive development in terms of both supporting the dignity of the organization and its relations with Kyrgyzstan. However, it can be said that if the alliance adopts the proposal of Kyrgyzstan, there will be certain adverse outcomes.

First of all, this situation will be reflected in Yerevan's relations with the CSTO. The acceptance of Kyrgyzstan's proposal by the CSTO, which rejected Yerevan's proposal in the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflicts, will accelerate Armenia's separation from the CSTO.

The second is related to Tajikistan's reaction to this since the approval of Dushanbe is required to establish a peacekeeping force at the border. Otherwise, there will be the impression that the peacekeeping force at the border is deployed to limit Tajikistan. The initiative could also be interpreted by Dushanbe as Moscow's support for Bishkek.

The third is related to Uzbekistan's stance. Since Tashkent is not a member of the CSTO, it may oppose the deployment of a collective peacekeeping force including Russian soldiers in a region close to Uzbek borders. In the past years, the Tashkent administration opposed the establishment of a military base by any third country in the regions close to its borders. Tashkent will probably approach this issue with a similar perspective.

It can be estimated that Zas opened Kyrgyzstan's proposal for discussion during his meeting with Rahmon in Dushanbe. The President of Kyrgyzstan, who made a similar proposal before, explained the necessity of stabilizing the border conflict to the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin at the meeting held in Astana. However, Dushanbe has never been willing to accept this proposal.

As a result, if Russia supports Kyrgyzstan, several problems may arise on the Dushanbe-Moscow line. In fact, at the "Russia-Central Asia" meeting held in Astana, Rahmon stated that Russia should respect the Central Asian countries and declared Moscow's attitude a disturbance.

[1]"Глава Минобороны Кыргызстана предлагает выставить посты миротворцев ОДКБ на проблемных участках границы с Таджикистаном", Interfax, <http://interfax.az/view/878874>, (Date of Accession: 20.10.2022).

[2]"Рахмон и генсек ОДКБ выступили за усиление охраны таджикско – а little гранской границы", Tass, <https://tass.ru/mezhdunarodnaya-panorama/16083325>, (Date of Accession: 20.10.2022).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

China's First Permanent Political Party School and Africa

In 2022, China opened the first Political Party School in Tanzania in East Africa, both on the continent and overseas. The school, called the Mwalimu Julius Leadership School, initially recruited relatives of top leaders in the ruling parties of six countries: Mozambique, South Africa,

Zimbabwe, Angola, Tanzania, and Namibia.[1] All the political leaders in the first group of participants are people who have governed their countries uninterruptedly since independence. The International Liaison Department (ILD) within the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) funded



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ÇALIŞKAN**

this political party school with 40 million dollars, and the ruling parties of the respective countries also supported it.[2] This school is advantageous for Beijing in terms of the development of the Exchange of views between the leaders as an inter-party's diplomacy.

Like many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, in the years of independence of Tanzania, it was influenced by Mao Zedong and CCP. This issue shows that China will also increase its influence in terms of ideology through Political Party Schools in Africa. China's military base in Djibouti in 2017, is the first military base of this country in a foreign land. At the same time, the political parties in the six countries mentioned seem that they are willing to take lessons from China's economic and governance model. It is possible to understand their support of the establishment of the Political Party School.

In early June 2022, a letter was written to Chinese President Xi Jinping by participants of a training workshop organized at this Political Party School in Tanzania, and Jinping replied to the letter in the same month. Jinping's response to this letter can be considered an indicator of the importance the CCP leadership attaches to the ruling parties in Africa and the school in question. One of the students who attended the school said, "The fact that Jinping responded to our letter in a short time like a week despite having such a busy schedule shows the value he attaches to Africa-China relations." [3]

In addition, another issue to be addressed here is China's investments within the framework of the Belt and Road Project, which is touted as China's grand project. Even though these investments are decreasing due to the problems created by the Covid-19 pandemic and the decline in economic growth, it is possible to state that Beijing continues to strengthen the network of ideological and diplomatic relations, which we can call the political pillar of the project in question.

The Political Party School established in Tanzania reflects the political pillar of the goals outlined in the context of BRI and at this point, it aims to develop the diplomacy network between the CCP and the ruling parties in Africa. In this context, the CCP has created an opportunity to take this goal, which it characterizes as developing and strengthening people-to-people connections, to a higher level through the party school in question.

As it can be understood, this school reveals that the Beijing administration, and naturally the CCP, attaches great importance to relations with political parties to develop people-to-people contacts and sees them as a means of spreading its ideology. It is known that the CCP has been providing party training in many regions, especially in Latin America, South Asia, and Africa for many years. However, this leadership school is the first permanent party school funded and established by the CCP. Therefore, this indicates that the CCP and the Chinese leadership will continue to establish and fund such schools to develop foreign inter-party partnerships in line with their goals.

Jinping has expressed that he desires BRI to encourage and enhance international cooperation. This can be enhanced through trade, foreign policy, diplomacy, finance, and people-to-people links, he said, thus increasing international cooperation for common development.

To some extent, BRI can be described as China's globalization. It is claimed that China, which has been developing cooperation with the countries along the route of the project and investing in infrastructure, is taking this initiative to establish its system.

In addition to improving economic relations through infrastructure investments, Beijing has also allegedly taken steps to coordinate policy and spread Chinese-type socialist ideology within the project. At this point, however, Beijing states that the people-to-people connection is the strong social foundation of the BRI. Improved people-to-people contact and inter-party communication are seen as necessities to ensure the continuation of the project. This raises the possibility that the BRI may give rise to the concept of Chinese-type globalization.

In this context, the Beijing administration has brought Chinese media to many continents and regions, expanded the network of Confucius Institutes, and made investments in various sectors from agriculture to education, and technology to health. In this way, the Jinping administration has strengthened its communication with political parties and made important moves to establish links between think tanks, legislative bodies, and civil society organizations. This Political Party School established in Tanzania can be interpreted as one of the steps taken in this direction.

At Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, the first permanent party school established by China in Africa, classes are organized by the CCP and focus on how the party is governed, and how and in what ways the party leadership can be strengthened. In addition, Africa and China have not publicized the content of the lectures, which emphasize the promotion of the CCP's vision through a range of topics, including what roles it should play in global affairs. In addition, it is noteworthy that the political parties of the six African countries that supported the establishment of the school have been in power since their independence. Therefore, the education provided at the school can be expected to consolidate the governance of these parties.

As a result, the CCP has put the party training it has been providing for many years in South Asia, Latin America, Africa, and many other regions permanently through the first party school it established in Africa. It can be predicted that efforts in this direction will continue. The continuation of the BRI investments, which declined and slowed down with the Covid-19 outbreak, at least on a political and diplomatic basis, is of great importance for China to spread its influence. In this context, the Beijing administration may expand its political party schools on a broader basis in the coming years and increase its influence by opening these schools on many continents and spreading its ideological system within the scope of BRI investments.

[1] Kester Kenn Klomegah, "China Opens Its First Political Party School in Africa", Eurasia Review, <https://www.eurasiareview.com/05072022-china-opens-its-first-political-party-school-in-africa/> (Date of Accession: 07.11.2022).

[2] Jevans Nyabiage, "China's political party school in Africa takes first students from 6 countries", South China Morning Post, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3182368/china-party-school-africa-takes-first-students-6-countries> (Date of Accession: 07.11.2022).

[3] "Contributing Youth Power to Africa's Development and Africa-China Cooperation", Gv.cn, www.gov.cn/xinwen/2022-06/15/content_5695865.htm (Date of Accession: 07.11.2022).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

The Effects of the Russia-Ukraine War on Local and Global Health Security

Although nearly nine months have passed since the Russia-Ukraine War, which began on February 24, 2022, the war is still ongoing and continues to increase its violence each passing day. Thousands of people lost their lives due to war, and millions of people were forced to emigrate. Many issues have opened a discus-

sion about the Russian-Ukrainian war, such as the energy crisis, food crisis, climate crisis, and migration. Because this war has exceeded the scope of traditional security approaches and for this reason, it has begun to be addressed with new security approaches. Health security is one of these areas.



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Health security, in its most general definition, is the whole of activities aimed at combating famine and hunger, reducing the negative effects of environmental pollution on human health, combating epidemics, reducing child deaths, and increasing clean water opportunities. The most important environment that feeds security threats arising from health problems is war and conflicts. According to the “World Report on Health and Violence” published by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2002, 191 million people died between 1945 and 2002 due to non-war acts of violence and adverse health conditions as a result of wars. This is not just about the people who died on the battlefield of the Russia-Ukraine War, but also it reveals the need to examine people who are not directly on the battlefield but have health problems affected by the war.

The Russia-Ukraine War has local and global effects in terms of health security. Local effects are specific to the borders of Ukraine; global effects are seen around the world on the occasion of Ukrainian immigrants.

After the start of the war in Ukraine in February 2022, many cancer patients who could not receive early diagnosis and treatment died or their tumors progressed and became more critical. The constant witness of conflict and bombardment by the civilian population has caused the public’s mental health to deteriorate greatly. Even if they were not directly attacked, civilians exposed to the sounds of bombardments began to experience a great deal of hearing loss and deafness.

Access to food and medical products has also been restricted due to the constant curfew declared in the country because of air strikes. Due to the war, many health institutions and employees in Ukraine became incapacitated, and even at the very beginning of the war, on March 15, 2022, WHO shared its data with the world public to emphasize this situation.

According to the data in question; until March 15, 2022, 31 attacks were carried out on Ukrainian health services, 26 of these attacks damaged or destroyed health facilities, and in 5 attacks ambulances were damaged or destroyed. In the statement made by WHO based on these data, it was stated that attacks on health services have a direct impact on everyone’s access to basic health services, especially women, children, and other vulnerable groups.[1]

WHO announced in September 2022 that there were more than 500 attacks on the Ukrainian healthcare system. It was stated that these attacks disrupted health services and therefore the number of Covid-19 cases in Ukraine will increase in the coming months.[2] New threats in the field of health security in Ukraine continued to increase with the intensification of the war day by day.

