



ANKASAM **bulletin**

29 January 2023
ISSUE: 2023/04



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The Place of Southeast Asia
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Germany's "Ukraine
Dilemma" and Strained
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Journal of Regional Studies

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Design-String: Esra Karadağ



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Russia's Reaction to the Integration Process of the Balkans into the EU: The Case of Montenegro

Montenegro is one of the countries that are the scene of a struggle for influence between the West and Russia in the Balkans. At the beginning of the 2000s, Russia came to the fore as advantageous in this struggle, but since the 2010s, it is seen that the process has developed in favor of the West.

However, after the dissolution of Serbia-Montenegro in 2006, Montenegro has turned its direction to the West. In this context, the European Union (EU) initiated negotiations on Montenegro's accession to the union in 2012. Thus, Montenegro's integration process with the EU has gained momentum. In this context, Montenegro has been one of the countries that joined the



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Western sanctions after Russia's annexation of Crimea in violation of international law in 2014.

On the other hand, the failure of the pro-Russian military coup in October 2016, aimed at overthrowing the pro-Western government in Montenegro,[1] was a turning point in the relations between Moscow and Podgorica. This coup attempt was carried out to prevent Montenegro's membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). In particular, the accession of Podgorica to NATO in 2017 has led to a decline in Moscow's influence in this country, which is important in Balkan and Adriatic geopolitics.

As can be understood, the NATO membership of Montenegro, which has been described as a Russian ally in the Balkan geography for many years, has been a great loss for the Kremlin. On the other hand, it can be said that the means for the West to gain influence over Montenegro are international institutions such as the EU and NATO, and that the relations between the parties develop within an institutional framework.

On the other hand, it can be argued that the concepts of history, culture and religion gained weight in Russia's policy towards Montenegro. In particular, the fact that a significant part of Montenegro's population belongs to the Orthodox sect of Christianity and that one-third of the population consists of ethnic Serbs is important for Russia to increase its influence in the country. Moreover, Russia continues its policy of Panslavism through the Serbian Orthodox Church in Montenegro. Therefore, when Moscow determines its policy towards Potgoritsa, it emphasizes religious and cultural elements.

In addition to all this, Montenegro's geopolitical position is another factor that plays a role in the importance that Moscow attaches to Podgorica. The fact that Montenegro is among the countries bordering the Adriatic increases its importance in Balkan geopolitics. However, Podgorica's membership in NATO has led to the transformation of the Adriatic into a "NATO Lake" in a sense. For this reason, the Kremlin is trying to gain influence through economic means, at least in Montenegro.

On the other hand, relations between Montenegro and Russia have been gradually deteriorating since Podgorica joined NATO. Despite this, Russia has tried to maintain its effectiveness through economic investments after Montenegro became a member of the organization.

Currently, Russia is the largest foreign investor in Montenegro. As of 2019, most Russian investments in Montenegro have been realized through the real estate and tourism sectors. Furthermore, Moscow's investments are equal to 26% of Podgorica's gross domestic product (GDP).[2] The situation is quite remarkable in that it shows the economic influence of Russia on Montenegro. In other words, in recent years, Moscow's policy towards Podgorica has been dominated by the economy rather than religion, culture and history.

Despite all this, Moscow's strategy has been seriously wounded after its military intervention in Ukraine on February 24, 2022. Especially after Dritan Abazovic became the Prime Minister of Montenegro in April 2022, relations between Russia and Montenegro began to be further strained. After the Abazovic government took office, it both declared that it would accelerate the country's EU membership process[3] and announced that it would participate in all of Brussels' sanctions against Moscow.[4]

To summarize briefly, Montenegro wanted to adapt to the EU in terms of foreign policy by participating in the sanctions against Russia. In other words, the Abazovic government wanted to accelerate the process of Podgorica's integration with Brussels. This reflected negatively on relations with Moscow.

On the other hand, although Montenegro has put forward a clear stance against Russia, it is experiencing some difficulties in the harmonization process with the EU due to the political tensions in the country. In this context, in June 2022, the European Parliament (EP) expressed satisfaction with Montenegro's commitment to European integration, but pointed out that Podgorica must make strides in electoral and judicial reforms and in the fight against organised crime and corruption.[5] Therefore, Montenegro's integration with the EU is not progressing at the desired level due to some disagreements in domestic politics rather than foreign policy.

As it will be remembered, in July 2022, Podgorica decided to freeze the real estate of some Russian citizens in the country by complying with the sanctions imposed by Brussels against Moscow.[6] In other words, Russia's economic influence in a country where it has sig-

nificant investments in the Balkans has begun to decrease with the war. However, a political crisis has occurred in Montenegro after the government led by Dritan Abazovic failed to win a vote of confidence in August 2022. In this case, the agreement signed by Abazovic with the Serbian Orthodox Church in the country played a decisive role. Moreover, on November 1, 2022, the Montenegrin Parliament, which consists of 81 people, adopted a resolution restricting the powers of the President of the Republic with 41 votes, which caused a reaction from the EU. The decision limits the powers of the President regarding the formation of a government in the country. The pro-Serb and pro-Russian Democratic Front, known for its anti-NATO stance, played a critical role in this decision.[7]

Predictably, the political instability that began in the country after Abazovic's failure to win a vote of confidence could lead to a consequence that could increase Russia's influence over Montenegro. This could hamper Montenegro's EU integration process, especially as evidenced by Brussels' reaction. It is seen that the pro-Serb forces have increased their influence in Montenegro recently.

On December 29, 2022, former Foreign Minister Moidrag Lekic was given the task of forming a government in Montenegro. Lekic was supported by the pro-Russian Democratic Front. Moreover, as a member of parliament, Lekic opposed Montenegro's accession to NATO in 2017 and recent resolutions condemning Russia's aggression against Ukraine.[8] A government formed by Lekic could therefore cause Montenegro's EU integration to slow down. Moreover, given Lekic's ideas, this could lead to an improvement in Montenegro's relations with Russia.

In conclusion, there has been a period in which Russian influence has gradually decreased in Montenegro in recent years. In this case, it can be said that two points come to the forefront. The first is Montenegro's membership in NATO in 2017. The second is Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022. However, the political instability that began in the country in August 2022 and the increase of the influence of the Serb supporters may open the door to a new process in Moscow's relations with Podgorica.

[1] "Montenegro Sentences Russians, Opposition Leaders for Failed 2016 Coup", Euractiv, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/enlargement/news/montenegro-sentences-russians-opposition-leaders-for-failed-2016-coup/>, (Date of Accession: 10.01.2023).

[2] "Montenegro Eyes Economic Package to Overcome Ukraine Crisis", TRT World, <https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/montenegro-eyes-economic-package-to-overcome-ukraine-crisis-55589>, (Date of Accession: 10.01.2023).

[3] "Montenegro Elects New Minority Government That Aims To Speed Up EU Membership Process", Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, <https://www.rferl.org/a/montenegro-government-abazovic-serbia/31825954.html>, (Date of Accession: 10.01.2023).

[4] "Montenegro's New Government Pledges to Join All EU Sanctions Against Russia", Ukrinform, <https://www.ukrinform.net/rubric-polytics/3477055-montenegros-new-government-pledges-to-join-all-eu-sanctions-against-russia.html>, (Date of Accession: 10.01.2023).

[5] "Montenegro: Political Tensions Slow progress of EU-Related Reforms", PubAffairs Bruxelles, <https://www.pubaffairsbruxelles.eu/eu-institution-news/montenegro-political-tensions-slow-progress-of-eu-related-reforms/>, (Date of Accession: 10.01.2023).

[6] "Montenegro Freezes Property of Two Russians on EU Sanctions list", Balkan Insight, <https://balkaninsight.com/2022/07/27/montenegro-freezes-property-of-two-russians-on-eu-sanctions-list/>, (Date of Accession: 10.01.2023).

[7] "EU Concerned By Controversial Law in Montenegro to Restrict President's Powers", AA, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/eu-concerned-by-controversial-law-in-montenegro-to-restrict-presidents-powers/2733111>, (Date of Accession: 10.01.2023).

[8] "Montenegro's Parliament OKs Prime Minister-Designate After Disputed Change in Presidential Powers", Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, <https://www.rferl.org/a/montenegro-lekic-prime-minister-designate-presidential-powers/32199968.html>, (Date of Accession: 10.01.2023).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

How will Sweden's policies be shaped during the EU Presidency?

The year 2022 has witnessed two important developments for Sweden. First of all, the Stockholm administration has put an end to the neutrality policy that has been careful not to be included in military alliances for many years after the Russia-Ukraine War that started on February 24, 2022. In this context, Sweden has applied to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). The second important development is that the right-wing coalition came to power in the country after the general elections held in Sweden in September 2022.

On the other hand, Sweden has become the president of an important position in the European Union (EU) as of 2023. In this context, Stock-

holm has taken over the Presidency of the Council of the EU as of January 1, 2023. Therefore, it can be assumed that the dynamics caused by the mentioned developments will be effective in the process of the Swedish Presidency.

In addition to all these, it is useful to mention the task of the EU Presidency and the structure of the council. The Presidency of the Council of the EU is held every six months on a rotating basis between EU member states. During this period, the Presidency chairs meetings of the Council at all levels and plays a decisive role in ensuring the continuity of the EU's work in the Council. There is also no election for the Presidency of the Council of the EU. Each Member State in turn carries out this task. The



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Presidency of the Council of the EU has two main duties. The first is planning and presiding over meetings in the EU Council and preparatory bodies. The second represents the Council in its dealings with other EU institutions. In other words, the Presidency carries out the Council's relations with other EU institutions, especially the European Commission and the European Parliament (EP).[1]

As can be understood, Sweden has started to chair an extremely important task within the EU. In particular, the war conjuncture in Europe, the economic faltering of some countries in the union and the problems experienced in terms of energy pose some challenges to Stockholm. On the other hand, on December 14, 2022, Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson announced that Stockholm would focus on four essential points during the EU Council Presidency. These include security, competitiveness, environmental and energy transition, and democratic values and the rule of law. [2]

Nevertheless, the Swedish Government has announced that it will prioritize economic and military support for Kiev in the security phase, as well as supporting Ukraine in EU membership. Stockholm has also drawn attention to the fight against cross-border organised crime. In the competitiveness clause, the most urgent measure is devoted to the war in Ukraine and its short-term consequences. Moreover, it was emphasized that Europe's strength, resilience and global standing are linked to economic output, which is closely linked to single market and global trade opportunities. While the long-term energy market reform was discussed under the title of environment and energy transition, it was stated that efforts to combat high and variable energy prices would continue.[3]

Predictably, the most important challenge for Sweden will be the effects of the Russia-Ukraine War on Europe. Almost all of Stockholm's priorities are related to the war. Nevertheless, although they are different types of institutions, Sweden is also striving for NATO membership. In this respect, both Sweden and Ukraine are trying to become members of various Western organizations. Given this situation, it can be foreseen that there may be critical developments in Kiev's integration with the EU on the occasion of Stockholm's contributions.

On the other hand, internal dynamics as well as external dynamics will be decisive in Sweden's Presidency of the Council of the EU. In this respect, Sweden's internal dynamics should also be emphasized. Currently, Sweden is governed by a coalition of three parties. These parties are the Moderate Conservative Party (M), the Liberal Party (L) and the Christian Democratic Party (KD). The far-right Sweden Democrats Party (SD) also supports the current government from the outside. The cooperation of the four parties

is based on the Tidö Agreement. In this context, the parties have declared that their approaches to the problems in the country are similar and that they will seek joint solutions to deal with them.[4]

In addition to all this, the SD, although it supports it from the outside, has a critical role in shaping the policy of the current government. The SD, which stands out with its anti-immigrant identity, is also opposed to the EU. For this reason, Western analysts are making criticism that the SD could take the Swedish Presidency of the EU Council hostage. Charlie Weimers, who is an MP for the EP as well as an SD MP, stated that they do not want any mandatory mechanism on migration and that they will not accept more asylum seekers coming to the country. Asserting that this is the red line of the SD, Weimers also stated that crossing this line will have consequences for the Swedish Government. In addition, the SD MP promised that his party would not cause any problems in Ukraine's struggle against Russia and suggested that there was a high level of support for Kiev within the party.[5]

In this context, the SD, under Sweden's EU Council Presidency, will try to influence Stockholm's migration policy rather than the war in Ukraine. Therefore, it can be said that Sweden's internal dynamics will be very important in Stockholm's Presidency.