The Russia-Ukraine War has global effects as well as local effects on health security. Moreover, this situation carries much greater risks than local ones. The most important of these risks have emerged with the immigration problem. After the war began, a period of nine months passed and in this short period, approximately five million Ukrainians had to immigrate from their country. This mass of immigrants can cause local diseases to be carried to the countries they migrated to.

If the country of emigration is in good economic condition, it can create living spaces for Ukrainian immigrants and prevent the spread of diseases. However, in economically weaker countries, immigrants mix directly with the local population, and health problems are put in the background compared to basic living needs. This can cause diseases to spread and mutate. For this reason, an epidemic that may start in the country that receives immigrants can spread to the whole world. For example, in November 2021, twenty children were

diagnosed with polio in Ukraine, and therefore a vaccination campaign was started by the Ministry of Health of Ukraine.[3] However, it is not known exactly what measures were taken after the war broke out. For this reason, there may be people with the disease in question among the immigrants. Considering that polio is a contagious disease, the existence of an epidemic risk cannot be denied.

In addition to the new epidemics, Covid-19, which is not yet ended, may grow again due to these migration waves and return to its old levels. Moreover, since the Russia-Ukraine War is a conventional war, both sides use ballistic missiles. In addition, forests are burned and destroyed for the passage of army convoys. This, in turn, leads to the escalation of the climate crisis, which is effective worldwide and directly affects global health security negatively. Although the current situation is rhetorical, the danger of a nuclear war also poses a great threat to global health security.

As a result, the Russia-Ukraine War has created a significant threat to health security both locally and globally. The continuation of the war may cause much bigger problems in the future, especially for the countries that accept Ukrainian immigrants. Although the population affected by the war in the current situation is predominantly the Ukrainian people, the war to become globalized. Therefore, it can be said that global health problems may be encountered more frequently.

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[2] “ВООЗ прогнозує жовтневий сплеск COVID-19 в Україні”, UNN, <https://www.unn.com.ua/uk/news/1994023-vooz-prognozuye-zhovtneviy-splesk-covid-19-v-ukrayini>, (Date of Accession: 03.11.2022).

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ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Can North Korea's Nuclear Tests Achieve Their Goal?

North Korean state officials are making harsh statements against the exercises carried out in the region in partnership with the United States (US), South Korea, and Japan, and they warn that these exercises will be answered. This attitude of North Korea is not only in words but also in the field as the activities carried out by the

Pyongyang administration become more serious. North Korea conducted more than twenty missile tests on October 2, 2022.[1] These tests include a short-range missile that crashed near South Korea, as well as a long-range intercontinental ballistic missile that alarmed Japan.



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All these tests made 2022 the year when North Korea conducted the most ballistic missile tests.[2] This situation brings to mind the questions of "Can North Korea achieve its goals with its current trials?" and "How far can it go to achieve its goals?"

At this point, it can be said that North Korea's strategy is to attract the attention of the US, to ease the sanctions imposed on it, to gain some privileges, and to have the opportunity to negotiate recognition. But the US is currently busy with the upcoming midterm elections. In its foreign policy, it is focused on the Ukraine War and the global power struggle with China. In this case, it can be predicted that the Pyongyang Government will further increase its current activities to get the desired result. This means that intercontinental long-range ballistic missiles will be used more frequently in future tests.

In addition to all this, each new level that North Korea will raise its tests will raise both global security concerns and regional threats and risks to a higher level. This situation may lead to stronger sanction pressure within the United Nations (UN). However, due to the tension between Russia and China in the West, it is difficult to form unity within the UN Security Council (UNSC). Fifteen states that are members of the UNSC could not take a common stance in condemning North Korea's latest attempts, and China and Russia refused to condemn North Korea.[3] However, the Moscow administration cited the US as responsible for the tension between Pyongyang and Washington at the meeting.[4]

At the same time, North Korea's new nuclear law allows for the preventive use of nuclear weapons in a variety of situations. One of the main reasons underlying this law is that the Pyongyang Government sees the exercises held in the region in partnership with South Korea, Japan, and the US as a rehearsal for the occupation.

However, it is not easy for North Korea to attract the attention of the US to the point of returning to the negotiating table. Therefore, Pyongyang, which is thought to make a move to increase missile tests on the occasion of the midterm elections, may try to put itself higher on the Washington administration's priority list.

On the other hand, Russia cannot achieve the desired results in the Ukraine War. This creates an ambiguous situation for North Korea. First of all, the preoccupation with the Ukrainian War and the nuclear threats of Russian President Vladimir Putin in American foreign policy makes it difficult for Pyongyang's missile tests to attract the attention of the US. In other words, the distraction created by the Ukraine War in the US creates a disadvantageous situation for North Korea.

On the other hand, if North Korea's nuclear tests cause some effects on the US, Moscow can also benefit from the developments. Thus, by gaining an advantageous position against the West, Russia can take more serious steps to undermine the hegemony and power of the West. The realization of this possibility may also bring some opportunities for Pyongyang in terms of opposition to Western hegemony.

This ambivalent situation for North Korea over the Ukraine War similarly manifests itself in terms of Chinese foreign policy and Taiwan issues. The possibility the President of China Xi Jinping, who is authorized for a third term, following a more proactive foreign policy and increasing the pressure on Taiwan, may work against the Pyongyang Government by making it difficult for North Korea to attract the attention of the US.

In addition, the distraction that North Korea will create for the US may strengthen China's hand in foreign policy production and Taiwan, allowing it to challenge the West more and shake the Western alliance. Of course, the realization of this situation will strengthen the hand of North Korea.

The fact that both Russia and China can more powerfully oppose the hegemony of the US, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and the West, so North Korea, with which they have already converged in terms of foreign policy interests over the “common enemy”, can also achieve their nuclear targets without encountering global reactions, sanctions, and military threats. Also, that situation will enable them to perform their experiments more comfortably.

As a result, it can be said that one of the most important reasons why the trials have become so frequent is that North Korea aims to gain various gains by attracting the attention of the US and the Western alliance. However, due to the global struggle with China and the Ukraine War, it seems difficult for the current trials to attract the attention of the US. However, the distraction that these trials will create in the US may also serve the interests of Russia and China, and indirectly North Korea.

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[2] Ibid.

[3] “Us Confronts China, Russia at UN over N. Korean Missile Launches”, Al Jazeera, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/11/5/us-confronts-china-russia-at-un-over-n-korean-missile-launches>, (Date of Accession: 05.11.2022).

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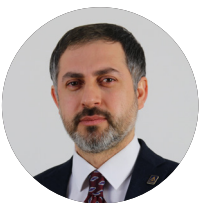
ANKASAM ANALYSIS

US–Ukraine Discussions: Forcing Russia to Make Concessions

The White House has confirmed that Jake Sullivan, the National Security Advisor of the United States of America (US) visited Ukraine on November 4, 2022. During a secret visit to Kyiv, Sullivan met with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and the Head of the Office of the President of Ukraine Andriy Dechermak. He also met with the Minister of Defense of Ukraine Oleksii Reznikov. While the official aim of the visit was not disclosed, American media reports that Sullivan discussed the details of the next military aid package to Kyiv and that he assured complete support for Ukraine will continue after the November 8, 2022 midterm elections.

Sullivan also confirmed that the US will provide Ukraine with a new 400-million-dollar military aid package, as well as plans to provide Kyiv with economic and humanitarian assistance in the coming months. According to the Pentagon, as part of a new 400-million-dollar military support package for Ukraine, the US would fund the upgrade of 45 T-72 tanks as well as Hawk anti-aircraft missile systems. The plan also includes funding for the purchase of 1,100 Phantom Phoenix tactical aircraft and 40 armored riverboats.[1]

According to the Washington Post, during Sullivan's visit to Kyiv, he encouraged Ukraine to leave the



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door open for talks with Russia.[2] In other words, Sullivan is requesting that Zelensky leave the door open to discussion with Russia. According to The Wall Street Journal Sullivan had been in private meetings with Kremlin Foreign Policy Advisor Yuri Ushakov and Security Council Secretary Nikolai Patrushev in recent months. Sullivan stated that the purpose of these negotiations was to prevent the escalation of the war in Ukraine, including Russia's threat to use nuclear weapons, and to keep the communication channels open between the two countries. Sullivan stressed that the resolution of the dispute was not on the agenda during this visit.[3]

Zelenskyy, who made a statement simultaneously with Sullivan's visit to Kyiv, said: "If the Russians withdraw from the occupied Ukrainian territory and admit their 'mistake' for attacking Ukraine, Ukraine can develop a forum for discussion with Russia. "There is no point in negotiations with Russia, who wants to destroy Ukraine by invading it" he added.[4] A similar statement was made by Mykhailo Podolyak, Advisor to the President of Ukraine, who stated that "more than eight months after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the Ukrainian soldiers succeeded in gaining superiority over Russia and effectively destroyed the myths about Russia's military superiority, and in this environment, there can be no talk of any agreement between Kyiv and Moscow." [5]

After Russia held referendums in the regions of Luhansk, Donetsk, Kherson, and Zaporizhzhia between September 23-27, 2022, and declared these regions its territory, Zelensky signed a "Decree that Ukraine will not negotiate with Russia as long as Putin is in power" on September 30, 2022, prepared by the National Security and Defence Council.[6] In this context, Ukraine legally does not want to negotiate with Russia either.

Russia, on the other hand, claims to be open to discussion with Kyiv and to seek its objectives through diplomatic methods. One of the most crucial reasons for Russia's willingness to negotiate is that its focus in Ukraine has shifted to defense. In terms of Ukraine and the US, Russia's military condition indicates that Russia has lost its military dominance in Ukraine. The Ukrainian Army, on the other hand, which claims to have achieved remarkable success against Russia, is preparing for a fresh operation in Kherson. According to Kyiv, any unconditional negotiation with Russia would be seen as a victory for Moscow. For this reason, starting negotiations with Russia, which has been on the defensive in the Ukrainian field, will mean allowing it to become stronger again.

Sullivan's visit to Kyiv was actually to discuss the conditions that need to be met for them to hold negotiations with Russia. From the point of view of the US, the negotiations with Russia depend on the concessions that the Kremlin can make. In reality, the US committed to equipping Ukraine with 45 tanks armed with offensive weaponry and stated that it would help other nations who wished to supply Ukraine with tanks. Thus, Washington is putting more pressure on Moscow, forcing it to accept its terms.

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[6] "Указ Президента України №679/2022", president.gov.ua, <https://www.president.gov.ua/documents/6792022-44249>, (Date of Accession: 07.11.2022).

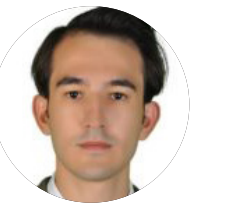


ANKASAM ANALYSIS

How is the Energy Crisis Affecting Cultural Life in Europe?

The biggest reflection of the Russia-Ukraine War, which started on February 24, 2022, around the world and in Europe in particular, has been the price increases experienced in energy. The fact that the members of the European Union (EU) were dependent on Russian gas by about 40% before the war left the countries in the bloc facing an unexpected challenge. So much so that, in this process, which has evolved into a crisis over time, many states in Europe have been in a difficult situation.

It can be said that the effects of the energy crisis in continental Europe are experienced in various fields. However, one point that remains in the background is how the crisis has affected cultural life in Europe. This crisis has also affected places where social life and cultural information transfer are at a high stage, especially museums and theatres. This situation has consequences such as the restriction of cultural activity areas in Europe in the current process.



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For example, Eike Schmidt, director of the Uffizi Art Museum in Florence, Italy, stated that the institution's energy bills have almost tripled and that the expenses for July 2022 cost 185% more than the previous year. The examples are not limited to Italy alone. A similar situation is happening in other countries of the EU. A representative of the Rijksmuseum, one of the largest art museums in the Netherlands, also said that their bills had tripled. A representative of the Paris Musees institution, which undertakes the operation of 14 museums in Paris, also expects that the total bill for the institution will be about 1 million euros more than last year.[1]

In Hungary, another EU member state, it is seen that the dimension of the energy crisis is more effective than the other members of the bloc. In the country, many cities are closing public facilities such as theatres, museums, and libraries due to rising energy costs.[2] One of the most important examples of this is the closure of the 111-year-old Erkel Theatre, one of the venues where the prestigious Hungarian State Opera performs in Budapest, as of November 2022 due to increasing energy bills.[3]

Therefore, the effects of the energy crisis should not be considered only as a restriction of cultural activities. It can be predicted that this situation may increase social unrest as artists and other working people are unemployed. In this context, it is seen that Hungary, which increased its natural gas purchases from Russia after the war, is also in a fragile structure.

The fact that even Germany, the most financially powerful country in the EU, is experiencing considerable difficulties in the face of the energy crisis is important in terms of showing that the crisis is extremely effective. Olaf Zimmermann, director of the German Cultural Council, warned that museum exhibitions would be in danger if there was a shortage of energy. He said that during an emergency, people should think about which works of art they want to protect.[4]

For example, every work exhibited in museums has a certain sensitivity to light. In other words, whether it is light-sensitive graphics or heat-sensitive paintings, each exhibition needs its unique temperature conditions.[5] This is very important in terms of showing how complicated and profound the energy crisis has had impact on cultural life in Europe.

Museums in the United Kingdom (UK) are worried about not being able to keep their doors open as the energy crisis is predicted to cause heating bills to cost five times more by 2022. Sharon Heal, director of the UK Museums Association, stated that the crisis is even worse than the Covid-19 pandemic.[6]

Therefore, while the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic has not yet passed and the normalization process has just begun to be started, the energy crisis caused by the war has worsened the situation for museums. It can be said that the situation applies not only to the UK but to the whole of Europe. Moreover, considering that the UK is not dependent on Russian natural gas in Europe like Germany, it can also be suggested that the crisis is developing independently of the energy policy pursued by countries.

Furthermore, another problem in terms of museums in Europe is that many museums are located in historical buildings. In other words, they are not suitable for saving energy. It is costly to operate, heat, and maintain.[7]

As part of the measures taken in France, another European country, nine museums in the city of Strasbourg, along with other French cultural institutions, have complied with French President Macron's call for savings and have started to stay open only five days a week in the current process.[8] As can be seen, some cultural institutions in Europe have come to the point of closing their doors at least for part of the week.

The pyramid of the Louvre Museum, which is also one of the most visited museums in the world, has started to be darkened early to save energy.[9] All these examples are proof of how deeply the energy crisis has affected cultural life in Europe.

Consequently, museums and theatres are places where people go to socialize, meet and contribute to themselves. The energy crisis in Europe has led to the restriction of these areas. The fact that the maintenance of the collections in museums and galleries requires special conditions, that is, high energy, leaves these areas in a difficult situation. In this context, while the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic have not yet passed, it can be said that European countries are facing a new challenge.

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[2] "Hungary Closing Public Facilities Due to Soaring Cost of Energy", Euronews, <https://www.euronews.com/2022/10/30/hungary-closing-public-facilities-due-to-soaring-cost-of-energy>, (Date of Accession: 08.11.2022).

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[6] "Europe's Energy Crisis May Close British Museums?", Adventure, <https://adventure.com/energy-crisis-threatens-public-institutions/>, (Date of Accession: 08.11.2022).

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ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Serbia's New Government and the Balance Policy

On 3 April 2022, the Serbian people went to the polls to elect the members of parliament and the president. The presidential race was won by current President Aleksandar Vucic, a joint candidate of the Socialist Party of Serbia (SPS) and the Serbian Progressive Party (SNS), while Prime Minister Ana Brnabic took over responsibility for forming a government in parliament. Although around seven months had passed since the elections, the government could only be established on 26 October.

The new cabinet, which was approved with 157 votes in favour after the parliamentary vote, con-

sists of 28 ministers with Ana Brnabic retaining her position as prime minister. Brnabic, one of the names Vucic trusts, is in her third term as Prime Minister.[1] With the completion of the ongoing mission of Brnabic, that is, the formation of the government, Serbia is expected to face many challenges. Being stuck between Russia and Europe, especially in the recent period, and experiencing the side effects of its East-West balance policy, Serbia enters a tough process. While Serbia experiences increasing pressure from Europe to impose sanctions on Russia, as it cannot turn its back on Russia, it is on the verge of a strategic decision process in terms of both regional and



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country-wise interests. In this context, the process of forming a government, which has taken almost seven months, indicates that Serbia is moving cautiously and gives hints about the country's future policies. Accordingly, the names selected for the cabinet have significance. While members are siding with the idea of the European Union (EU), there are also pro-Russian ones, such as Ivica Dacic, in the cabinet.[2]

Speaking after the official swearing-in ceremony held following the vote in the parliament, Brnabic stated that the government would primarily focus on energy investments and emphasized that EU membership is a strategic goal. On the other hand, as part of the speech, she focused on the relations with Europe and underlined that their intention is to build a "European Serbia", but that this cannot work unilaterally without the support of the EU. In addition, she highlighted their foreign policy vision to invest in cooperation by maintaining friendly relations with other countries. [3] This speech demonstrates that Brnabic aims not giving the impression of a pro-Russian or pro-EU government.

There are also criticisms indicating that the formation of the government should not take this long. Experts consider that Vucic is behind this prolonged process and that he tries to consolidate his position by slowing down the process as much as possible. However, it is seen that Vucic, who feels that the long-established balance policy has come to an end, is still careful during the process of forming a government to appoint officials who can pursue this policy by siding with both Russia and the EU.

When the appointed ministers and the ministers that are changed are examined, it is understood that Serbia will maintain its balance policy. In this context, examples such as the replacement of former Interior Minister Aleksandar Vulin, known for his proximity to Russian President Vladimir Putin, point to a more cautious progression in relations with Russia. On the contrary, the former Energy Minister Zorana Mihajlovic, one of the names close to the US, not being appointed to the office is a positive message for Russia. With this step, Serbia gives Russia the message that it will not allow the West to shape its energy policies.[4]

Ivica Dacic, who was appointed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, shows that the balance policy with Russia will continue. This is because, although it is known that Dacic is a pro-Russian politician, experts suggest that Dacic also can shift towards a policy siding with the West according to the situation of domestic politics.[5] In this regard, as stated above, Vucic chose his ministers cautiously and it is no coincidence that he appointed Dacic to the Ministry

of Foreign Affairs as a name to undertake the possible negative outcomes of the balance policy.

In addition, Tanja Miscevic being appointed to the Ministry of European Integration indicates that cooperation with the EU may increase. Miscevic has served as the head of negotiations with the EU before.[6]

From this point of view, it is expected that Serbia will continue the balance policy it has long implemented with the new government as well. Yet, serious obstacles have emerged for Serbia to continue this policy, particularly in the recent period. The increasing tension with Kosovo, the pressure of the EU to impose sanctions on Russia, and the EU accession process requiring conditions that "conflict with national interests"; on the other hand, the energy dependence on Russia, and the reflections of its pro-Russian policies on other relations have pushed Serbia into a corner. In this context, increasing economic difficulties and the energy crisis may force Serbia to take major steps, which may result in deviating from the balance policy.

It is also noteworthy that Brnabic stated in a speech she made in the parliament during the formation of the government that it is crucial to have a pro-Serbian government acting in Serbian interests elected.[7] At this stage, it can be said that Serbia acts by national interests and attaches more importance to this aim. This indicates that if Russia does not meet Serbian national interests, Serbia may distance itself from Russia, and it can be considered that the same principle will be pursued in relations with the EU.

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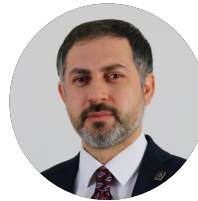


ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Contributions of Tajik–Kyrgyz “Peace” to the Two Countries and the Region

Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan government delegations met in Dushanbe on November 14, 2022, to discuss the delimitation and demarcation of the Tajik–Kyrgyz state border. The meeting was chaired by Saimumin Yatimov, Chairman of the State Committee for National Security of Tajikistan, and Kamchybek Tashiev, Chairman of the State Committee for National Security

of Kyrgyzstan. After the meeting, the relevant protocol was signed between the parties. While the specifics of the discussions and the signed protocol have not been disclosed, it is said that the meeting was held in a cordial atmosphere and in the spirit of mutual understanding, and the parties decided to convene the next meeting in Kyrgyzstan.[1]



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One of the most difficult issues for both Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan is the border dispute. However, the parties, having learned from border confrontations that occurred within the past few months, recognize that resolving the matter among themselves is the best solution. Both states have sensitivities about borders and reservations about the decisions they will take. On the other hand, both countries are well aware of the problem's existence and the fact that if it remains unaddressed, it will do significant harm.