On the other hand, Sweden's Ambassador to the EU Lars Danielsson pointed out on January 9, 2023 that migration has become an issue where you can win or lose elections in almost every member state. Danielsson also said that a migration agreement must be agreed before the new commission takes office in 2024.[6]

From Danielsson's statements, it can be argued that irregular migration will be one of the issues that will be important in Stockholm's EU Council Presidency. The fact that Sweden will head this institution will allow it to bring issues such as migration to the agenda more often.

In conclusion, all of the articles that Sweden has announced that it will prioritize in the Presidency of the Council of the EU are related to the Russia-Ukraine War. Therefore, Stockholm's policies will be shaped depending on this war. On the other hand, given Sweden's harsh stance against irregular migration, it can be foreseen that Stockholm will raise this issue in its own interests.

[1] "The Presidency of the Council of the EU", European Council of the European Union, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/council-eu/presidency-council-eu/>, (Date of Accession: 16.01.2023).

[2] "Priorities", Swedish Presidency of the Council of the European Union, <https://swedish-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/en/programme/priorities/>, (Date of Accession: 16.01.2023).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Bosnia and Herzegovina's EU Adventure: Candidate Country Status

With the outbreak of the Russian-Ukrainian War, the Balkans, already an unstable region, have become even more fragile. Frozen ethnic and religious conflicts and problems are one of the main causes of instability in the region, while corruption and economic problems are obstacles to a sustainable environment of prosperity and stability.

The process of harmonization and integration with the European Union (EU) and other Euro-Atlantic institutions, which is one of the foreign policy priorities of the countries in the region, is considered as a remedy for the existing

instability. However, in the current process, it is seen that the EU membership processes of the Balkan countries, except Croatia and Slovenia, have been protracted and there has been a mismatch between the parties. However, recently, it is seen that the EU has been increasing its presence in the region and the harmonization and integration process with the Balkan countries has been prioritized again.

While the risks of the Russia-Ukraine War undoubtedly lie behind this change in the EU's approach to the region, the energy and security



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crisis has also played a decisive role in this conjuncture. In this context, the fact that Bosnia-Herzegovina, one of the countries in the region, has recently gained EU "candidate country" status after many years is a significant development. Mentioned in 2003 as a "potential candidate country", Bosnia and Herzegovina officially applied for EU membership in 2016. Bosnia and Herzegovina, which obtained the status of "candidate country" after a nearly 20-year adventure, has achieved an important development.[1]

Bosnia and Herzegovina still has many shortcomings in terms of candidate country status. In particular, the complex political system created by the Dayton Peace Agreement and the political gridlock this system has allowed is one of the main problems in the country. On the other hand, the separatist rhetoric of the leaders of the Republika Srpska (RS), one of the constituent entities of the state, and their steps to block the decision-making processes in the government are among the most important obstacles to achieving sustainable stability.

In addition to all these, the fact that the political and economic institutions in the country are far from being inclusive and that most state institutions are run based on ethnic elements and are plagued by corruption further exacerbates the problems. In fact, the European Commission's 2022 report on Bosnia and Herzegovina, published a few months before the country was granted candidate status, addressed these problems, and stated that Bosnia had not sufficiently fulfilled the necessary conditions for its journey with the EU.[2]

As such, the granting of candidate country status to Bosnia shortly after the publication of this report left a question mark. At this point, it should be noted that the "candidate country" decision taken in December 2022 was not essentially for Bosnia and Herzegovina's citizens; it was a political, geopolitical, and strategic decision.

In this framework, when the move for "candidate country" status is analyzed, it can be stated that it is an attempt to prevent Pan Slavism from spreading in the region.

Considering the threats and risks posed by the Russia-Ukraine War in the Balkans, the decision taken by the EU becomes more understandable. As a matter of fact, the EU, which has recently been showing efforts to increase its visibility and its room for manoeuvre in the region, has been trying to attract Bosnia-Herzegovina to its side due to its strategic location and the presence of elements within the country that are known to have close relations with Russia and has been endeavouring to prevent possible challenges arising from this country.

At this stage, one should not ignore the recent political developments in the country. The fact that the general elections held in October 2022 were held in a democratic environment despite many controversial situations and that the results of the elections signalled a change was influential in this decision. It is not a coincidence that the decision coincided with an agreement on the ongoing government formation process in the country.[3] As Jasmin Mujanovic points out, the Russian-Ukrainian War has been decisive in these developments.[4]

On the other hand, when we look at the reactions of politicians in the country, we see that while most of them welcomed the decision, some of them made criticisms that were not entirely wrong. For example, Bosnian Croat leader Dragan Čović, who personally submitted the application for EU membership in 2016, stated that it took a long time for the decision to be taken, that Bosnia could remain in this status for years, but that their goal was to achieve membership as soon as possible. Bosnian Serb leader Milorad Dodik stated that he would have been more optimistic if the decision had been taken a few years ago; referring to the Russian-Ukrainian War, he underlined that this decision was a belated reaction to the existing injustice and that they did not care much about this decision. Denis Bečirović, the new Bosniak member of the Presidential Council of Bosnia and Herzegovina, stated that this decision was encouraging for all Bosnian citizens.[5]

It is possible to say that the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina generally welcomed the decision, but lost most of their expectations in this protracted process. This is because the decision is not expected to have tangible economic and social benefits.

As a result, Bosnia and Herzegovina is not expected to experience major changes after obtaining “candidate status.” However, it is thought that the political instability in the country can be prevented with the decision taken. In the background of the decision lies the EU’s effort to prevent instability in the Balkans after the Russia-Ukraine War.

[1] “EU potvrdila kandidatski status za Bosnu i Hercegovinu, čestitke evropskih lidera”, Radio Slobodna Evropa, <https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/bosna-i-hercegovina-eu-kandidatski-status/32177770.html>, (Date of Accession: 04.01.2023).

[2] “Key Findings of the 2022 Report on Bosnia and Herzegovina”, European Commission, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/country_22_6093, (Date of Accession: 04.01.2023).

[3] “‘Osmorka’, HDZ BiH i SNSD potpisali ‘historijski’ sporazum”, Al Jazeera Balkans, <https://balkans.aljazeera.net/news/balkan/2022/12/15/osmorka-hdz-bih-i-snsd-potpisali-historijski-sporazum>, (Date of Accession: 04.01.2023).

[4] “‘Ukrajina učinila više za EU perspektivu BiH nego ijedan domaći političar!”, Slobodna Bosna, <https://www.slobodna-bosna.ba/vijest/280581/jasmin-mujanovic-otvoreno-ukrajina-uchinila-vise-za-eu-perspektivu-bih-nego-ijedan-domaci-politichar.html>, (Date of Accession: 04.01.2023).

[5] “Šta znači kandidatski status za Bosnu i Hercegovinu?”, Radio Slobodna Evropa, <https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/bih-uslovi-preporuka-status-kandidata-eu/32079385.html>, (Date of Accession: 04.01.2023).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

USA and Japan to Establish a “Crisis Response Force”

After the end of the Cold War, the President of the United States of America (USA), George W. Bush, proclaimed the establishment of the New World Order, in effect declaring American hegemony in the world. Since the 1980s, China’s emphasis on liberal policies and the announcement of the Belt and Road Initiative in 2013 have posed the most serious threat to American hegemony in the long term. In order to stop and limit China’s rise, the Pivot-Asia strategy was implemented under Barack Obama,

trade wars under Donald Trump and crisis strategy under Joe Biden. In this sense, the US aimed to confine China to its own borders and reduce its interest in global politics through crises that would be artificially created and then fueled within China or in its immediate neighborhood.

China’s economic prosperity and increased investment in its military power has led to Beijing’s activities being perceived as a regional



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security threat. In addition, the US and its allies have raised the “China threat” as China has vowed to use force if necessary to achieve its goal of unification with Taiwan. One of the allies that felt such a risk most keenly was Japan. This is because it has archipelagos extending as far as Taiwan. The Nansei/Ryukyu Islands, for example, encircle China from the seas and prevent it from opening up to the world. Therefore, along with Taiwan, Japan’s islands are also considered to be under threat.

Evaluating all these security risks, the Tokyo administration is trying to expand its national defense to distant seas and a large airspace (space). In its strategy document published in December 2022, Japan emphasized that in case of any attack on its territory, it will strengthen its counter-attack capabilities, missile defense and joint defense capabilities with the United States.[1] In line with this aim, negotiations between the defense forces of the two countries are continuing in order to increase the coordination in response to crises. Both Japan and the United States are trying to reorganize and strengthen their troops in the region.

In accordance with the security agreement signed between the two countries in 1951, the United States deployed its military units on the southern Okinawa Island in order to ensure the defense of Japan. These units serve within the US-Indo-Pacific Command. But in addition, Washington has established a new unified command to task it with crisis response. Japan is taking similar steps. Tokyo will establish an integrated-unified command aiming to control all its military commands from a single centre. Thus, with their new military commands, the US and Japan aim to increase their operational readiness and improve their response capabilities in the event of a crisis. In case of emergency, these commands will coordinate movements between the Japanese Self-Defense Forces and the American Forces.

It is seen that both states are preparing for a war regarding Taiwan. For example, Japan is reported to have increased its military buildup near Taiwan.[2] In about five years, Tokyo and Washington will have developed their joint response capabilities against a possible invasion attempt in Taiwan. Apparently; Neither Japan nor the USA is prepared for a crisis-conflict-that could break out under the current conditions. China plans to complete its military modernization by 2027. The United States is also calculating that a war could break out over Taiwan or Japan by this date and is making its preparations accordingly. Because, in the last war simulations about China and Taiwan prepared in universities in the USA, the years 2026 or 2027 were taken into account.[3] Similarly, Japan has set 2027 as the ultimate target for the realization of its national defense strategy.

During the recent military exercises, for the first time, the US Marine Corps deployed Japanese military units as part of the “reserve force” through the joint tactical coordination centers instead of contacting (notifying) the allied command posts. In other words, the United States can now use the joint tactical coordination center to obtain reservists from Japan without having to notify Japan and ask for its help in responding to the crisis. This will save allied states significant time in an emergency crisis. US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin announced that these bases will contribute to the defense of Japan, as well as to the free and open Indo-Pacific.[4]

The United States may begin to establish the crisis response coordination center established with Japan with its other allies. Thus, during the Taiwan Crisis, the United States will be able to deploy in the bases of many allied states close to the island and intervene quickly. This is part of the US crisis strategy. “We call it “theater,” said General James Bierman, Commander of the US Marine Corps Intervention Force. “We are building theater in Japan, in the Philippines and elsewhere.”.[5]

Theater, a military term, refers to the “field of action” of troops. In other words, theater generally determines the scope (limits) of operations and missions of military units, including defense-security cooperation with allied states. The military theater that was previously set up for Ukraine is now being set up for crises that may arise in Taiwan and its nearby islands. US commander James Bierman pointed out that the cooperation with the allied states in the Indo-Pacific was similar to that in the Russian-Ukrainian War in Europe.

He emphasized that thanks to these preparations, Ukraine was able to mount a successful defense.[6] So the US and allied states are preparing for Taiwan this time.

China’s reaction to these latest steps taken by the United States with Japan was swift. Accordingly, Beijing rejected Washington’s offer to re-establish the bilateral consultation mechanism and resume dialogue to prevent military confrontation in the region.[7] In fact, in the last days of 2022, a Chinese military aircraft came within 10 feet (3 meters) of a US military aircraft in the South China Sea, forcing it to maneuver.[8] In response, the US has increased its efforts to keep communication channels open with China in order to prevent crises from turning into conflicts. Because US Secretary of State Antony Blinken is expected to visit Beijing in 2023. In August 2022, during the visit of the Speaker of the US House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi to Taiwan, it was even claimed that China could shoot down this plane. That’s why the US wants to avoid such a risk during Blinken’s Beijing visit. However, a natural consequence of the US crisis policy is the escalation of tensions and the possibility of conflict. Washington has risked this possibility of conflict in order to confine Beijing to its borders.

[1] “Basis of Defense Policy”, Japan Ministry of Defense, https://www.mod.go.jp/en/d_policy/basis/index.html, (Date of Accession: 13.01.2023).

[2] “Japan Nears Plan For Ammo Storage Network Closer To Taiwan”, Asia Nikkie, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/Taiwan-tensions/Japan-nears-plan-for-ammo-storage-network-closer-to-Taiwan>, (Date of Accession: 13.01.2023).

[3] “War Game Suggests Chinese Invasion of Taiwan Would Fail At A Huge Cost To US, Chinese and Taiwanese Militaries”, CNN, <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/01/09/politics/taiwan-invasion-war-game-intl-hnk-ml>, (Date of Accession: 13.01.2023).

[4] “US To Deploy New Mobile Marine Unit in Japan’s Okinawa: Austin”, Korea Times, https://koreatimes.co.kr/www/nation/2023/01/501_343443.html, (Date of Accession: 13.01.2023).

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[6] Ibid.

[7] “China Snubs US Military Outreach Ahead of Expected Blinken Visit”, VOA News, <https://www.voanews.com/a/china-snubs-us-military-outreach-ahead-of-expected-blinken-visit-/6910896.html>, (Date of Accession: 13.01.2023).

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ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Kazakhstan-Azerbaijan-UAE Convergence in Caspian Centered Projects

The most important effect of the Russia-Ukraine War, which started on February 24, 2022, on global trade was undoubtedly the blockage of the Northern Corridor. In this context, it is possible to state that the importance of the Middle Corridor, which connects the East and the West via the China-Central Asia-Caspian Sea-Caucasus-Balkans-Europe route, has increased. Because the Middle Corridor is the shortest, least costly and most stable route between China and Europe. Undoubtedly, this situation increases the geopolitical and geoeconomic importance of the states bordering the Caspian Sea. For this reason, it is seen that the states of the region focus on Caspian-centered pro-

jects and therefore try to consolidate their own positions.

It can be stated that Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan have a strong will to deepen their Caspian-centered cooperation. In this sense, it can be said that the first concrete output of the cooperation between the parties is the meeting of KazMunayGas Chairman of the Board of Kazakhstan Magzum Mirzagaliyev and SOCAR Chairman Rovshan Najaf in Baku on 18 August 2022 and discussing the Caspian-based infrastructure projects.[1] At the same time, the meeting between Mirzagaliyev and Najaf is not only in the logistics dimension of the Middle



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Corridor; It means that it comes to the forefront in terms of energy supply and security.

In the following process, the search for cooperation between the parties continued at an accelerated pace and on August 24, 2022, the visit of the President of Kazakhstan, Mr. Kasım-Cömert Tokayev, to meet with the President of Azerbaijan, Mr. İlham Aliyev, took place in Baku.[2] This has clearly demonstrated the importance that the two countries attach to the Middle Corridor in terms of energy exports, attracting foreign direct investment, and regional-interregional integration processes.

As of January 2023, it is possible to state that the search for Caspian-based cooperation has gained momentum and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has come to the fore in these searches. As a matter of fact, the visits of both Mr. Aliyev and Mr. Tokayev to the UAE demonstrate this situation.

In this context, the first visit of Mr. Aliyev to Abu Dhabi took place on January 15, 2023. The President of Azerbaijan, who participated in the "Sustainable Development Week" event during the visit, said the following during the meeting:[3]

"the UAE transformed into world's one of the most stable, developed and successful countries. And we, your brothers in Azerbaijan, are really proud of what you are doing."

In addition, Mr. Aliyev also met with UAE President Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. At the meeting between the two leaders, cooperation opportunities between the parties were discussed and Mr. Aliyev invited his UAE counterpart to Baku.[4] Considering that the UAE is currently cooperating with Azerbaijan in investment projects worth hundreds of millions of dollars, most notably the wind energy project of Masdar, it can be said that energy was the highlight of Mr. Aliyev's visit. Although more references are made to renewable energy projects, it is not possible to argue that the option of providing solids for Caspian-based projects has been overlooked. Because the visitor traffic also indicates this.

As a matter of fact, after the visit of Mr. Aliyev, the UAE hosted the President of Kazakhstan, Mr. Tokayev. During the visit covering 16-19 January 2023, Mr. Tokayev made the following statement:[5]

"The Emirates is our leading and reliable strategic partner in the Middle East and Arab world. Your country has supported Kazakhstan since the first days of independence. Kazakh people will never forget this. The United Arab Emirates has significantly contributed to our capital's development and improvement. This is evidence of true friendship."

In addition, Mr. Tokayev stated that the UAE invested approximately 3 billion dollars in Kazakhstan and that Kazakhstan also invested over 1 billion dollars in the UAE, and that the trade volume between the two countries exceeded 600 million dollars in 2022.[6]

As might be expected, the parties have developed a constructive and pragmatic form of cooperation that prioritizes mutual interests. Considering that Mr. Tokayev held meetings with important names from the business world during his visit,[7] it can be argued that Astana's expectation is to attract foreign direct investment. Of course, one of these investment areas is Caspian-based projects.

At this point, it should be stated that; The UAE is an actor that cares about developing pragmatic relations with the Central Asian and Caucasian states. Of course, the energy factor plays a decisive role in these relations. Because, like Astana and Baku, Abu Dhabi expects UAE companies to take part in Caspian-based projects.

As a matter of fact, despite the fact that both Mr. Tokayev and Mr. Aliyev met with Nahyan on other issues that focused on bilateral relations, the successive visits of the leaders of the two states bordering the Caspian Sea to Abu Dhabi, in essence, focused on the Middle Corridor and This indicates that there is a search for cooperation, especially the energy dimension of which comes to the fore.

As a result, the UAE has been operating in the region with energy and economy-based collaborations since the past. It is understood that the most recent title of these cooperations, which are based on mutual respect and in which all parties have gained, are the projects related to the Caspian Sea. The visits of both Mr. Aliyev and Mr. Tokayev can be interpreted as the harbinger of serious developments in the Middle Corridor centered energy projects between the three actors.

[1] "KazMunayGas Chairman Meets with Azerbaijan's SOCAR President, Visits Batumi Oil Terminal", Astana Times, <https://astanatimes.com/2022/08/kazmunaygas-chairman-meets-with-azerbajians-socar-president-visits-batumi-oil-terminal/>, (Date of Accession: 18.01.2023).

[2] "Состоялась встреча Ильхама Алиева и Касым-Жомарта Токаева один на один", Vesti, <https://vesti.az/politika/sostoyalas-vstreca-ilxama-alieva-i-kasym-zomarta-tokaeva-odin-na-odin-470437>, (Date of Accession: 18.01.2023).

[3] "President İlham Aliyev: United Arab Emirates Transformed into World's One of most Stable, Developed and Successful Countries", APA, <https://apa.az/en/official-news/president-ilham-aliyev-united-arab-emirates-transformed-in-to-worlds-one-of-most-stable-developed-and-successful-countries-393861>, (Date of Accession: 18.01.2023).

[4] "Aliyev Went to Visit a Friend... to Create "Sustainable Development"", Aze. Media, <https://aze.media/aliyev-went-to-visit-a-friend-to-create-sustainable-development/>, (Date of Accession: 18.01.2023).



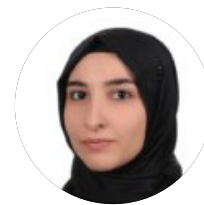
ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Taliban's Diplomatic Moves and Moscow Shift

Although the Taliban has been ruling Afghanistan since August 2021, it has not been recognized by any states. However, it establishes dialogue and communication with many states. The Taliban, who wants to increase interaction with all actors, especially neighboring countries and states in the nearby geography, tries to overcome the problem of recognition and legitimacy through cooperation. In this context, one of the countries that the Taliban tend to is

Russia.

During the second Taliban period, relations on the Taliban-Moscow line followed a fluctuating course. However, recently, it is seen that the Taliban have given constructive messages to Russia. On January 12, 2023, Taliban Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaki met with Zamir Kabulov, Russia's Special Envoy to Afghanistan. During



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the meeting, where bilateral relations and regional developments were discussed, Muttaki stated that Moscow has a special position in the foreign policy of the Taliban. He also stated that the Taliban administration wants to expand its diplomatic mission in Moscow.[1]

As known, the Taliban is not recognized by any countries. However, it tries to overcome this situation through diplomatic missions. The same request also was made to India. The Taliban are trying to persuade the Indian government to allow it to appoint a diplomatic representative in New Delhi.[2] However, it can be said that while the diplomatic missions in Kabul are under the threat of terrorism, the countries will not be willing to have the Taliban keep diplomatic missions in their own territory.

Currently, the so-called Emirate of Khorasan (ISKP) of the terrorist organization State of Iraq and the Levant (DAESH) has increased its anti-Russian propaganda activities. There were also attacks against the Russian and Pakistani diplomatic missions in Kabul. Therefore, Moscow will not allow DAESH to target its missions further. On the other hand, allowing the opening or expansion of a diplomatic representation can be accepted as a sign of recognition. But in the current conjuncture, no country will agree to this.

On the other hand, during the said meeting, Kabulov also condemned the terrorist attack that took place near the Taliban Ministry of Foreign Affairs recently and mentioned that the country should not be destabilized. At the same time, he stated that Moscow, unlike the West, does not want to criticize Afghanistan and interfere in its internal affairs and is against the isolation of Afghanistan.[3] These statements are very important in terms of demonstrating that the Taliban's presence in the international arena is supported. It could also be a message that the Taliban should not over-develop its relationship with the West. In other words, Moscow may be implying that if it treats the Taliban the way it wants, mutual satisfaction can be achieved. However, how to respond to the expansion of the diplomatic mission remains a question mark for now.

Despite the dialogue developed with the Taliban, it is understood from the relationship style that Moscow will not recognize the Taliban or take a step in this direction. The exclusion of the Taliban at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Leaders Summit held in Samarkand in September 2022 can be read as an indicator of this situation.

From the Taliban's point of view, Russia is seen as a substitute for the West. The Taliban follow a method that aims to establish a balance between the parties and to use the actors as alternatives to each other. There is a Taliban reality that tries to make concessions from Russia when communication with the West is increased, and from the West when closeness with Moscow is established.

At the regional level, it is possible to say that security problems and the threat of terrorism are factors that shape Russia-Taliban communication. On the other hand, factors such as Russia's demand for the release of Afghanistan's national reserves and blaming the West and the United States (US) for the insecurity problem in the region make the Taliban pay more attention to its ties with Moscow.

In addition, Russia is taking some steps within the scope of the Afghanistan Problem through international meetings which called "Moscow Format". Taliban officials were not invited to the last meeting held in November 2022, and this was an important message to the Taliban that they should pay attention to the protection of their communication with Moscow.

At this point, it can be said that the economic agreement with Russia is of great importance for the Taliban. As it will be remembered, in September 2022, it was announced that Russia would supply natural gas, oil and wheat to Afghanistan and an agreement was reached between the relevant parties. The aforementioned agreement is significant in that it is the first known major economic agreement of

the Taliban.[4] The Taliban interpreted this as “one more step towards recognition”. It is possible to say that the Taliban’s demand for a diplomatic mission was shaped by these steps. Another factor that makes Russia important for the Taliban is energy.

Considering all these aspects, it can be said that Moscow is seen as an important partner by the Taliban. Russia, which is isolated due to the war in Ukraine, also acts with the strategy of directing its resources to Asia. Even though the Kremlin is busy with the war, it also tries to play a decisive role within the scope of the Afghanistan Problem. Therefore, it uses the situation of the Taliban as an isolated actor in this sense.

In the final analysis, Moscow and the Taliban, two internationally isolated actors, act by measuring and using each other as balancing factors. It can be said that the Russian factor has an important effect on the communication of the Taliban with Central Asian countries, the West and the USA. On the other hand, the Taliban is trying to carry out a strategy that considers the West-Russia balance. It also wants to increase its visibility. Diplomatic missions requests to Russia and India are also important in this context. However, it does not seem possible to get results in this regard.

[1] “Russia Place is Special in Afghanistan’s Foreign Policy: Muttaqi”, Bakhtar News, <https://bakhtarnews.af/en/russia-place-is-special-in-afghanistans-foreign-policy-muttaqi/>, (Date of Accession: 13.01.2023).

[2] “Taliban Wants to Send Envoy to Delhi, Boost Ties Between India, Afghanistan”, First Post, <https://www.firstpost.com/world/taliban-wants-to-send-envoy-to-delhi-boost-ties-between-india-afghanistan-11972332.html>, (Date of Accession: 13.01.2023).

[3] “Russia Place...”, op. cit.



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Russia’s Purposes for Authorizing the Use of Druzhba

Since the Russo-Ukrainian War, relations between Europe and Russia have been severed. Within the scope of the sanctions imposed, Europe stopped buying energy from Russia and turned to new alternatives. In this process, the geographies where Europe concentrated were the Caucasus and Central Asia centered on the Caspian Basin. Particularly, high-level visits to the region has occurred from Germany.

In the relations developed between Central Asia and Europe, Kazakhstan has become one of the main actors due to its rich energy resources. The Astana administration also attached importance to the relations established to accelerate its economic development and invited Western investors to its country. On the other hand, the Astana ad-

ministration has also started to look for ways to transfer underground resources to the West. In this process, Kazakhstan, which turned to Azerbaijan, started to export energy through the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline.