First and foremost, the unsolved issue impedes the improvement of relations. It is also acknowledged that there is a possibility of conflict, and that potential tensions might escalate into conflicts, and eventually into a full-fledged war. In this context, Bishkek and Dushanbe prefer ongoing dialogue to mitigate possible dangers and address the matter.

In case the parties fail to resolve the problems among themselves, it will pave the way for third parties to be involved in the process. If they cannot demonstrate a willingness to settle the difficulties between themselves, the process is also likely to become more uncertain if other parties who appear friendly but have their own agendas are included. There are many examples of this.

In this context, it will be Bishkek and Dushanbe that will resolve the Tajik–Kyrgyz border problem in a way that will be in the interests of both countries. For example, border disputes between Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan in the most problematic regions have been steadily addressed in recent months, benefiting both countries. In previous years, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan were able to solve their border and water problems among themselves. As a result, Tajikistan started to feel more secure in the region.

If the border problems between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are resolved, Bishkek and Dushanbe will benefit in a number of ways. These interests will have an impact not only in bilateral relations, but also in issues such as regional security and economic cooperation.

If the Kyrgyzstan–Tajikistan border conflicts are resolved, both countries will feel safer. Since there will not be a conflict, there will be no losses. Both sides suffered at least 50–60 casualties in the latest and maybe most brutal fight of the previous 30 years, which occurred in September 2022. If the border problems are addressed, Kyrgyzstan will not exacerbate mutual threats by massing soldiers on the Tajik border and Tajiks on the Kyrgyz border.

Secondly, this will affect the internal security of both countries. Conflicts always have internal political consequences. And the government is being held accountable for it. The absence of human casualties will also alleviate the worry felt by both the Kyrgyz and Tajik administrations as a result of public's reaction.

Thirdly, as a country with political will, it will gain respect from its neighbors, the region and the international community. Because it is always the opposing side who is blamed in border disputes, the accused party's international standing suffers and it becomes guilty. The disappearance of the border problem will lead to the elimination of international pressures.

Fourth, it will contribute to regional security. The potential dangers of conflict increase the possibility of it escalating into war. A war between neighbors may raise the probability of third (particularly foreign) parties seeking to benefit from it becoming involved. There may be those who want to turn the border conflicts into a regional instability. A peace between the parties will prevent such a possibility.

Fifth of all, it will contribute to a greater focus on the problems originating from Afghanistan. Tajikistan has strained ties with Kyrgyzstan and must relocate some of its soldiers from the south to the northern borders and station them there. There is a military concentration on two fronts. Because the Afghanistan problem is not simply a Tajikistan concern, but also a regional one, Kyrgyzstan can work with Tajikistan to combat other security challenges rather than worrying about the Tajik threat. In this case, the collaboration will make both countries feel safer and stronger.

Sixth, neighbors who eliminate security risks and political issues between them will be able to gain more economic and commercial benefits. Border trade increases between nations that have border security. This will contribute to the increase of the economic welfare of the citizens living in the border regions. It will pave the way for them to develop local and international projects between countries as well as between border regions.

Seventh, and perhaps most importantly, the increasing hostilities between societies, arising from border conflicts, will initially decrease and then disappear completely. Prejudices that have grown in the last 30 years between two communities who have lived side by side for thousands of years will disappear. Friendship and brotherhood will be re-established.

As a result, if the Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan border disputes are resolved with the political will of Bishkek and Dushanbe, it is certain that it will make a great contribution to both countries and societies at the economic, political, security and social levels. For this, they must act in accordance with the basic logic and nature of the negotiations, and both sides must make mutual concessions in this regard. These concessions are not a loss, on the contrary, they will pave the way for significant gains for both sides.

[1] "В Душанбе прошло заседание по делимитации и демаркации таджикско-киргизской границы", Avesta, <http://avesta.tj/2022/11/15/v-dushanbe-proshlo-zasedanie-po-delimitsii-i-demarkatsii-tadzhiksko-kirgizskoj-granitsy/>, (Date of Accession: 16.11.2022).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

The Position of the Southern Cyprus in the Russia-US Rivalry

Lately, the most prominent issue in the Greek Cypriot Administration of Southern Cyprus (GCASC) was the abolishment of the arms embargo of the United States (US), which last over 30 years toward GCASC, in recent months. [1] The main aim of this arms embargo, implied after the Cyprus Peace Operation of Türkiye in 1974, was to prevent an arms race between

GCASC and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). However, the Washington administration alleviated the embargo toward GCASC in 2018,[2] and in 2022, it was abolished completely. Therefore, the GCASC started to gain a new perspective on foreign policy and security strategies.



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As it is known, due to this embargo, the GCASC made deals with countries such as Israel and Russia, in order to be armed and strengthen its army. Of course, this issue brings several conditions as well. The development of military relations with the GCASC caused the increase of the influence of Moscow in the region. When the historical aims of the Kremlin administration toward the Mediterranean are considered, it can be said that Moscow is concerned about catching every chance to increase its influence in the region.

Even though the GCASC is a member of the European Union (EU) since it is not a member of a collective security organization such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), legally, there is no vengeance in the development of military relations with Russia. In addition, there are economic relations between the sides. However, after the US abolished the arms embargo, the GCASC desired to purchase arms from Washington.[3] Moreover, the Greek Cypriot decision-makers realize that this will cause regional and international problems. For instance, those kinds of steps may cause an escalation of problems with the TRNC.

It is observed some experts claimed in the regional media that the GCASC may be a member of NATO.[4] In addition, in the public polls, it is seen that there is a demand for the GCASC to be a member of NATO.[5] Although membership is unlikely due to the problems with Türkiye and the TRNC, these discussions reveal that the GCASC is in search of new security policies.

On the other hand, in GCASC it is seen that there is a possibility to involve in Russian-Ukrainian War. Some government officials have used some expressions on the increased importance of the GCASC[6], it is understood that the GCASC is hesitant on that issue. For instance, it is discussed that in the conditions of the GCASC purchased arms from the US, it may send old Soviet-made weapons to Ukraine. However, on 13 October 2022, the President of GCASC Nikos Anastasiades rejected this claim and put the final point.[7]

The real aim here is the model applied to Greece. Already, the Athens administration has signed a defense agreement with Berlin and it is agreed to buy Marder 1A3 weapons from Germany and to send old Soviet-made tanks to Ukraine.[8] Similarly, it is expected from the GCASC to modernize its army with American arms and send its old weapons to Ukraine; however, it is seen that GCASC does not lean towards it. The main reason for this is that Greece is a NATO member and has defense support from this organization in a framework. Since the GCASC's situation is not the same, Nicosia cared about acting more cautiously. Because the GCASC may harm its steps against Russia.

The increasing influence of the US over the GCASC is not an issue that Russia can react to in the current situation. Currently focused on the Ukraine War, Russia's interest in the Eastern Mediterranean seems to be waning. This, of course, is seen as an advantage by Western allies such as Britain, France, and Italy. This is confirmed by the fact that in the last three months, a large number of military exercises involving these states have been organized off the coast of the island of Cyprus.

As a result, the US lifting of the arms embargo on the GCASC has created a new geopolitical equation. In the past, Moscow has been an important military partner of the GCASC due to this embargo. However, the outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine War has reversed the picture. Nevertheless, it cannot be said that Russian decision-makers have fully internalized a Euro-Atlantic-centered policy. This is because the SCGA is not a part of NATO and is not expected to become a member of the alliance. For this reason, the GCASC has developed a softer discourse on Russia than Greece.

[1] Ahmet Gençtürk, "US Decision to Lift Arms Embargo Will Embolden Greek Cypriot Administration, Lead to Escalation", Anadolu Ajansı, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/-us-decision-to-lift-arms-embargo-will-embolden-greek-cypriot-administration-lead-to-escalation-/2687570>, (Date of Accession: 31.10.2022).

[2] "H.R.5508-End the Cyprus Arms Embargo Act", Congress.gov, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/5508/text?format=txt>, (Date of Accession: 31.10.2022).

[3] "Όπλα από τις ΗΠΑ αγοράζει τώρα η Κύπρος", Crisis Monitor, <https://www.crisismonitor.gr/2022/10/02/opla-apo-tis-ipa-agorazei-tora-i-kypros/>, (Date of Accession: 01.11.2022).

[4] Μενέλαος Τσισιόπουλος, "Η Κύπρος, το NATO και το τέλος της κατοχής", Parapolitika.gr, <https://www.parapolitika.gr/stiles/menelaos-tasiopoylos/article/1222212/i-kupros-to-nato-kai-to-telos-tis-katohis/>, (Date of Accession: 01.11.2022).

[5] Δημοσκόπηση: Ένταξη της Κύπρου στο NATO προκρίνουν οι πολίτες, Simerini.sigmalive, <https://simerini.sigmalive.com/article/2022/10/9/demosko-pese-entaxe-tes-kuprou-sto-nato-prokrinoun-oi-polites/>, (Date of Accession: 01.11.2022).

[6] Vassilis Nedos, "Ukraine War Bolstering Cyprus' Positions", e-Kathimerini, <https://www.ekathimerini.com/opinion/interviews/1195774/ukraine-war-bolstering-cyprus-positions/>, (Date of Accession: 01.11.2022).

[7] "Ν. Αναστασιάδης: Δεν θα αποστείλει η Κύπρος οπλισμό στην Ουκρανία", Euronews, <https://gr.euronews.com/2022/10/13/anastasiadis-den-tha-apos-teilei-h-kypros-oplismo-sthn-oykrania>, (Date of Accession: 01.11.2022).