Otherwise, the Astana administration, which wants to develop various alternative routes, wants to move Moscow to the south; that is, to the north using Russian pipelines against the desire to reach Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India; therefore, the administration gave the message that it wanted to reach Europe. As a matter of fact, after the talks on the Astana-Moscow line, a consensus was reached between the parties.

In this context, Kazakhstan will begin to send energy



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to Germany. In this process, the Druzhba Pipeline, which Europe has not sanctioned, will be used. In this context, Kazakhstan plans to send 20,000 tons of oil to Germany in January 2023; It was decided to increase the said amount to at least 1.5 million tons by the end of the year and, if necessary, to 7 million tons. Considering that Germany imported 20 million tons of oil from Russia in the pre-war period, the amount that Kazakhstan will send is at a level that will give Germany a breather, even if it does not save Germany from the energy crisis.[1]

At this point, it is a significant question why Russia has approved the shipment of Kazakh oil through Druzhba. Because the relations between the West and Russia are at the lowest levels in history. There is also an important security dilemma. The parties demonstrate a strong will to increase their military capabilities. Therefore, it can be said that the parties do not want to approve a development that will give each other a breather. But it is also clear that Moscow has different plans and goals.

With the approval of the Druzhba Pipeline, the Kremlin administration is sending a message that Europe still needs Russia for energy. Russia, which has turned energy into a trump card against the West, is trying to build a bloc through energy with the policies it implements today. Some countries are not warm to the bloc that Russia wants to establish within the scope of their national interests and independent foreign policies. Russia, on the other hand, aims to show that it still remains an effective actor through various energy routes. Considering that an energy sent from Central Asia passes through safe routes and at relatively low cost, it is understood that Russia is trying to give some messages through Druzhba.

However, although Russia wants to build a bloc on energy, it cannot get a clear answer even from the countries in its immediate geography. One of the most important examples of this is the "gas union" proposal offered to Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. Kazakhstan has not given a clear response and Uzbekistan has declared its opposition to the union. In the face of this situation, Russia may have consented to the use of Druzhba to convince Kazakhstan.

Currently, Russia wants to reach various markets, mainly India and China, through the cheapest and least risky routes. India, in particular, has recently become one of Russia's most important customers. Energy is already being sent to China via Kazakhstan. However, it is important that this is sustainable. At this point, the Moscow administration seems to have approved Kazakhstan's use of Russian pipelines for exports to Germany by approaching the issue through a win-win policy.

On the other hand, Russia's geopolitical importance has decreased due to the war in Ukraine. In particular, the closure of the Northern Corridor has led to the importance of lines such as the Middle Corridor. Therefore, it can be said that Russia is trying to increase its gains through the Druzhba Pipeline and to eliminate its lost geopolitical importance. In addition, Moscow aims to send a message to Europe through Druzhba that energy lines and corridors should not be included in the scope of sanctions and that this is in Europe's favor.

One of Russia's goals is to increase its influence in world politics, especially in the post-Soviet geography. The outbreak of the Russian-Ukrainian War and the serious losses of the Russian Army on the ground showed that the political, military and economic capacity of the country in question was not as high as thought. In other words, it can be said that Russia is seeking to maintain its influence through Druzhba.

In addition to all this, Russia is trying to make various cracking voices within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). One of the most important states that can be a candidate for this is Germany which argues that Europe should act more independently than the United States of America (USA). Because there is an important competition between Germany and European actors, such as Poland which adopts policies close to both the United States, and the United States. In order for the Berlin administration to implement its targeted policies and to have a strong hand against Washington, it needs to be able to act more independently on energy. Being aware of this, Russia is trying to provide Germany with an environment in which it can act more independently through Kazakh oil.

As a result, Russia is going through an extremely difficult period. However, it is looking for ways to maintain its power and influence with various policies it has developed. At this point, Moscow pays attention to use its trump cards as an effective tool. One of the latest examples of this is the export of Kazakh oil to Germany via the Druzhba Pipeline. With this policy, Moscow shows that it aims to maintain its influence especially in energy geopolitics. It also seeks to prove that sanctions on power lines are hurting Europe. Therefore, while Russia is trying to protect its economy, influence, and power; It is taking steps to deepen divisions within the West.

[1] Almaz Kumenov, "Kazakhstan to Send Oil to Germany via Russian Pipeline", Eurasianet, <https://eurasianet.org/kazakhstan-to-send-oil-to-germany-via-russian-pipeline>, (Date of Accession: 19.01.2022).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Seeking Strong Cooperation on the Astana–Abu Dhabi Line

Kazakhstan is a state that stands out with its reform processes among Central Asian countries. The most important aim of these reforms is to create a prosperous future for the Kazakh people. In this context, the Astana administration, which has taken liberalization steps, also attaches great importance to attracting foreign direct investment. On the other hand, Gulf countries are making investments in Central

Asia and gaining important economic gains within the framework of the relations they have developed with the countries of the region. Therefore, when we look at the relations between the Gulf countries and the Central Asian republics, it is seen that pragmatic cooperation based on mutual respect and shaped by a win-win logic has developed. In the nature of Kazakhstan–United Arab Emirates (UAE) rela-



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tions, there is a cooperation model that suits the interests of both sides. For this reason, the visit of the President of Kazakhstan, Kasım-
Cömert Tokayev to Abu Dhabi on 16-19 January 2023 is worth examining.[1]

Tokayev, who went to Abu Dhabi as the guest of UAE President Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan as part of the “Sustainable Develop-
ment Week”, first attended the event and then met with his UAE counterpart. In the meeting between the leaders, which took place in a
very constructive atmosphere, Tokayev said that Kazakhstan is ready and willing to produce and supply organic agricultural products
to the UAE market. In addition, Tokayev invited UAE companies to invest in his country, especially in the food industry.[2]

Nahyan, on the other hand, said that the strong UAE-Kazakhstan relations, which have been going on for more than 30 years, have
been strengthened since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 1992, due to the fact that they are
built on mutual understanding, and that the agreement signed in October 2021 to establish a long-term strategic partnership be-
tween the parties, especially in energy. trade, space etc. stated that it offers great opportunities in the fields.[3]

As it can be understood, both countries emphasize economic cooperation. In this context, in the meeting between the leaders, it was
emphasized that the trade volume in bilateral relations reached 600 million dollars in 2022 and the target of increasing this figure
to 1 billion dollars was adopted.[4] In addition to all these, nine different memorandums of understanding were signed between the
parties in order to improve relations on the Astana-Abu line. The signed documents are:[5]

- Joint Declaration on Strategic Investment Projects
- Memorandum of Understanding Between Kazakhstan Ministry of Industry and Infrastructure Development and UAE General Civil Avi-
ation Authority
- Agreement of Principles between the Kazakhstan Ministry of Energy and the Kazakhstan Investment Development Fund and the UAE
Masdar Company
- Cooperation Agreement between KIDF and Masdar Company
- Mutual Memorandum of Understanding Between the Ministry of Industry and Infrastructure Development of the Ports of Kazakhstan
and Abu Dhabi
- Strategic Cooperation Agreement Between KasMunaiGas of Kazakhstan and Abu Dhabi Ports
- Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation between the Ministry of Health of Kazakhstan and the Ministry of Health and Pre-
vention of the UAE on Cooperation in the Field of Health
- Mutual Memorandum of Understanding between the Kazakhstan Public Administration Academy and the UAE Anwar Gargash Diplo-
matic Academy
- Agreement between the Archives of the President of Kazakhstan and the UAE National Library and ArchivesWhen we look at the agree-
ments above, it can be said that the parties are determined to develop cooperation at the level of strategic partnership. In addition,
Masdar’s prominence indicates that UAE companies will come to the fore in the projects to be carried out regarding the renewable
energy sector in Kazakhstan. The cooperation and infrastructure projects between KasMunaiGas and Abu Dhabi Ports can be inter-
preted as a harbinger of the participation of UAE companies, including the Caspian Sea, in infrastructure investments, especially in
terms of energy. In the joint statement published after the meeting between the leaders, the following statements were included:[6]

“Reaffirming the importance of the fruitful economic partnership between the two countries, the parties expressed their intention to
further deepen the bilateral economic cooperation in line with the national interests. In particular, promising areas such as renewable
energy, food security, agriculture, mining, transport and logistics sectors, construction and cooperation between international financial
centers were discussed...

...The parties agreed on the deepening of cultural exchange, as well as the expansion of cooperation in the fields of tourism, sports,
education, science and health, the rapprochement of the peoples, the deepening of mutual understanding between them, the mutual
enrichment of cultures and the development of bilateral relations.”

As can be understood from the aforementioned statement, Kazakhstan-UAE relations have a multidimensional structure. It is clear that
the driving dynamic of these relations is commercial relations. However, the parties also desire to increase the interaction between the
peoples and strengthen the bonds of love through fields such as culture, education, sports, science and health. All these issues reveal
that the relations on the Astana-Abu Dhabi line have a tendency to develop and deepen.

As a result, Tokayev visited Abu Dhabi on 16-19 January 2023 and attended the “Sustainable Development Week” event and met with his
UAE counterpart, Nahyan. The meeting of the two leaders resulted in the signing of nine memorandums of understanding between the
parties, demonstrating the determination of both countries to develop relations. It can be said that the economy is the driving force
in these relations. Because Kazakhstan invests; The UAE, on the other hand, is in search of a market. Therefore, there is a pragmatic
relationship between the parties that prioritizes mutual interests. However, bilateral relations are not limited to economic cooperation.
Because both Astana and Abu Dhabi; education, science, culture, etc. to strengthen interaction in areas as well, and therefore not only
states; He also wants to build bridges between people.

- [1] “Kazakh President Arrives in UAE for Official Visit”, Astana Times, <https://astanatimes.com/2023/01/kazakh-president-ar-rives-in-uae-for-official-visit/>, (Date of Accession: 18.01.2023).
- [2] “President Tokayev’s Visit to UAE: Focus on Increased Business and Investment Ties”, KazInform, https://www.inform.kz/en/president-tokayev-s-visit-to-uae-focus-on-increased-business-and-investment-ties_a4024843, (Date of Accession: 18.01.2023).
- [3] “UAE and Kazakh Presidents Discuss Bilateral Relations”, WAM, <http://wam.ae/en/details/1395303119943>, (Date of Accession: 18.01.2023).
- [4] “President Tokayev’s Visit...”, op.cit.
- [5] “President of Kazakhstan Visits UAE-Nine Documents Signed-Joint Statement Issued”, New Central Asia, <https://www.newscentralasia.net/2023/01/18/president-of-kazakhstan-visits-uae-nine-documents-signed-joint-statement-issued/>, (Date of Accession: 18.01.2023).
- [6] Ibid.

STRATEGY FOR A FREE, PEACEFUL, AND PROSPEROUS INDO-PACIFIC REGION



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

The Place of the North Pacific Region in South Korea's Indo-Pacific Strategy Document

South Korea's Asia-Pacific Strategy Document was published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of South Korea on December 28, 2022 with the title "Free, Peaceful and Prosperous Indo-Pacific Region".^[1] The document consists of a total of 4 chapters and 43 pages. The aforementioned document is very important in terms of showing South Korea's Indo-Pacific strategy, current situation in the region, threat perceptions, bilateral relations with actors, political stance, targets, forecasts, determinations, alliances and geopolitical and geoeconomic perspectives of South Korea. As a matter of fact, in the last part of the second part of the document titled "Vision, Cooperation Principles and Regional Scope", regional-based

strategies are discussed. At this point, the evaluation made on the North Pacific region is important both in terms of South Korea's regional attitude and the general framework of the region.

The analysis of the document over the North Pacific begins with the inference that South Korea is geographically located in the region, and therefore the North Pacific has a significant importance for the Seoul administration.

At this point, the fact that South Korea places more emphasis on this region than other regions



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in the document shows that the Seoul Government generally puts its center-periphery relationship and its own security perceptions in the foreground within the framework of a free, peaceful and prosperous Indo-Pacific strategy.

In the document, it was emphasized that bilateral and multilateral agreements with the states of the region on the basis of mutual benefit should be deepened. From this point of view, it can be thought that South Korea does not have the capacity to deal with states such as North Korea and China, which it perceives as threats in the region, on its own. Currently, Seoul attaches great importance to the military exercises it organizes with the United States (US) and Japan, as North Korea's nuclear power makes the security framework of the region fragile.

However, it can be said that Seoul's expression of the need to develop bilateral relations with other capitals aims to both soften the conflict environment and prevent possible conflicts by building both regional security and interdependence. In addition, the emphasis on collective effort can be read as the West, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and especially the USA wants to expand their alliance in the Indo-Pacific region and Seoul has a positive approach to this.

At the same time, South Korea emphasized in the document that its alliance relations with the United States would be strengthened. In fact, both actors maintain a strong dialogue in the foreign policy production processes on the basis of the "common enemy" and common goals in the region. However, South Korea demonstrates a will to further deepen the cooperation. This can be interpreted as Seoul's need for the support of the West within the framework of regional security.

South Korea, which has shown a serious will for the development of alliance with the USA, emphasizes common values such as democracy, human rights and the rule of law. This situation and the stated values also reinforce the Western perspective that South Korea has already adopted.

In addition to all these, it is clearly stated in the document that the concept of "liberal democracy" lies at the basis of the alliance with the USA. As a matter of fact, it is known that the new world order led by the USA and NATO after the Cold War was established within the framework of the "liberal democracy" of the West. This means that South Korea is positioned within the framework of Western values, both ideologically and geopolitically. At this stage, it can be stated that the main aim of South Korea is to get the support of the West

against the threats originating from North Korea through values such as democracy and human rights.

On the other hand, it was underlined in the document that an important pillar of the alliance with the USA is the position in technology production, economy and supply chains. In addition, it has been said that the union with the USA and Japan is not only caused by the threat of North Korea, but also covers many other areas of cooperation. It can be argued that Seoul is trying to ensure the permanence of the alliance through those statements.

In the last part of the document, it is stated that the cooperation developed with Japan in the context of common values will be deepened. It has also been said that more mature relations with China will be established in the context of reciprocity and compliance with international law. In addition to all these, it was mentioned that cooperation with Canada, Mongolia and other countries based on mutual interest would be developed.

At this point, mentioning the name of Japan and emphasizing that cooperation will be developed can be claimed to be an effort by Seoul to prevent Tokyo's increased defense expenditures from harming the regional alliance. However, mentioning the names of countries such as Canada and Mongolia can be evaluated as South Korea does not want to overlook any actor and attaches importance to all states in line with its regional and global welfare goals. On the other hand, the emphasis on international law towards China is very important. However, it was also stated that relations with China would be matured. From this point of view, it can be argued that South Korea will try to keep the channels of dialogue with China open.

As a result, the Seoul administration has attached special importance to the North Pacific Region in the strategy document it has published. It can be stated that this importance stems from the dangers felt by South Korea in this region.

[1] "Strategy for a Free, Peaceful and Prosperous Indo-Pacific Region", Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Korea, <https://www.mofa.go.kr/viewer/skin/doc.html?fn=20221228060752073.pdf&rs=/viewer/result/202212>, (Date of Accession: 08.01.2023).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Russia's Reaction to the Integration Process of Moldova into the EU

Located in Eastern Europe, Moldova is one of the former Eastern Bloc countries. Moldova, which has Romania to the west and Ukraine to the east, are of great importance in terms of the geopolitics of the region. This leads to a struggle of influence between the West and Russia over Moldova.

In this context, it is worth mentioning what instruments Moscow used against Chisinau. Most of the population of Moldova belongs to the Orthodox sect of Christianity. The Metropolitan of Moldova, which is also affiliated to the Moscow Patriarchate and is one of the two Orthodox churches in Moldova, is the largest church in the country. The other Orthodox church in the country is the Metropolitan of Basarabya, which



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is affiliated with the Romanian Orthodox Church. However, it is claimed that 85% of the Orthodox in Moldova belong to the Metropolitan of Moldova of the Russian Orthodox Church.[1] Therefore, Orthodoxy is one of the elements that ensure the continuation of Moscow's influence on Chisinau.

Moreover, the "Transnistrian Question" between the two states plays an important role in shaping the future of relations. Transnistria, located on the Moldova-Ukraine border, declared its unilateral separation from Moldova in 1992. However, the Kshinev administration does not accept this separation request.

In this context, the region stands out with its Russian-backed separatist structure. Furthermore, Moldova's dependence on Russian natural gas to a large extent has been another instrument used by Moscow on Chisinau. Moldova is dependent on Russian gas and electricity from the separatist region of Transnistria. This shows how important Transnistria is for Moscow. Russia can both exert military pressure and use its energy weapon against Moldova through the region. In other words, Orthodoxy, energy and the Transnistrian Question play a decisive role in increasing Moscow's influence over Chisinau.

Moreover, the separatist Tiraspol administration has long made it clear that Transnistria is Russian and will one day be officially recognized. The presence of 1,500 Russian troops in Transnistria since 1992 has led to the strengthening of Moscow's position in the region. It is possible to argue that these units consist of two components. These are the "peacekeeping unit" that has been in the region for three decades and the Russian troops guarding the Soviet-era ammunition depot in the Transnistrian village of Cobasna, 2 km from the Ukrainian border.[2]

Cobasna, which is said to be protected by about 1,500 Russian soldiers, is claimed to be home to the largest arsenal in Europe. Currently, this arsenal stores approximately 20,000 tonnes of weapons and ammunition, 57% of which are unusable or untransportable. Access to the area controlled by the Transnistrian administration and the "Russian peacekeeping force" is strictly prohibited.[3] Therefore, Russia's military presence in Transnistria is extremely important in terms of increasing its influence in both Moldova and Eastern European geopolitics. Furthermore, Moscow has the opportunity to directly threaten Kiev on the occasion of the region.

In particular, the Russia-Ukraine War, which began on February 24, 2022, has increased Moldova's desire to join the European Union (EU). Moldova has been the scene of the struggle of pro-Russian and pro-Western governments in the country for many years. In this respect, Moldova's official application for EU membership after the start of the war can be interpreted as a remarkable development. As a result of the war, the threat that Moldova perceives from Russia has increased. In this respect, the Chisinau administration has started to follow a policy aimed at strengthening its ties with Western international organizations. Therefore, it would not be wrong to say that the power struggle over Moldova has developed in favor of the EU with the war. In this context, Moldova applied for EU membership on March, 3 2022. On June 23, 2022, the EU granted Moldova as well as Ukraine the status of a "candidate country." [4]

As can be understood, the war has created a domino effect in the process of Moldova's accession to the union. Moldova refrained from taking steps towards the EU until the war in Ukraine began. Chisinau's energy dependence on Moscow also played an important role in this. However, with the war, the conjuncture in Europe changed and Moldova has taken the path of integration with the EU due to the threat it perceives from Russia. In particular, the fact that the EU granted Ukraine and Moldova candidate status on the same date was in a sense a message to Russia.

On the other hand, Russia's reaction to the EU's decision has been harsh. Russian Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova warned that the granting of EU candidacy status to Moldova on June, 24 2022 would have negative consequences. Zakharova also argued that the decision was taken within the framework of the containment of Russia.[5]

Nevertheless, on July 22, 2022, Vitaly Ignatyev, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Transnistrian administration, expressed his determination to ensure the independence of Transnistria and possible unification with Russia, and stated that Moldova's becoming a "candidate country" for the EU ended all possibility of cooperation.[6]

In this context, it is seen that the relations on the Moscow-Chisinau line have been strained with Moldova's EU process. However, it should be underlined that Moldova does not consider membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), although they are different types of institutions. In this respect, Moldova wants to realize its integration with the West through the EU.

On the other hand, Moldovan President Maia Sandu stated on December 29, 2022 that her country wants to achieve EU membership by 2030.[7] Given the war conjuncture in Europe, it can be foreseen that Brussels may accelerate Moldova's accession process to the union. Thus, the EU will both take an important step towards the enlargement of the union towards Eastern Europe and try to make Chisinau implement the reforms it wants to take place in the country.

In conclusion, it can be predicted that the power struggle between the West and Russia over Moldova will continue. Unlike Ukraine, Moldova wants to ensure its integration with the West through the EU without bringing NATO membership to the agenda. With this policy, Chisinau wants to reduce the reactions that may come to it from Moscow.

[1] "Moldova's Orthodox Churches Quietly Divided", Religion Watch, <https://www.religionwatch.com/moldovas-orthodox-churches-quietly-divided/>, (Date of Accession: 14.01.2023).

[2] "Ukraine War Risks Repercussions for Transnistria", Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, <https://carnegieendowment.org/politika/87986>, (Date of Accession: 14.01.2023).

[3] "The Largest Illegal Arms Depot in Eastern Europe", Arnika, <https://www.arnika.org/en/hotspots/moldova/the-largest-illegal-arms-depot-in-eastern-europe>, (Date of Accession: 14.01.2023).

[4] "Moldova", European Council Council of the European Union, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/enlargement/moldova/>, (Date of Accession: 14.01.2023).

[5] "Russia says EU candidate Status for Ukraine, Moldova Will Have Negative Consequences", Reuters, <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/russia-eu-candidate-status-ukraine-moldova-will-have-negative-consequences-2022-06-24/>, (Date of Accession: 14.01.2023).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Japan's Gains from G7 Visits

Since Japan will hold the Presidency of the Group of Seven (G7) Summit, which will take place in Hiroshima in May 2023, Japanese Prime Minister Fumiyo Kishida met with the leaders of the G7 member countries. Within the scope of the trip, which took place between 9-13 January, Kishida visited France, Italy and the United Kingdom in Europe, and Canada and the United States of America (USA) in North America. Kishida left the talks with many gains for Tokyo.

The first of Japan's gains was in the field of security. Kishida, who first met with French President Emmanuel Macron, agreed to increase cooperation on the security front and to hold "2+2" security talks between diplomatic and defense chiefs.[1]

Similarly, British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, US President Joe Biden and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau have agreed to expand their



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defense cooperation with Japan. In recent years, Japan has tended to increase its security measures in the Asia-Pacific Region due to the threat perceptions centered on China and North Korea. Increasing its defense expenditures and modernizing its army in domestic politics, Japan is trying to gain international support by expanding its defense partners in foreign policy.

Within the framework of security measures, the agreement between Japan and the USA to cooperate in space is also an issue that the Tokyo administration leaves the table with profit. Japan, which does not have a long experience in the space industry, has been in close contact with the USA, which is more experienced in this field and considered as the space giant in the 21st century. The space studies carried out by Japan with the USA have progressed towards the use of space for civilian purposes, especially scientific research. However, the conclusion of a security-based space agreement between the parties in the last meeting is an expression of Japan's leaving from the civil space policy it has followed so far due to regional security concerns.

In addition to security, Kishida gathered support for Ukraine during the negotiations, demonstrating the value he attaches to human rights and international law, and thus succeeded in gaining the tolerance of the international public. Kishida conveyed to G7 partners that strict sanctions against Russia for its invasion of Ukraine will be strengthened and strong support for Ukraine will be continued with determination.[2] Besides, Kishida's words "East Asia could be next Ukraine"[3] point to the high of Japan's threat perception.

Energy security is another area that Kishida has gain. When the energy outlook of Japan is analyzed, it is seen that liquefied natural gas (LNG) ranks first in energy consumption with 31,7%. In fact, in 2022, Japan broke new ground in its history as the world's largest LNG importer. Russia ranks first in Japan's LNG imports with a rate of approximately 10%.[4] Japan, which is highly dependent on Russia for LNG purchase, wants to reduce this dependency and ensure energy security by establishing different energy partnerships. In this regard, Kishida asked the USA and Canada to assist Japan in LNG. He stated that LNG from the USA and Canada and their cooperation for clean energy will play an important role in Japan's energy security.[5]

It is seen that Japanese Prime Minister Kishida has also made gains in the field of economy and trade within the framework of his visits. In particular, the USA and Canada expressed their desire to strengthen economic ties with Japan. Canadian Prime Minister Trudeau announced that there will be mutual visits between the delegations in 2023.[6] The USA, on the other hand, underlined the importance of close economic relations between the USA and Japan in such a period, drawing attention to the difficulty of maintaining the global supply chain safely due to the problems caused by the Russia-Ukraine War and technology trade with China.[7] Japan, the world's 3rd largest economy, attaches importance to the strengthening of its economic and commercial ties with the world's largest economy, the USA, for the continuity of its economic security and the sustainability of its country's development at a time of global difficulties.

As a result, Japan sees the G7 Presidency as an opportunity to improve its relations with the G7 countries. At this point, although it highlights security-based cooperation, it can be stated that Tokyo's aim is to develop its relations with its allies in a multidimensional way.

[1] "Kishida Kicks off G-7 Tour in France, Preparing for May Summit", Nikkei Asia, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/Kishida-kicks-off-G-7-tour-in-France-preparing-for-May-summit>, (Date of Accession: 15.01.2023).