[8] Nikolaus J. Kurmayer & Oliver Noyan, Germany Sends Greece First Tank Batch From Ukraine Swap Deal, Euractiv, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/defence-and-security/news/germany-sends-greece-first-tank-batch-from-ukraine-swap-deal/>, (Date of Accession: 01.11.2022).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

EU-Central Asia Connectivity Conference: Global Gateway

On November 18, 2022, the ancient city of Samarkand, will host another important summit and will once again reveal to the whole world that it has become an important platform where regional-global issues are discussed. The summit in question will be held under the title of "European Union (EU)-Central Asia Connectivity Conference: Global Gateway". Thus, the conference in Samarkand will be the first gathering following the adoption of the EU's "Global Gateway Strategy" on December 1, 2021.

The summit will bring together the leaders of Central Asian countries and the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Joseph Borrell, as a result of the President of Uzbekistan, Mr. Shavkat Mirziyoyev's constructive efforts. In his article on the meeting, Borrell stated that three main themes will be discussed at the summit. These themes are transportation link, energy link and digital link.[1] Essentially, these three themes make it possible to understand the EU's open-



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ing to Central Asia. Currently, the most important agenda item of the EU is overcoming the energy crisis caused by the Russia-Ukraine War. In this context, the association continues to seek alternative energy suppliers. In this regard, Central Asia stands out both in terms of its rich resources and in terms of the safe, short and low-cost route it offers through the Middle Corridor. Therefore, it can be stated that the main issue on Borrell's agenda is the intensification of Caspian-based energy projects.

Another agenda item is transportation corridors due to the importance of establishing the connection between Asia and Europe, and especially between China, one of the world's production workshops, and Europe. As a matter of fact, considering the congestion in the Northern Corridor due to the Russia-Ukraine War, it can be said that strategies to use the Middle Corridor much more effectively are important for the EU. Undoubtedly, such a vitality in the Middle Corridor is also in the interests of the regional states. Because Central Asian states are in an effort to attract foreign investment. Strengthening transport links will mean deepening of economic relations. This means that the contribution of the EU to the development of the region will increase even more.

Between 2014 and 2020, the EU provided 1.1 billion Euros to Central Asian countries through various funds.[2] It is foreseen that this figure will be 390 million Euros between 2021-2024. The strengthening of transport and energy connectivity can be interpreted as increasing the trade volume in relations, as well as aiding much more than the stated amounts due to the aid to be provided for the development of infrastructures. The process initiated through the EU-Central Asia Economic Forum and as well as the inaugural meeting scheduled for 5 November 2021 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, confirm this.

The main purpose of the reform processes currently carried out by the countries of the region is to create a prosperous future for their people. It can be said that the reforms carried out in this context have the aim of liberalization and their direction is the West. Therefore, it can be argued that the relations that will deepen through the energy and transportation corridors will serve the expectations of the region regarding the development goals. As a matter of fact, Borrell expressed his support for the reforms made by the regional states.[3]

At this point, it is possible to interpret the Trans-Afghan route within the framework of the Middle Corridor when the issue of the security of the corridors is on the agenda more frequently. At the same time, the security of the corridors requires the stability of Central Asia. For this reason, it can be stated that the Afghan

Question will also be discussed at the summit. In this context, it can be said that in line with the general approach of the Central Asian states, projects that will bring Afghanistan to the table of international cooperation will be on the agenda and it will focus on humanitarian aid activities aimed at increasing stability in the country in question. In his statement on the issue, Borrell said, "we want to speed up our cooperation on the situation in Afghanistan." [4]

The third theme to be discussed within the scope of the summit is the digitalization of economies and societies in accordance with the requirements of today. Because with globalization, access to information becomes easier all over the world, and digital systems also contribute to the elimination of paperwork in the service of states to their citizens through systems such as e-government. A similar issue exists in banking, security, and so on, and digitization affects every element of life in some manner. However, it is obvious that digitalization includes various threats, especially cyber terrorism. In this sense, Europe wants to present its technological level as a tool that contributes to the digitalization of Central Asia and to increase its influence in the region in this way. This is why this issue was one of the main themes of the conference in Samarkand.

In addition to all these, it was announced at the Samarkand Summit that in the context of climate change, which is another global problem, green economy targets will also be evaluated.[5] Although the EU's dependence on fossil fuels is the determining factor in the Central Asian orientation of the EU, both the states of the union and the region are determined to reach their climate targets in the medium and long term. Therefore, the green economy goal is a factor that contributes to the development of the union's relations with the regional capitals.

In conclusion, the EU-Central Asia Connectivity Conference, which will take place on 18 November 2022, indicates that the links between Central Asia and the EU in the fields of transportation, energy and digitalization will be strengthened. Moreover, this is not just for EU-Central Asia connectivity; it shows that important opportunities have emerged that can contribute to the East-West interaction, especially through the Middle Corridor. Therefore, the issue of the security of the corridors, which came to the fore with the Russia-Ukraine War, has made Caspian-based initiatives more important than ever. For this reason, the EU is accelerating the "Central Asian Initiative".



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

The Future of Russia-India Relations

Afterwards of the Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, the Group of Seven (G7) made several decisions in order to prevent Moscow's gaining high profits from oil export. In this regard, G7 has released a plan to impose a second cap on Russia's oil shipments by sea as

of December 5, 2022, and on refined petroleum products as of February 5, 2022. Also, as long as the oil was sold below a fixed price, it has been determined that European companies were permitted to transport and insure Russian oil to third countries.



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Moscow, which is facing Western countries sanctions, in order to hamper the decreasing of oil-price, has begun to sell oil at discounted prices to big Asian consumers. Afterwards, India increased its purchases from Russia of oil, which it had previously acquired from Iraq and Saudi Arabia. Russia, which made up just 0.2% of all oil imported by India in the year to March 31, 2022, becomes India's top oil supplier in October 2022. [1]

In the weeks leading up to the beginning of the price-cap mechanism, Western countries effort to persuade the states to join the coalition of countries applying the price cap on Russian oil. Prior to her visit to New Delhi, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen made the following statement regarding India's need to comply with the Russian oil price capping: [2]

"Our objective is to hold down the price that Russia receives for its oil and keep that oil trading. The gainers from this will be particularly those countries that do buy cheap Russian oil, and our hope would be that India would take advantage of this price cap, though its firms are bargaining with Russia."

India will continue buying Russian oil because it benefits the country, India's foreign minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar who is visiting Moscow for the first time since Russia invaded Ukraine, emphasised that the two countries were expanding their trade ties. [3] A significant point is that this statement was made before Yellen's visit to New Delhi. As is seen, the Biden administration is unlikely to be able to reach its aims to divert New Delhi from Moscow and counterbalance Beijing with it.

In a joint press conference with his Russian counterpart, Sergey Lavrov, Jaishankar asserted that India-Russia relations would not rupture for some time to come, expressing the following words: [4]

Rus mevkidaşı Sergey Lavrov'la düzenlediği ortak basın toplantısında, Rusya-Hindistan ilişkilerinde Batı'nın beklediği kopuşun uzun bir süre gerçekleşmeyeceğinin altını çizen Jaishankar şu ifadeleri kullanmıştır:

"Russia has been a steady and time-tested partner. Any objective evaluation of our relationship over many decades would confirm that it has actually served both our countries very, very well."

Although the main reasons behind India's buying cheap Russian oil are the increasing global energy prices and its tiger economy which is growing day by day, it is claimable that India-Russia relations have entered into a new phase to show regard to regional dynamics and new geopolitical equations. Because India stands behind the strategic ties it has developed with Russia at the expense of its relations with the US and its disengagement with the Western World.

India's independent foreign policy and Russia's desire for a large market for weapons and oil trade can be evincible for this strategic relation's main pillar. In spite of this, while ties between the New Delhi-Moscow have beyond its economic relations, arms trade and geopolitical interests, security ties between India and the US are relatively new.

The expansion of bilateral relations despite the Western Bloc has advantages for India as well as disadvantages for Russia. Due to the price-capping mechanism for oil, India has gained strength in energy bargaining. At this stage, it can be said that the balance in Moscow-New Delhi relations has appeared to be tilted in favour of India. But the relations with China have occurred to be the main identifier in the region.

Against the unipolarity of the West, Moscow acts together with Beijing and tries to transmit oil that it cannot sell to Europe to China, the world's largest oil consumer. In addition, Russia is trying to improve its relations with India, which has disagreements with China.

Against the unipolarity of the West, Moscow acts together with Beijing and tries to transmit the oil that it cannot offload to Europe to China, the world's largest oil consumer. Furthermore, India, which has a dispute with China, is also trying to improve relations with Russia. Furthermore, Russia is looking at improving its relations with India, which has disputes with China.

The foreign policy of India is circling its border disputes with China and Pakistan. Thus Moscow may have difficulty balancing the Beijing and New Delhi because of the deteriorated relations between these two actors. India, which has confronted a strong China, would not easily abandon its long-standing security relations with Russia. This may require the US to take more initiative to develop a versatile and permanent relationship with India.

From Moscow's perspective, China is the world's largest energy consumer. So this is why China is more prominent than India. Besides the Indian market is more competitive by comparative the Chinese one. Therefore, the Chinese-Russian strategic partnership affects relations with India and the US's influence over India. On this point, it should not be ignored that India is a significant country in the eyes of Moscow in terms of withstanding the rise of China. Russia, with India, is a balancing actor against China's increasing presence in Central Asia.

Moreover, the US requires India's partnership in order to gain control over China. For this reason, Washington is attempting to get New Delhi onside to keep Russia on line. However, these attempt seems to obtain no result.

In addition, there is a common discussion point about the US's attempt to create pressure on India through Pakistan. In this context, Russia has to keep India close to itself to not lose against the US but also built cautious relations with New Delhi in order to not distract itself from China. This can be interpreted as Russia's fragile-balancing act between India and China.

After all, the relationship between India and Russia is deepening rapidly because of trade concerns, particularly with respect to oil. Therefore, the parties are developing a pragmatic approach as per their interests. However, it should be noted that the background of this includes the great power competition, including Beijing and Washington. It is also known that regional power balances, including the dimension of Afghanistan and Pakistan, affect Russian-Indian relations.