[2] "Kishida Highlights Cooperation with France on G7 Hiroshima Summit", NHK, https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/20230110_04/, (Date of Accession: 15.01.2023).

[3] "Japan PM: East Asia Could Be Next Ukraine", VOA, <https://www.voanews.com/a/kishida-says-g7-should-show-strong-will-on-russia-s-ukraine-invasion/6918474.html>, (Date of Accession: 15.01.2023).

[4] "Japan LNG Supply Chain Developments", International Trade Administration, <https://www.trade.gov/market-intelligence/japan-lng-supply-chain-developments#:~:text=After%20being%20passed%20by%20China,from%20Russian%20suppliers%20this%20year>, (Date of Accession: 15.01.2023).

[5] "Japan's Kishida Talks LNG with US, Canada", Energy Intelligence, <https://www.energyintel.com/00000185-ad0a-de58-a3ef-fddb-2bc70000>, (Date of Accession: 15.01.2023).

[6] "Japanese PM Fumio Kishida Visits Ottawa to Discuss Economy, Trade, China and Russia", CBC, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/kishida-trudeau-ottawa-visit-1.671153>, (Date of Accession: 15.01.2023).

[7] "Biden and Kishida Vow to Bolster U.S.-Japan Alliance as China's Power Grows", NY Times, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/13/us/politics/biden-kishida-japan.html>, (Date of Accession: 15.01.2023).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Is a New Era Beginning on the Moscow-Taliban Line?

After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the Taliban asked Russia for help because the United States of America (USA) intervened in Afghanistan within the framework of "Operation Enduring Freedom"; But Moscow turned down the Taliban's request. Even at the first stage, Russia supported the American intervention. However, the fact that the US did not withdraw from Afghanistan after overthrowing the Taliban, and especially in 2014, when the terrorist organization Daesh al-Iraq and al-Sham (DEAS)

began to pose a threat to Russia by operating in the north of Afghanistan, the Moscow administration decided against the Taliban. led him to establish a relationship with

As a matter of fact, it can be stated that Russia's support played a decisive role in the start of the second Taliban era from Afghanistan in August 2021. In this process, Russia welcomed the second Taliban period and gave positive messages by keeping the Kabul Embassy open.



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With the effect of the situation in question, Russia and the Taliban developed good relations in the first stage. In this context, Russia accredited the Taliban diplomats and handed over the Afghan Embassy in Moscow to the Taliban. In the eyes of the international community, the Kremlin administration has given messages that will be welcomed by the Taliban. For example, Russia states that the US should release Afghanistan's national reserves and advocates that the Taliban should not be isolated from the international community. Moreover, by inviting the Taliban to the Moscow Format held in 2021, Russia tried to act as a bridge for the Taliban to establish dialogue with other actors.

Despite all this, the developments that took place after the leader of the terrorist organization Al-Qaeda, Ayman Al-Zawahiri, was neutralized by means of an air operation in Afghanistan's capital, Kabul, disturbed Moscow. First of all, the killing of Zawahiri has created the idea that the USA is still very powerful in Afghanistan in terms of intelligence and operation. In addition, the deaths of two Russian diplomats in the suicide attack organized by DAESH in front of the Russian Embassy in Kabul and the efforts of the Taliban to establish relations with the USA and its Western allies without consulting the regional states also created dissatisfaction in Russia. In particular, the contacts of the Taliban officials with the US officials in Doha and Abu Dhabi negatively affected Moscow's approach to the Taliban.

These developments strengthened the opinion of the Russian decision makers that the USA's surrender of Afghanistan to the Taliban was a ruse, and strengthened the idea that the Washington administration was planning developments that would destabilize Russia through Central Asia. Therefore, the statements from the Moscow administration contained sentences criticizing the Taliban, and Russia did not invite Taliban officials to the Moscow Format meeting held in 2022.

At a time when relations between Western countries, especially the USA, and the Taliban were tense, Russia's Afghanistan Representative Zamir Kabulov visited Afghanistan. Meeting with Taliban Foreign Minister Emir Khan Muttaki, Kabulov said that Russia has a special position in the foreign policy of the Taliban and that the Taliban wants to strengthen its diplomatic presence in Moscow. During the meeting, it was explained that issues such as bilateral relations, regional developments and the Taliban's wheat and natural gas imports from Russia were discussed. In addition, Kabulov condemned the attack that took place in front of the Taliban Foreign Ministry and stated that some actors wanted to make Afghanistan insecure.

As can be understood, Muttaki gave the message that he would focus on regional states such as Russia and China, based on the fact that it is difficult for the Taliban to repair their relations with the West. It is not easy for the Taliban to meet the conditions expected by the West.

On the other hand, Kabulov clearly conveyed Russia's expectations to the Taliban Foreign Minister. The remarkable point here is that the Russian diplomat declared that they would not interfere in Afghanistan's internal affairs. According to Kabulov, Russia's priority is to prevent Western actors from returning to Afghanistan. Therefore, for the Kremlin, the management style of the Taliban is an internal matter of Afghanistan and does not concern them. However, it is important that the Taliban do not weaken. In fact, natural gas and wheat supplies are also considered within the scope of preventing the weakening of the Taliban. By procuring these materials, it is aimed to eliminate the internal legitimacy debates in Afghanistan and to increase the living standard of the people to some extent. In addition to all these, Kabulov gave the message that Russia would support the Taliban in international platforms.

As a result, the meeting between Muttaki and Kabulov opened the door to the beginning of a new era between the parties. Because the Taliban could not achieve the desired results from its rapprochement with the West and turned to the region again. Russia, on the other hand, revealed that its priority is to limit the influence of the USA and its allies in Afghanistan.



STRATEGY FOR A FREE, PEACEFUL, AND PROSPEROUS INDO-PACIFIC REGION



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

The Place of Southeast Asia and ASEAN in South Korea's Indo-Pacific Strategy Document

The strategy document, which is expected to be published by South Korea at the end of 2022 and which is important in terms of showing the country's strategy regarding the region, was published on December 28, 2022 with the name "Free, Peaceful and Prosperous Indo-Pacific Region".[1] This document, published on the official website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of South Korea, consists of a total of 4 chapters and 43 pages. The document is important in terms of reflecting Seoul's strategy, security framework, alliance relations, cyclical perspective, objectives, determinations, foresights, geoeconomic and geopolitical view and general perception of foreign policy towards the region. As a matter of fact, in the last part of the

second part of the document titled "Vision, Principles of Cooperation and Regional Scope", regional-based strategies are discussed. At this point, the assessment made on the Southeast Asian Region and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is worth examining both in terms of South Korea's attitude and the general framework of the region, including an important economic organization of the region.

The relevant section of the document begins by emphasizing that ASEAN is both South Korea's second largest trading partner with a share of \$176.5 billion and the second largest investment destination with a share of \$10 bil-



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lion. After that, it was stated that 10 million South Korean citizens visit ASEAN countries annually and ASEAN is one of the biggest development cooperation partners of Seoul. At this point, it can be said that ASEAN is an important economic actor for the region. As a matter of fact, South Korea's detailed mention of ASEAN both in the title and in the introduction shows the importance that Seoul attaches to economic interests and interdependence within the scope of regional prosperity and peace. In addition to this, it can be stated that because of the fact that "interdependence" is a Western-based discourse, Seoul displays a Western approach within the scope of regional stability.

Later, it was said that South Korea considers ASEAN as a key actor in ensuring regional peace and establishing prosperity, and then it was stated that responsibilities will be shared by both actors at the regional level and comprehensive cooperation will be established strategically, including both trade and socio-economic factors. This can be read as South Korea may want to develop bilateral cooperation with other countries in ASEAN and direct these countries to Western-based cooperation within the scope of regional prosperity and peace. Therefore, Seoul seems to be in a desire to increase its allies against Beijing and Pyongyang. Because South Korea believes that other regional actors should also take responsibility in the context of security.

In this context, the places mentioned in the following section, where almost every country's name is tried to be mentioned, also confirms the determination in the upper paragraph. Because, "Special Strategic Partnership" with Indonesia, "Comprehensive Strategic Partnership" with Vietnam, "Strategic Partnership" agreements with Thailand and many other cooperation agreements with Cambodia, Myanmar, Laos, Brunei, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, and Timor-Leste are planned. It was also emphasized that mutual ties will be strengthened by signing bilateral agreements for a free, peaceful and prosperous Indo-Pacific Region. Trying to include the names of each country in this document means that South Korea does not want to overlook any actor and attaches importance to all states in line with the goal of regional and global welfare.

Then, the strategy determined for ASEAN's place in the Indo-Pacific Region is mentioned. ASEAN is expected to play a key role in promoting cooperation in the region in terms of openness, transparency and inclusiveness, according to the strategy called "ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP)". From this point of view, it is underlined that ASEAN will fight resolutely to ensure peace, freedom and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific and South Asian Regions. At this point, it was mentioned that South Korea will support both the AOIP strategy and the centrality of ASEAN in line with the targets. This situation is indicative of Seoul's pursuit of Western-based cooperation, since ASEAN was established within the framework of

Western values against the communist expansion resulting from the Vietnam War. In the following part, it was said that by harmonizing South Korea's own strengths and ASEAN's needs, a mutual and solid-based cooperation with the organization will be built. As a matter of fact, it was emphasized that the cooperation in question would focus on digitalization, climate change, environment and health.

At this point, at a time when the scope of security in the region is beginning to change, cooperation with ASEAN will not only be considered in the context of the traditional security framework of the Korean Peninsula and the South China Sea; it was also stated that it would be implemented in the context of economic security, maritime security and other possible security concerns.

In the last part of the section on the region, it was stated that in addition to the mutual and well-founded cooperation between ASEAN and South Korea, bilateral relations with the states within ASEAN will be expanded. It has been said that these cooperations have continued for years, both politically and economically, and it has been emphasized that these relations will be carried to higher levels and taken to a new dimension on the basis of solidarity with cultural exchanges between people.

It is thought that this situation will contribute to the common goals of Seoul and ASEAN in the Indo-Pacific. Therefore, it can be said that South Korea emphasizes soft power and while expressing the conventional and nuclear threats it feels in the region, it draws attention that it will not pose such a threat. It can be argued that it is trying to convey the message that collaborations, alliances and dialogues, even if only on the basis of interests, will be tried to be established through soft power, public diplomacy and cultural diplomacy efforts. This indicates that Seoul aims to both inspire confidence and become a point of attraction.

As a result, the part of the document titled "Southeast Asia and ASEAN" put forward strategies for ASEAN rather than Southeast Asia. As a matter of fact, South Korea emphasized collective effort over ASEAN and gave the message that every actor should share responsibility in the sub-text of its regional strategy. This situation can also be read as the West wants to expand its alliance in the Indo-Pacific region. However, this document in question shows that Seoul supports multilateralism. As a matter of fact, in this part, it is possible to state that an approach based on the West and challenging the regional hegemony of China is exhibited.

[1] "Strategy for a Free, Peaceful and Prosperous Indo-Pacific Region", Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Korea, <https://www.mofa.go.kr/viewer/skin/doc.html?fn=20221228060752073.pdf&rs=/viewer/result/202212>, (Date of Accession: 08.01.2023).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Balance Policy of Germany: China and Japan

According to a source in the Japanese government, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz plans to visit Tokyo in March 2023.[1] The meetings between the delegations, which will also be attended by ministers, are expected to address a range of issues, from the energy and food crisis to the economy and global developments. The fact that Scholz plans to visit Tokyo this time after his visit to Beijing in November 2022 reveals

that Germany is in a dilemma in foreign policy and follows a policy of balance.

It is claimed that the Berlin administration has not been able to reach a consensus on the China issue and therefore has difficulty in developing policies. This uncertainty in Berlin's view of Beijing also negatively affects German Japanese relations. Cause Tokyo is trying to



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unite the G7 countries around itself in the fight against China in 2023. But among the bloc members, Germany's position differs from that of other actors. On the one hand, Scholz stated that cooperation with China is inevitable and that they will continue the dialogue; Moreover, the German Foreign Ministry is preparing a new strategy document that will limit the economic relations of German companies with China.