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[2] "The U.S. Believes India Will Benefit From A Price Cap On Russian Oil", Oilprice, <https://oilprice.com/Latest-Energy-News/World-News/The-US-Believes-India-Will-Benefit-From-A-Price-Cap-On-Russian-Oil.html>, (Date of Accession: 09.11.2022).

[3] "India Says Russia Oil Deals Advantageous As Yellen Visits Delhi", Reuters, <https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/buying-russian-oil-is-indias-advantage-foreign-minister-2022-11-08/>, (Date of Accession: 09.11.2022).

[4] Ibid.



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Symbol of China's Growing Influence in Croatia: Pelsajac Bridge

Croatia, a Balkan country, is located at an important nexus in terms of China's Belt-Road Project. Croatia was one of the first Balkan countries to sign a memorandum of understanding with China within the scope of the Belt-Road Project in 2017,[1] and within this framework, relations between the two countries developed rapidly.

Relations gained momentum through the memorandum signed in 2017, and in 2018, a Chinese company won the tender for the Pelješac Bridge, the largest infrastructure project in Croatia.[2] On July 26, 2022, the Pelješac Bridge was inaugurated. The bridge is 2440 km long. Chinese Premier Li Keqiang stated that the pro-



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ject was a remarkable achievement and cultivated the friendship between Beijing and Zagreb. In addition, the Pelsejac Bridge is also very important in terms of the fact that for the first time a Chinese company won a tender for the project funded by the European Union (EU).[3]

Chinese Ambassador to Croatia Qi Qianjin told the Croatian press that the Pelsejac Bridge is the largest project realized by a Chinese company in Croatia and stated that the bridge ultimately fulfills a dream of connecting the south of Croatia with the rest of the country.[4]

Brussels has provided 357 million euros for the construction of the bridge, and EU Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms Elisa Ferreira described the opening of the Pelsejac Bridge as “a symbol of European solidarity and financial and political support for Croatia.”[5] Moreover, the Pelsejac Bridge is the largest and most expensive infrastructure project funded by the EU.[6] This situation has shown the importance that Brussels attributes to the project.

As it is understood, the importance of the bridge should not be evaluated only in the context of China-Croatia relations. Because this project is, in a sense, the product of the China-EU partnership. So much so that the EU has undertaken the financing of the Pelsejac Bridge.

The importance of the project for Croatia, as mentioned above, is that it connects the southernmost territories of the country with the northern territories by road. Thus, the north and south of the country, which is divided into two by the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, are connected to each other.

Due to Bosnia and Herzegovina’s non-membership in the EU, anyone trying to travel north from Dubrovnik, located in the southernmost Adriatic, or cross the Peljesac Peninsula to the Croatian mainland had to pass through two border controls.[7] However, with this opening, direct transportation to Croatia has been provided via the Pelsejac Bridge. Thus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, which has the shortest coastline in the world, has been prevented from accessing the high seas by Croatia. In other words, on the occasion of the bridge, the Croatian lands divided into two by the Neum Corridor, which is the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, were united. Therefore, it can be said that in the long term, this bridge will cause problems between Zagreb and Sarajevo.

For all these reasons, the Pelsejac Bridge is of strategic importance for Zagreb. The fact that China has assumed the leading role in such a project has undoubtedly served to increase its influence in Croatia. Therefore, it can be argued that thanks to this partnership, China-Croatia relations are based on solid foundations and the development trend in bilateral relations will continue. In other words, it can be foreseen that the relations between the parties may evolve into a strategic one. Moreover, considering the assistance it has provided to the project, it can also be argued that China has chosen sides in the face of geopolitical problems in the Balkans. It can be argued that the support of Zagreb by Brussels was decisive in Beijing’s choice.

Consequently, the opening of the Pelsejac Bridge is considered as an important phase for China in the Balkans and in the Belt-Road Project. Moreover, China has played a leading role in an EU-funded project for the first time. Thanks to this project, Beijing and Brussels

have come together at a common point. Therefore, the bridge can serve as a model for the future of China-EU cooperation. Certainly, China’s successful completion of the project can also be interpreted as a harbinger that its influence in the Balkans will increase.

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[2] Ibid.

[3] “Chinese-built Peljesac Bridge in Croatia Opens to Traffic, a Symbol of Closer Ties”, Global Times, <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202207/1271607.shtml>, (Date of Accession: 03.11.2022).

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ANKASAM ANALYSIS

A Period of Disputes in Franco-German Relations?

The problems between Germany and France came at a bad time. Tensions between Berlin-Paris are developing at a critical moment when Europe must address common concerns by working together to overcome the current energy and economic difficulties. It has been seen that the differences between German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and French President Emmanuel Macron are growing by the day. Currently, the two countries differ on a variety of critical subjects ranging from energy to defense to international trade. In fact, a

French newspaper had the headline "War between Germany and France becomes possible again".[1] Although the situation is not so dire, both sides appear to be turning their backs on one other.

France's rejection of the German-led MidCat Project could be viewed as the first significant disagreement between the parties. The project, proposed by Germany in 2003 and nearly abandoned in 2019, had resurfaced as a result of the energy crisis caused by the Ukraine War.



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However, Paris opposed MidCat once more, citing its high costs, lengthy construction process, and environmental impact. But, in reality, Macron is concerned about France losing its advantageous position in energy. In this regard, on October 20, 2022, Spain, France, and Portugal announced a new natural gas pipeline project that they will jointly build.[2] In short, the MidCat Project has now been completely set aside.

Previously, the Paris administration proposed certain initiatives that it could lead in order to achieve an autonomous Europe. An example of such an initiative, the European Political Community's (EPC) first summit, was held on October 6, 2022 in Prague, the capital of Czechia.[3] The German Chancellor also attended the meeting. Although this may appear to be a positive indication, bilateral ties did not improve significantly; in fact, the situation further deteriorated.

Looking at the discussions within the European Union (EU), we can see that while France wanted a price cap to be imposed to European natural gas prices, the German government stalled before accepting and indicating that it had a few conditions. Germany has also been chastised for agreeing a 200-billion-euro assistance package aimed at supporting German businesses and families while delaying efforts to collect more funds at the EU level to assist financially distressed European countries.[4]

Furthermore, the two nations' annual Council of Ministers meeting has been pushed back to the beginning of 2023.[5] Despite attempts to portray it as inconsequential, the cancellation of this summit and the postponing of the discussions, which have been conducted since 1963, illustrates the depth of the issues in the two nations' relations. Macron and Scholz met in Paris on October 26, 2022, to make up for this cancelled summit.[6] However, the two did not hold the customary press conference after such meetings. Paris has thus demonstrated a cold stance toward Germany.

On October 13, 2022, fourteen North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies and Finland agreed to collaborate on the development of a cooperative air and missile defense system.[7] France, on the other hand, has stated that it would not participate in this project. France's reasons for not participating in the initiative include a desire to promote its own military technology and belief in its own nuclear deterrent, a refusal to acquire US or Israeli systems because it focuses on European armament programs, and concerns about the exclusion of the Franco-Italian system MAMBA. However, looking back at Europe's history, the military strengthening of Germany has alarmed

several countries, particularly France. As a result, it is not unexpected that France does not participate in a military formation headed by Germany.

On October 26, 2022, Germany granted permission to a Chinese company to purchase shares from a terminal at the Port of Hamburg, which is a vital trading center for Europe.[8] This was not welcomed both by politicians in Germany and throughout Europe. In addition, on November 4, 2022, Scholz visited Beijing to meet with Chinese President Xi Jinping.[9] Scholz also refused Macron's proposal to accompany him on the visit. This move has also led to an increase in tensions. Because criticism has emerged that Scholz aspires to operate independently of Europe. Furthermore, during his tour, Scholz included German businesspeople in his delegation and signaled to the world that he intended to expand commercial collaboration with China. This has also caused concern in Europe.

Both Germany and France are key to ensuring a politically stable Europe. But differences of opinion pose risks for cooperation within the EU. Although Scholz first stated that he wanted to work with Macron to build a strong Europe, this commitment appears to be waning today. In this context, at a recent summit in Brussels, the French president referred to the past, saying that Germany should not isolate itself from Europe.[10] The Hannoversche Allgemeine Zeitung newspaper cautioned the parties that only one person would benefit from the Franco-German confrontation, and that person would be Russian President Vladimir Putin, who wants to "split the EU as much as possible with his war against Ukraine"[11]

In conclusion, the two countries are having a hard time agreeing with each other in the context of EU and Continental Europe. France does not approve the decisions taken by Germany. As a result, the true cause of the harm to the parties' relations is Berlin's determination to act freely by refusing to confine its foreign policy to Continental Europe, and Paris refusing to become its sidekick. If the Franco-German disagreements persist, the spirit of unity inside the EU is likely to take a severe blow.

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[2] "Energy Crisis: Spain and France Announce New Deal to Build Underwater Gas Pipeline", Euro News, <https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2022/10/20/spain-and-france-announce-new-deal-to-build-underwater-gas-pipeline>, (Date of Accession: 09.11.2022).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Montenegro's Accession Journey to the EU

While the European Union (EU) accession of the Western Balkan countries has been frequently discussed recently, most experts state that Montenegro is the top country in the region eligible for EU membership. The reason behind Montenegro's standing is that it minimizes its problems with its neighbors compared to other Balkan countries.

After Montenegro's parliament declared its independence from the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro in 2006, the country applied for EU membership in 2008. In 2010, the European Commission issued a positive comment on Montenegro's application. Then, in December 2011, the EU Council announced that it would

launch accession negotiations in June 2012. After eight years of accession negotiations, the opening of all 33 chapters, three of which were temporarily closed, was decided. Montenegro's accession process to the Union is still under discussion.^[i] Moreover, the Podgorica Municipality, which adopts the euro as its currency, is one of the fastest-growing countries in the Western Balkans among other EU candidate states.

Despite this positive atmosphere, the European Commission's 2022 Enlargement Report states that the country has certain responsibilities to fulfill.^[ii] These include freedom of expression, freedom of the press, the fight against corruption and organized crime, and the cred-



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ibility of the judiciary. These issues remaining unresolved further Montenegro away from the EU. Although the Government of Montenegro has implemented detailed policies to solve the structural problems mentioned, no satisfactory results have yet been achieved for the EU. Furthermore, the Podgorica administration should not be viewed as the only party responsible for Montenegro's prolonged EU accession process. It is known that enlargement procedures are carried out slowly within the EU. In fact, this aspect of the union has been criticized many times by international actors. In addition to the slow and thorough nature of the decision-making mechanism, some EU member states are skeptical about enlargement itself. Undoubtedly, this also applies to Montenegro.

The reason for the skeptical approach of these countries is to examine in detail whether certain values, which have become the identity of the EU, are adopted by the candidate countries or not. For example, even within the member states, the EU closely investigates to see concepts such as human rights, economic reform, freedom of expression and judicial independence being applied.^[iii] Therefore, as it can be seen in the commission report, having concerns about Montenegro, the EU aims at making the accession process safer.

This situation is not unique to Montenegro; it is seen that the EU's already slow decision-making mechanism is busy with the Ukrainian War and the various political and economic problems emerging from it. In particular, finding a solution to the energy crisis is taken as a more important concern than the EU's enlargement. In addition, the economic crisis is among the factors that stop the expansion due to the high inflation accompanying the energy crisis. It is known that the Western Balkan countries are not economically strong, indicating more burden on the EU.

Despite all the difficulties, the reason for the close contact of EU diplomats with the Western Balkan countries and the Berlin Process came to the fore; in other words, the reason for this geography to gain importance for the EU is security. Although it is estimated that Russia's war against the West will not extend beyond Ukraine, no one could predict that such a destructive war would occur in the east of Europe in February 2022. Therefore, EU countries, whose energy and economic security is under threat, have attached more importance to the east of Europe and the Balkans region in general for border security.

On the other hand, considering Montenegro's domestic politics, the Democratic Party of Socialists of Montenegro, which governed for thirty years, worked devotedly to realize EU reforms and become eligible for membership with its pro-European attitude.

However, the coalition formed in the 2020 elections by the conservative parties known to be pro-Russian came to power under the leadership of For the Future of Montenegro Party. However, in June 2022, Prime Minister Dritan Abazovic announced that he would sign the "Basic Agreement" on the Serbian Orthodox Church (SPC), which led to controversies in Montenegro. As Abazovic refused to take a step back, the controversies escalated and the Abazovic Government could not receive a vote of confidence. Thus, the government fell. Recent developments can be interpreted as a negative political period for Montenegro.

From the people of Montenegro's standpoint, EU membership is mostly supported. According to Euronews surveys, roughly 80% of the people are in favor of Montenegro's EU membership.^[iv] Of course, the reason behind this demand of the people of Montenegro is the economic prosperity that the EU will provide. Freedom of movement to other EU states and easier employment in these countries are the advantages that would benefit the people of Montenegro. Moreover, it can be assumed that Montenegro, which has a coast to the Adriatic Sea, would welcome more tourists with the EU membership.

In addition to the social and economic benefits mentioned, Montenegro's accession to the EU may bring positive developments in domestic politics. Speaking of the essentials, the journey to democratization will gain a new dynamism with EU membership.

As a result, Montenegro is seen as a more eligible candidate for the EU compared to other Western Balkan countries. While the country's foreign policy is the most significant aspect, this view has many dimensions. Above all, Montenegro has solved most of the problems it has experienced with its neighbors. However, in the 2022 Enlargement Report published by the European Commission, it is emphasized that Montenegro is not yet fully eligible for membership, and that there are steps of democratization, transparency and liberation that need to be completed. However, from a broad perspective and considering European geopolitics, it can be said that the importance of the Balkan geography for the EU has increased. Nevertheless, it is difficult to say that Montenegro will soon become a member of the EU. Regardless, it is certain that the EU membership will make significant contributions to Montenegro in socio-economic, political and cultural terms. For this reason, the majority of the people of Montenegro support the EU accession.

[i] "Montenegro", European Commission, https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/enlargement-policy/montenegro_en, (Date of Accession: 04.11.2022).

[ii] "2022 Enlargement Package: European Commission Assesses Reforms In The Western Balkans And Turkey And Recommended Candidate Status For Bosnia And Herzegovina", European Commission, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/nlp_22_6082, (Date of Accession: 04.11.2022).

[iii] "Υποκλοπή – PEGA: Δεν Υπάρχουν Αποδείξεις little Αλλά Να Ερευνηθούν Υι Καταγγέλει Για Pegasus Και Predator", in.gr, <https://www.in.gr/2022/11/04/politics/ypoklopes-pegas-den-yparxoun-apodeikseis-alla-na-ereynithoun-oi-kataggelies-gia-pegasus-kai-pretador/>, (Date of Accession: 04.11.2022).

[iv] Orlando Crowcroft, "Montenegro Wants To Join The EU-But Will Brussels Have It?", Euronews, <https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2021/02/01/montenegro-wants-to-join-the-eu-but-will-brussels-have-it>, (Date of Accession: 07.11.2022).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Increasing North Korean–Russian Cooperation in the Context of Arms Supply Claims

Claims that North Korea is supplying armaments to Russia demonstrate that Moscow and Pyongyang's military and political ambitions are converging. At the same time, these claims point to the logistical problems that Russia is experiencing in the Ukrainian War.

The accelerated pace of Moscow's arms supply signals that the Kremlin anticipates the Ukrainian War will continue for a long time. As a matter of fact, with this move, Russia may be attempting to enhance the speed of its weapons manufacturing capability, ensuring that



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output in its facilities keeps up with the speed of use. In other words, by acquiring military ammunition from North Korea, the Moscow administration may be attempting to stabilize the production process.

The United States of America's (USA) intelligence assessment on Russia's attempts to obtain artillery from North Korea indicates that Pyongyang is attempting to conceal its military supply through countries in the Middle East and North Africa. In this regard, US National Security Council Coordinator John Kirby stated that North Korea supplied a large quantity of artillery shells to Russia for the Ukraine War, with the destinations listed as Middle Eastern or North African countries.[1] Although Kirby did not name the country, the US may believe that Iran, another country suspected of supplying weapons to Russia, is being utilized as a transit country for North Korea's arms supply. Currently, the governments of Pyongyang and Tehran are cooperating on missile development.[2]

North Korea presently manufactures military ammunition that could be characterized as modernized versions of Soviet-era equipment. Furthermore, Pyongyang draws attention to itself through the development of Long-Range Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBM) and nuclear weapons. As a result, North Korea may appeal to Russia in the arms trade.

Another basis for the aforementioned claims is that North Korea has a railway network that connects to the Russian town of Khasan through the town of Tumangang in the country's north. The existence of such a route strengthens the claims.

At this point, it should be noted that artillery shells played a significant role in the Ukraine War and that the Russian arsenal had far more artillery shells than the Ukrainian Army at the start of the war. However, a balance was established with Western powers' arms supplies to Kiev, and Ukraine even gained the upper hand.[3] Furthermore, it is reported that 122 mm and 155 mm artillery rounds are among the most favoured artillery shells in the field, and while the Moscow administration had an edge in this area at the start of the war, Kyiv acquired an advantage with the rapid production of Ukroboronprom.[4] Therefore, the fact that North Korea has a significant stock of 122 mm artillery shells[5] may be an appealing factor for Russia. This can be interpreted as a factor pointing to the accuracy of the claims.

In addition to all of these, the fact that North Korea and Russia show signs of political rapprochement also strengthens the validity of the claims. In reality, the two countries are growing closer because they challenge Western hegemony and are "marginalized" by the global system, which has sought to isolate them through sanctions. North Korea, for example, is one of the few states that recognizes Russia's illegal annexation of Ukraine's Luhansk, Donetsk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions.

Furthermore, on October 7, 2022, North Korean President Kim Jong-un congratulated Russian President Vladimir Putin on his birthday and complimented him on "successfully defending the state from threats caused by the US and its Western hegemony." [6] In the message, Kim stated that North Korea–Russia cooperation was at its "strongest point in history." [7]

The Moscow administration, on the other hand, vetoed the new sanctions planned to be imposed on North Korea by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) in May 2022.[8] In addition, during the same UNSC meeting in November of the same year, Russia refused to condemn North Korea for its nuclear tests. Moreover, he blamed the West and the USA as the cause of the tension between Pyongyang and Washington.[9] This alignment of the two actors on both the foreign policy axis and the development of political strategy demonstrates that receiving ammunition support from North Korea in the Ukraine War is not that far off a possibility.

In conclusion, Russia encountered numerous difficulties throughout the Ukraine War. However, North Korea is viewed as a regional security threat due to its nuclear testing. It also conducts numerous drills in collaboration with the US, South Korea, and Japan. On the other hand, Pyongyang is also faced with a pressure of sanctions within the UNSC. As a result, it is expected that the parties would strengthen their collaboration in the face of global and regional issues. Therefore, it is normal for claims of arms supply to come to the agenda.

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ANKASAM ANALYSIS

A Sample of Strategic Cooperation: Hungary-Uzbekistan

The 9th Summit of the Heads of State of the Organization of Turkic States (OTS) was held in the Ancient city of Uzbekistan, on 11 October 11, 2022. Prime Minister of Hungary, Viktor Orbán has joined the summit and came together with the President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev. During the meeting of the two leaders; cultural issues, as well as cooperation in the fields of economy and energy, have been discussed.

Hungary, which is approximately 85 per cent dependent on Russian gas imports, has faced a variety of issues on energy security due to sanctions imposed on Russian energy after the Russia-Ukraine War. Concerning this, Budapest is exempted from the oil-import ban and has been one of the few states that transparently deprecator to the latest plan which is aiming to reduce gas consumption of the European Union (EU). Hence, Budapest officials; have en-



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countered serious economic challenges such as rising inflation, currency devaluation and budget deficit, right along with the termination of EU funds due to non-compliance with EU standards.