Germany is taking steps to struggle China, especially pointing out that it will give more support to actors such as the United States of America (USA), Britain and Japan. But at the same time that the problems with China must be resolved peacefully, that this is not a military issue like in Ukraine; on the contrary, it states that there is an economic dispute.[2]In short, the Berlin administration argues that Beijing's increasing claims against the international order constitute an economic problem and that it is wrong to solve the Taiwan Problem by military means.[3]

In saying this, Germany takes into account the war in Ukraine. As it is known, Berlin is discussing withdrawing its military support to Ukraine. The United States and Britain are pressuring Germany to continue this support. Berlin, on the other hand, is looking for a way out of both Ukraine and China. The G7 countries give Germany only one way out: to be hostile to China. After its last contacts with China in November 2022, US pressure on Germany increased and forced Berlin to change policy.

While this uncertainty in Chinese politics continues, the transition of the G7 Presidency to Japan has been an important opportunity for Germany to review its policies. Because in the recent period, Tokyo has been making radical outbursts on both Ukraine and China. Berlin approaches the solution of these problems more peacefully.

By comparison, Germany urges G7 members to remain calm; Japan, by contrast, urges these countries to be proactive. Therefore, if Germany wants to prevent a crisis with China from breaking out, it will first have to calm Japan down. Because Tokyo plans to use the G7 Presidency for this purpose. Berlin is trying to increase its dialogue with Japan because it sees this danger.

As it will be remembered, after taking over, Scholz made his first visit to Asia, not to China, but to Japan. This step was interpreted as Germany giving up on China and would move closer to Japan from now on. Before long, however, Scholz saw that Japan could not be an alternative to China and decided to continue cooperating with Beijing. After seeing Scholz's contacts with Beijing in recent months, Tokyo has begun to distance itself from Berlin. Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida even missed Germany when he went on a European tour to visit the G7 countries. Kishida also cited the overlap of programs as the reason for this. But if desired, a meeting could have been arranged between Kishida and Scholz. It is likely that Kishida did not make or did not want to make a suitable plan to visit Germany.

Whatever happened during this time, it was announced that Scholz was planning to go to Tokyo. It seems that; Germany, and Scholz in particular, is under intense pressure from the United States to fight China. The same applies to the Russo-Ukrainian War. German Defense Minister Christine Lambrecht, who has announced that they will not provide more arms to Ukraine, recently announced her resignation.[4] Potentially that Scholz demanded the resignation of the Secretary of Defense as a result of intense pressure from the United States.

Similarly, Germany is now preparing a new strategy to struggle China, and Scholz is preparing to visit Tokyo to further align itself with the G7 countries. It seems that; The United States wants Germany to give more support to the G7. Therefore, it can be argued that the pressure from Washington was effective in Scholz's visit to Tokyo. Although Germany tries to separate itself from the US policy on China, it fails to do so.

As expected, Scholz will try to reduce his differences with Japan during this visit. Berlin's main aim is to prevent new crises from emerging in the world. Accordingly, Germany meets with both China and Japan and invites the parties to peace and dialogue. Beijing's concern is that Germany will join other Western powers by returning to the politics of polarization.[5] Japan, by contrast, is worried that a rift could form within the G7 due to Germany's incompatibility with China.

As a result, while the polarization in the global system continues, Germany is trying to reduce this tension by pursuing a policy of balance. In this way, the Berlin administration is trying to ensure its economic security. China has been Germany's largest trading partner for the past seven years. Japan is also Germany's second largest trading partner in Asia. In addition, Germany is one of the world's largest automakers and relies heavily on chips manufactured in Taiwan, China, and Japan to maintain this position. In fact, these additions apply to the whole world. In this sense, Germany, which has learned from Ukraine, seems to do its best to prevent a new crisis that will drag it down economically.

[1] "German Leader Scholz Plans to Visit Japan in March", Japan Today, <https://japantoday.com/category/politics/german-leader-scholz-plans-to-visit-japan-in-march>, (Date of Accession: 18.01.2023).

[2] "Germany Will Not Arm Taiwan, Senior Lawmaker Says", US News, <https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2023-01-11/germany-will-not-arm-taiwan-senior-lawmaker-says>, (Date of Accession: 18.01.2023).

[3] "Germany's Scholz Tells China: Any Change in Taiwan's Status Quo Must Be Peaceful", US News, <https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2022-11-04/germanys-scholz-tells-china-any-change-in-taiwans-status-quo-must-be-peaceful>, (Date of Accession: 18.01.2023).

[4] "Almanya Savunma Bakanı Lambrecht İstifasını Sundu", DW, <https://www.dw.com/tr/almanya-savunma-bakan%C4%B1-lambrecht-istifas%C4%B1n%C4%B1-sundu/a-64403342>, (Date of Accession: 18.01.2023).

[5] "Germany's Ideology-Driven China Policy Not in Interests of Either Side: Chinese Ambassador", Global Times, <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202301/1283496.shtml>, (Date of Accession: 18.01.2023).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

Germany's "Ukraine Dilemma" and Strained Relations with the US

Germany has only one condition for sending its "Leopard 2" tanks to Ukraine: The United States (US) must also agree to send its tanks. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz argues that the decision to provide more arms to Ukraine should be taken in cooperation between the allied states. The German Defense Minister Christine Lambrecht shared this view and was forced to resign under pressure. Her replacement, Boris Pistorius, is expected to stick to Scholz's line.

The Scholz government states that it will support Ukraine "as long as it is deemed necessary." Since the beginning of the war, Berlin has been reluctant to provide Ukraine with military equipment. Scholz's coalition partners, on

the other hand, demanded that German tanks of the 'Leopard 2' type be sent to Ukraine immediately and pressured Pistorius and Scholz to do so. Scholz and like-minded members of the Social Democratic Party argue that Germany does not have enough 'Leopard 2' tanks and would not risk its national security by spending its stocks on this war.

The US, especially under Donald Trump, has demanded that European members bring their defence spending to at least 2% of their budgets in exchange for greater support for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). In other words, the US said that it could not bear the cost of protecting Eu-



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rope alone and that Europe had to strengthen its defences. In the process, Washington even began to reduce the number of its troops in Germany. In February 2022, with the outbreak of war in Ukraine, the number of American troops in Germany increased again.

The war in Ukraine increased Germany's military dependence on the US. At some point, however, Berlin realized it was in a stalemate in Ukraine and began reducing its already reluctant arms support to Kyiv. In this respect, Germany began to diverge from this Western coalition of war against Russia. Recall that in December 2022, Scholz wrote in Foreign Affairs magazine that the world should avoid dividing into Cold War-style "blocs." [1]

The US pressure on Germany in the Russian-Ukrainian War is similar to the US pressure on Germany in its Pacific and China policies. Indeed, Scholz's government is as concerned about the outbreak of a new crisis in Taiwan as it is about the end of the war in Ukraine. For example, during his visit to Beijing in November 2022, Scholz spoke about the danger of blocization and reiterated his support for multipolarity. Thus, Berlin sent a clear message that it would not follow Washington's "polarizing" policies in the Pacific.

Seeing that the US is engaged in a showdown with Russia and China through NATO and that this has turned into an escalation race with the Russian-Ukrainian War, Germany is trying to get out of the maelstrom into which it has been dragged. Due to issues such as Ukraine and China, Germany-US relations are characterized by a cold atmosphere.

Negotiations between German and US officials to discuss the future of military assistance to Ukraine have gained momentum. In this context, Chancellor Scholz held a telephone conversation with US President Joe Biden and the two sides agreed to closely coordinate support for Ukraine. The fact that Germany has imposed certain conditions on the US in return for providing tanks to Ukraine can be considered an important exit and challenge. Berlin is declaring that it no longer has to do everything Washington wants, that it will not fight if it is asked to do so, and that such a demand would polarize the world. Berlin's main concern is that the arms supplied to Ukraine could lead its NATO allies into a direct conflict with Russia and drag the whole of Europe into the war. Because if NATO is dragged into a war with Russia, it is not the US that will suffer the most, but continental Europe and especially Germany. That is why Germany and the US are in a bargaining position over European security. But Washington has many issues to use against Berlin. The US is making this advantage strongly felt in Pacific politics. For example, Germany's growing interest in the Asia-Pacific is a signifi-

cant advantage for Washington. Without US support, Germany would find it difficult to establish its influence in the region. More importantly, Washington could use this advantage to Berlin's detriment and deal another blow to the German economy with a crisis in Taiwan.

Scholz's visit to Beijing drew a great reaction from the US. After this development, it was claimed that Germany betrayed the US and harmed American interests. For example, American Journalist and Foreign Policy Expert Tom Rogan wrote an analysis titled "Waltzing in Beijing, Germany's Olaf Scholz plays the US for a fool." [2] In this analysis, Rogan argued that Germany cannot act freely under American (NATO) protection and that Washington should not turn a blind eye to Berlin's "betrayal." Rogan even suggested moving American troops from Germany to Poland or the Baltic states to teach Berlin a lesson.

Indeed, the instruments at the disposal of the United States are not limited to the Pacific. Washington uses this support for European security as a pawn in its hands. More precisely, the US is threatening to withdraw its support for European security if Germany does not do what it wants in Ukraine. The bigger threat is the outbreak of the Taiwan Crisis in the Pacific. This is because Germany is deeply integrated with the Chinese economy. Taiwan is also the world's leading producer of critical chips that major German technology companies need. At the same time, these dependencies constitute Berlin's vulnerability vis-à-vis Washington. This is why the Scholz administration has to do what it is asked to do in the war in Ukraine.

As a result, the US is trying to keep the world crises under its control and use them as a means of pressure on allied states. Ukraine and Taiwan are the most prominent of these issues. Both problems constitute Germany's "weak spot." For many years, Berlin has developed serious partnerships with Moscow and Beijing in areas such as the economy and energy and has entered a relationship of interdependence with these countries. It does not seem possible for Germany to break free from these chains in the short term. Therefore, it can be argued that Germany will have to follow the US for a while longer.

[1] "Germany's Scholz Says World Must Avoid Dividing into Cold War-Style 'Blocs'", Arabiya, <https://english.alarabiya.net/News/world/2022/12/05/Germany-s-Scholz-says-world-must-avoid-dividing-into-Cold-War-style-blocs->, (Date of Accession: 19.01.2023).

[2] "Waltzing in Beijing, Germany's Olaf Scholz Plays US For a Fool", MSN, <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/waltzing-in-beijing-germany-s-olaf-scholz-plays-us-for-a-fool/ar-AA-13JEcp?li=BBnbcA1>, (Date of Accession: 19.01.2023).



ANKASAM ANALYSIS

The Place of the African Coast and the Indian Ocean in the South Korean Indo-Pacific Strategy Document

The strategy document, showing South Korea's perspective on the Asia-Pacific Region, was published on the official website of the South Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs on December 28, 2022, with the name "Free, Peaceful and Prosperous Indo-Pacific Region".^[1] This document contains 4 chapters and consists of 43 pages in total. The document is very important because it includes South Korea's determinations, security framework, threat perception, cyclical attitude, strategy, point of view to actors, defense concept and foresight regarding the Indo-Pacific Region as it is called in the document. As a matter of fact, in the last part of the second part of the document titled "Vision, Cooperation Principles and Regional Scope",

At this point, the assessment made over the African Coast and the Indian Ocean is important in many respects. The first of these is the geographical proximity of the African Continent and the African Coast to the Indo-Pacific Region. The other is that the Indian Ocean borders the Pacific Ocean, and this region is home to such states in the Indo-Pacific as Bangladesh, Indonesia, Christmas Island and Cocos Islands belonging to Australia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Timor Leste.^[2] At the same time, it is also very important that the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean are neighbors. Because it can be argued that the strategy



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that South Korea will implement in this region will play a significant role in the country's foreign policy production process at both the regional and global levels. At the same time, it can be said that Seoul's strategy regarding this region also contains clues in terms of the defense architecture that the country plans to build.

In the African Coast and Indian Ocean section of the document, it was first said that the Indian Ocean and Africa are South Korea's strategic partners. In this context, it was mentioned that Seoul will strengthen its cooperation with the countries on the eastern coast of Africa on the basis of mutual benefit and cooperation. As a matter of fact, at this point, it was emphasized that this alliance would have a future-based framework.

However, it was underlined that the eastern coasts of Africa serve as a strategic gateway between Africa and the Middle East. In this context, it can be predicted that South Korea plans to follow a sea-based strategy and the importance it will attach to these regions will be shaped within this framework. Because, due to the strategic importance attributed to the coast, it can be deduced that Seoul can gain influence in a wide maritime geography from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean if its influence over the region increases.

Afterwards, it was stated that South Korea will host the Korea-Africa Special Summit in 2024 and this meeting will strengthen Seoul's ties with African countries. In this context, it can be said that it will focus on soft power and summit diplomacy in the development of relations with African countries.