Hungary has gravitated to Central Asia as the most reasonable and reliable option in order to ensure the security of its energy supply and to find a solution that will not lead to incompatibility with EU policies. Such that, the OTS summit has created an opportunity for Orban and thus, dialogue on the Budapest-Tashkent line has paved a window for a solution to Hungary's energy crises. Following his meeting with Mirziyoyev, Orban made the following statements[1]:

"In the present war and sanctions crisis, the whole of Europe, with Hungary in it is struggling in order not to lose its economic impetus. In this situation, however, rather than slowing down the intensity of cooperation with Uzbekistan, our strategic partner in the region, we are seeking to increase it"

As understood by Hungarian leaders' remarks, Hungary has a desire the deepening its joint projects with Uzbekistan which started in nuclear energy, chemical industry, finance and telecommunication. Also, Hungary, which has been an EU member since 2007, evaluates its cooperation with Uzbekistan within the scope of the union and points to Tashkent due to its rich energy resources and critical geopolitical location in order to alleviate the impact of the war on the EU. Because Uzbekistan has the potential to supply natural gas to all of Europe through the Southern Gas Corridor which crosses Azerbaijan.

As is well known, Uzbekistan in Central Asia and Hungary in Europe are constituting key points in the Middle Corridor. Thus, the expanding relations between these two countries, not only offer a lifeline to the energy crises of the EU but also lead many sectors of the economy will benefit from the development and deepening of relations.

On the other hand, President Mirziyoyev visited Budapest on 3-4th October 2022, and during his visit, decisions are made that covered cooperation in agriculture, transportation, medicine, textile, food, electricity, water saving and industry sectors. Mirziyoyev, once again, reiterated that both countries agree to implement the decisions taken at this meeting.

In brief, both Budapest and Tashkent have willing to strengthen their diplomatic relations. Thus, Hungary, which experience difficult times regarding energy security is aware of the prominence of cooperation with Uzbekistan, which confirmed the multi-dimensional and multi-vectorial diplomacy with new reforms, which may lead to relief economically, particularly in energy. This is why Budapest has headed towards Uzbekistan, and, for this reason, it can be said that the relations between the two countries increasingly proceed.

A significant focus of the relations will be energy resources, particularly natural gas. In his remarks at the TDT Summit, the Hungarian Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade Minister Peter Szijarto highlighted the importance of energy resources by expressing the following: [2]

"If we rely only on facts and do not consider this issue from the point of view of political and ideological restrictions, then it is obvious that without the Turkic states it will be impossible to provide our energy supply."

Szijarto's statements may lead to the conclusion that the Turkish states are key actors in the European energy crisis and that Hungary's objective is to improve cooperation with all the Turkish states, with the help of its cooperation with Uzbekistan.

After the Russian-Ukrainian War, the changing equations for Europe have grown the significance of establishing mutual relations with Central Asian countries. Regional states, specifically Uzbekistan, have rich energy sources, as well as growing and developing economies day by day.

In conclusion, the increasing cooperation between Hungary and Uzbekistan can be expanded to include the entire Balkans and Central Asia, and through this, oil, natural gas, commodities and export goods will be able to transport in both directions via the Middle Corridor. This, overplus serving the development of the entire region, can strengthen the Asia-Europe and thus the East-West interaction.



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Role of Economic Ties in German-Chinese Relations

Economy Minister of Germany Robert Habeck stated on November 9, 2022 that the country had to protect its key industries from potential security threats and announced that they did not allow Chinese investors to buy the German chip factory Elmos.[1] At the end of October 2022, the coalition partners of Chancellor of Germany Olaf Scholz rejected the request of China Ocean Shipping Company (COSCO), which also offers logistical services, to purchase 35% of shares in one of the terminals at Port of Hamburg, a major trading port. Despite this, German Council of Ministers approved sale of 25% of the largest port in Hamburg to

COSCO on October 25, 2022. In fact, recent developments have raised expectations that the new government will adopt a different Chinese policy. In this context, it is necessary to outline the general framework of bilateral relations to understand whether Germany will adopt a new Chinese policy.

German-Chinese political relations began on 11 October 1972 with a declaration signed by Foreign Minister of China Ji Pengfei and then Foreign Minister of Federal Germany Walter Scheel. Economic relations between the two nations began under Helmut Kohl and have deep-



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ened under former Chancellor Angela Merkel. In this process, pragmatic connections have formed in Germany's China policy, and an approach that influences the EU's China policy has been adopted. As a matter of fact, it is known that Merkel took an active role in the process leading to the EU-China Comprehensive Investment Agreement signed on 30 December 2020.

Germany's China policy, which is ruled by a coalition government comprised of the Social Democratic Party, the Greens, and the Free Democratic Party, is expected to change in the post-Merkel period. Because Liberals and Greens promote a values-based approach that criticizes Merkel's China policy and believes it should be stricter. Furthermore, China's "pro-Russian neutrality" in the Russia-Ukraine War reinforced the assumption that Berlin's approach to Beijing would differ from that of Merkel.

So, are German-Chinese relations capable of varying according to policies of governments; or are there ties that will keep the two countries together independent of governments? Based on this problematic, although there are fundamental differences of opinion between two countries on issues such as human rights, individual freedoms, validity of international law and international order, there is an economic and mutual interdependence. China is both an important market for Germany and a source of cheap and quality goods imports.

Germany, on the other hand, is seen as a key European partner for China in the economic and political arena.[2] As a matter of fact, the trade volume between the two countries increased in 2021 compared to the previous year and exceeded 245 billion Euros.[3] In the first half of 2022, Germany mostly imported products such as computers, electric batteries, semiconductor devices, telephones and transformers from China, while exporting automobiles, motor vehicle parts and accessories, packaged medicines, copper powder.[4] In addition, Germany has various investments in China, especially in automotive sector. China, on the other hand, has investments in the machinery, automotive and chemical industries as well as in the telecommunications and green energy sectors in Germany.

As it is understood, commercial relations ensure continuity and sustainable relations between the two countries. For example, Volkswagen, the first major initiative in China, conducted 1/3 of its sales in China in 2021.[5] Similarly, Mercedes-Benz and BMW officials stressed that China has a key place in its global strategies, explaining that they want to expand their presence in China at the World Smart connected Tools Conference held in

n Beijing in September 2022.[6] Example of BASF outside the automotive sector is significant. As a matter of fact, the German chemical giant, BASF launched the largest overseas investment project in Zhanjiang in September 2022. On the other hand, BASF CEO Martin Brudermueller said the war in Ukraine has increased gas prices in Europe and is negatively reflected in sales.[7]

From this perspective, it is understood that it is inevitable for German investors, who have a significant market share in China, to exert strong pressure on the continuation of relations with Beijing. As a matter of fact, on November 4, 2022, Scholz made his controversial visit to China accompanied by a delegation consisting of the top executives of BASF, Siemens, Deutsche Bank, BioNTech, Adidas, Merck and German automotive manufacturers Volkswagen and BMW. In reality, Scholz stated before the visit, in response to criticism, that China remains an essential commercial and trade partner for Germany and Europe, but that the supply range would be expanded in circumstances where there could be harmful dependencies.[8] From this, it is seen that Scholz wants to maintain economic relations with China with caution, while remaining sensitive to the coalition partners' expectations.

On the other hand, continuation of bilateral economic relations constitutes an important area of movement for Beijing. For example, a decision was taken to limit Chinese 5G equipment manufacturer Huawei across Europe on the grounds that it engages in illegal activities such as espionage. Germany, however, does not comply with this decision. In fact, there is a law in Germany that authorizes ministries to intervene in telecommunications contracts, including Huawei. This law was expected to be implemented during the Scholz period, but no interference has yet taken place with telecommunications companies. For this reason, Germany has been warned by European Commission that the bloc must follow common 5G safety guidelines.[9]

In this context, for China, the continuation of partnership is important not only in terms of bilateral relations but also in terms of its presence in Europe. However, in addition to their continued partnerships, Germany and China's relationship has a systemic competitive character. Especially since the Russian-Ukrainian War, which began on February 24, 2022, Berlin's systemic competitor emphasis to Beijing has increased due to both the US influence and the understanding of the extent of damage that dependencies would cause to Germany. Russia's response to the policies of the Western alliance with energy caused many problems in Germany, which supplies 55% of its natural gas

consumption from Russia. With the sudden increase in energy prices, production started to decrease and inflation started to increase. Adding to all of these public protests, the government is left with an energy bomb ready to explode due to its dependence on Russia. Many short and long-term plans are being discussed, including returning to Russian gas to destroy this bomb before it explodes.

Given the devastating consequences of Germany's dependence on Russian gas, it is better understood why the opponent's emphasis on rivalry stands out. Because, German Foreign Minister Bearbock said, "We should no longer make ourselves dependent on any country that does not share our values. Economic dependence exposes us to political blackmail,"[10] adding that economic relations with China should be shaped by taking lessons from energy relations with Russia. The presence of the opposition against COSCO or prevention of acquisition of the chip factory can be considered a consequence of this approach.

Despite all criticism, why COSCO was given a share can be explained by China being more successful in providing energy supplies in comparison to Europe in the current conjuncture. German companies, seeking to mitigate the impact of the supply problem that was endangered by the energy crisis, have begun to increase their investment in China. It is estimated that trade traffic between Asia and Europe will intensify due to increased investments and with the cooperation provided in Port Hamburg, the problems that may arise in managing this density can be reduced.

In conclusion, the economic bond formed between China, a rising power by adhering to its own rules, and Germany, the largest economy in Europe, determines the course of bilateral relations. Although there are politicians in Germany who wish to limit Chinese investment and reduce German industry's reliance on the Chinese market, financial interests provide the glue that holds China and Germany together and prevents a major shift in Germany's China policy.

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16 November 2022

Dunyo, the leading news agency of Uzbekistan, referred to the work of the Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Studies (ANKASAM) on the Organization of Turkish States Samarkand Summit.

16 November 2022

The findings in the analysis of the Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Studies (ANKASAM) on the US exercises in Central and South Asia were referenced on Bloknot.ru.

18 November 2022

The findings in the analysis of the Ankara Center for Crisis and Policy Studies (ANKASAM) on the US exercises in Central and South Asia were cited on Asiais.ru.

19 November 2022

ANKASAM International Relations Specialist Dr. Doğacan Başşaran evaluated the G-20 Summit in Channel B.



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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