Then, it was emphasized that South Korea has intensified its efforts in the context of both maritime security and the fight against terrorism since 2009. Because this confirms the inference that South Korea approaches the region with a maritime-based perspective. In addition, it was said that Seoul will develop maritime security and maritime-based cooperation with the countries of the region.

At the same time, common sense was emphasized at the point of combating transnational threats. Here, it can be argued that South Korea emphasizes the sharing of responsibilities in tackling certain problems and gives the message that almost every actor should share duties in sharing responsibilities, as is the case throughout the document and in the parts related to other regions.

Afterwards, it was stated that the experiences of South Korea would be an inspiration for every country in the region and it was underlined that they would play a critical role in the construction of economic and social development processes. In this context, it can be argued that Seoul has positioned itself as a "source of inspiration" for the African Continent and Indian Ocean countries.

However, it can be said that South Korea aims to play a leading role in the development process of the region. It can be predicted that the possible leadership target, which is tried to be achieved with investments, aids and bilateral cooperation agreements, will contribute to South Korea's regional influence in the future.

In the last part where the region in question was examined, the importance of regional organizations such as the Indian Ocean Rim Association and the Indian Ocean Commission was mentioned and it was emphasized that the Seoul administration would cooperate with these organizations within the scope of its regional strategy. As a matter of fact, this reveals the importance that Seoul attaches to international organizations among regional actors, both in terms of security and economy. Because South Korea does not only talk about state-based relations; it also refers to these organizations for the development of the region.

As a result, it can be said that South Korea approaches the African Continent, the African Coast and the Indian Ocean Region, first of all, in the context of maritime security. Especially in these regions, it can be stated that Seoul wants to see itself as a leader in terms of regional development and tries to position itself as an "inspirational" actor before the countries of the region.

[1] "Strategy for a Free, Peaceful and Prosperous Indo-Pacific Region", Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Korea, <https://www.mofa.go.kr/viewer/skin/doc.html?fn=20221228060752073.pdf&rs=/viewer/result/202212>, (Date of Accession: 17.01.2023).

[2] "Countries in Asia-Pacific", Federal Aviation Administration, https://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/headquarters_offices/apl/international_affairs/asia_pacific/countries, (Date of Accession: 17.01.2023).



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Germany's Taiwan Policy

During her visit to Taipei on January 11, 2023, Marie-Agnes Strack-Zimmermann, Chairman of the German Parliamentary Defense Committee and a member of the Free Democratic Party (FDP), the coalition partner of Chancellor Olaf Scholz, stated that her country will not supply Taiwan with weapons; because he said that the situation is different from Ukraine's.[1] This statement was the last example of Germany's

long-standing diverging policies from Europe on the Taiwan Question. While the whole of Europe is trying to limit economic relations with China; The Berlin administration's granting of new shares to Chinese companies in the Port of Hamburg has been heavily criticized. Moreover, Scholz's departure to Beijing in November 2022 further inflamed the debates within Europe.



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It is seen that Germany differs sharply from the Western powers in its Chinese policy. In addition to economic factors, geopolitical factors such as the Anglo-Saxons' search for hegemony and Eurasia's opposition to it are effective here. In other words, Germany opposes the Taiwan policy of the United States (US)-England duo, citing its economic dependence on China. Because Berlin claims that what happened in the Russia-Ukraine War in the recent past will be repeated.[2]

Germany thinks that it was drawn into the war in Ukraine by the UK and the USA in 2022. As a matter of fact, in the summer of 2022, German Defense Minister Christine Lambrecht said, "We will not provide any more weapons aid to Ukraine." explanation as,[3] In a sense, it is a symbol of awakening. As a Eurasian country, Germany is trying to get rid of this crisis in Ukraine and prevent a new crisis in Taiwan. Lambrecht, who is against arming Ukraine, recently announced his resignation.[4] Apparently; The Berlin Government is under the pressure of the USA-England in both the Russia-Ukraine War and the China-Taiwan Issue.

The goal of the Berlin administration is to prevent the emergence of new crises in the world. In this direction, Scholz went to Beijing and said that he was against polarization and emphasized multipolarity. Germany is one of the states that suffered the most from the crisis in Ukraine. In fact, this is the war of England and the USA against Germany, and the actors in Continental Europe, Germany and Eurasia in general suffer the most from this.

To remind you, Berlin ended its energy cooperation with Russia due to the war in Ukraine and suffered great economic damage from it. Therefore, Berlin is making an effort not to make the same mistake in Taiwan and China. Those who advocate the military support of Taiwan are London and Washington. Continental Europe, on the other hand, does not want to be dragged into another war after Ukraine. This is why Germany refrains from supporting Taiwan militarily.

Ukraine has been a rehearsal for the US-England duo. In Taiwan, a larger game is being set up today. Indeed, fortifying Taiwan militarily will set it against China, and war will become inevitable after a point. Germany is trying to maintain its dialogue with China and Taiwan in a peaceful way because it sees this game of actors who want to collapse it economically.

To remind you, on August 2, 2022, the day the Speaker of the US House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi landed in Taiwan, there was a concern that China might attack Taiwan. There was even talk that China might shoot down Pelosi's plane. In this process, when the possibility of war reached its peak, Germany tried to deter China by implying that it could support the USA if necessary.[5] In this context, German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said, "We do not accept that international law is violated and that a larger neighbor violates international law and attacks its smaller neighbor. This of course also applies to China." he said.[6] This attitude is aimed at preventing a war from breaking out in Taiwan. Because one day after the visit; that is, with the reduction of the risk of war, Germany called for de-escalation in the Taiwan Strait and emphasized that it adheres to the "One China Principle".[7]

Germany takes a stand against whichever pole dares to fight. If China commits aggression, it will support the US stance. However, if the US and the UK want to deepen the crisis, they will also take a stand against it. But it is not correct to say that Germany fully supports China. Because he is against Beijing following an "aggressive" policy. For example, Scholz stated during his Beijing visit that the status quo change in Taiwan should happen peacefully.[8] Therefore, Germany is against China's use of military force against Taiwan.

In fact, the Berlin administration always benefits from the potential for cooperation between Moscow and Beijing. Because the polarization in the world is experienced between the USA-England duo and the Eurasian powers. Although the Russian-Chinese union seems to be against Western hegemony, the real challenge is for the USA-England duo. Continental Europe, which is a part of Eurasia, suffers the most from this competition. Germany is the protector of Continental Europe.

As it can be understood, the Berlin administration wants to be positioned as a mediator between the parties. It is also possible to call this a balance policy. The German Chancellor Klemens Von Metternich, who named the balance of power system in the 19th century,

even risked using his war power to protect the status quo in Europe. Today, Germany is trying to preserve the international status quo by peaceful means. But the biggest threats to the international order come from the actors who have veto power in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Germany has no such power. Therefore, it lacks the power to deter these actors. Therefore, the Berlin administration will not be very effective in changing the fate of Taiwan.

If the US wants to punish Europe, and especially Germany, with a new crisis, it can easily do so with the war in Taiwan. There is no way Germany can stop the United States on this issue. But Berlin's most important trump card is Beijing. If Germany can persuade China, they can cooperate in Eurasia together. With the inclusion of Russia in this, a great axis can be established in Eurasia. The United States sees this danger. But Germany and China also saw the "trap set by the USA". Therefore, it is time to convince Russia. If China and Germany succeed in deterring Russia from war, it would be a major failure for the United States. But then the USA will want to punish these actors by fueling the war in Taiwan. Therefore, the peace and security of the world will largely depend on cooperation on the Berlin-Beijing-Moscow line.

[1] "Germany Will Not Arm Taiwan, Senior Lawmaker Says", US News, <https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2023-01-11/germany-will-not-arm-taiwan-senior-lawmaker-says>, (Date of Accession: 16.01.2023).

[2] "German Chancellor's Party Warns of Breakdown in China Ties Over Taiwan", Anadolu Agency, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/politics/german-chancellor-s-party-warns-of-breakdown-in-china-ties-over-taiwan/2785526#>, (Date of Accession: 16.01.2023).

[3] "Almanya Savunma Bakanı: Ukrayna'ya Daha Fazla Silah Yardiminda Bulunmayacagiz", NTV, <https://www.ntv.com.tr/dunya/almanya-savunma-bakani-ukraynaya-daha-fazla-silah-yardiminda-bulunmayacagiz,1DyrZfDzp0mr-zqBfulkHQ>, (Date of Accession: 16.01.2023).

[4] "Almanya Savunma Bakanı Lambrecht İstifasını Sundu", Deutsche Welle, <https://www.dw.com/tr/almanya-savunma-bakan%C4%B1-lambrecht-istifas%C4%B1n%C4%B1-sundu/a-64403342>, (Date of Accession: 16.01.2023).

[5] "Germany Promises to Help Taiwan If China Attacks", Russia Today, <https://www.rt.com/news/560079-germany-help-taiwan-china/>, (Date of Accession: 16.01.2023).

[6] "China Issues Threatening Warning to Germany After Support for US Pelosi's Visit to Taiwan", Express, <https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/1649801/china-news-Nancy-pelosi-Taiwan-visit-germany-annalena-baerbock-berlin-ambassador-Beijing>, (Date of Accession: 16.01.2023).

[7] "Germany Calls for De-Escalation in Taiwan Strait", Anadolu Agency, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/germany-calls-for-de-escalation-in-taiwan-strait/2652753>, (Date of Accession: 16.01.2023).

[8] "Germany's Scholz Tells China: Any Change in Taiwan's Status Quo Must Be Peaceful", US News, <https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2022-11-04/germanys-scholz-tells-china-any-change-in-taiwans-status-quo-must-be-peaceful>, (Date of Accession: 16.01.2023).



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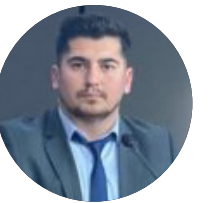
Foreign Policy Implications of Instability in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Yugoslavia has been a cosmopolitan state where various ethnic identities live together. Despite being one of the pioneers of the Non-Aligned Movement, the influence of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in the country increased significantly after the death of Josip Broz Tito. The USSR did not hesitate to support the Serbs due to its pan-Slavism policy in the region.

After the collapse of the USSR in 1991, the struggle for independence of nations dissatisfied with the policy of Serbization and the goal of "Greater Serbia" in the region became inevitable. In this context, Bosnia and Herzegovina became one of the states that declared its independence. How-

ever, Serbian nationalism, which has been effective in the region since time immemorial, did not allow this. After the confrontation of different interests and ideologies, war broke out.

As a result of the war, the Dayton Agreement was signed in 1995 as a result of NATO intervention. Although the treaty ended the war, it left Bosnia and Herzegovina with new problems and a political system that was difficult to deal with. In addition, many people died up to the moment the treaty was signed. There have been concluded prosecutions in this regard, as well as crimes that are still pending trial. There are currently 172 active arrest warrants in Bosnia and Herzegovina.[1] Thus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, which attaches importance to the democratization cri-



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teria of the European Union (EU), has shown the importance it attaches to democracy and human rights by prosecuting even its own citizens in the event of crimes against humanity.

With recent developments, Bosnia and Herzegovina's relations with the EU have made significant progress. Leaving aside the dilemma between "deepening" and "enlargement", the EU has taken various measures against possible threats. In addition to the rapid EU enlargement, the criteria of the organization are also of great importance in this process.

On the other hand, the importance given to these criteria by Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is looking for an ally after Russia threatened Bosnia and Herzegovina during the Russian-Ukrainian War, is clearly seen. For Bosnia and Herzegovina, which still cannot forget the losses it suffered in the recent past, getting rid of political isolation by establishing good relations with the United States (US) and the EU is a crucial issue.

In this context, Bosnia and Herzegovina, which wants to improve its diplomatic relations with various states, has also taken steps to improve its bilateral relations with Norway.[2] Traditional diplomacy has also changed with globalization. Instead of communicating only with governments, states have turned to the effective use of public diplomacy, which can be defined as the public relations of states.

States act with the motivation to prove the legitimacy of the steps they take by both promoting themselves in the international arena and creating public opinion in their favor. In this context, various forms of public diplomacy are preferred. Emphasizing the importance of political stability, Bosnia and Herzegovina tries to draw a pro-peace profile through humanitarian diplomacy. Bosnia and Herzegovina's sending 20 tons of humanitarian aid to Ukraine proves this.[3]

After the dissolution of the USSR between 1989 and 1991, Russia became relatively autocratic. The shadow governments in the buffer zones also put aside their competition in the bipolar order. After resolving its internal issues, Russia, which wanted to keep the tradition it inherited from the USSR alive, opened up to the outside world by stabilizing its domestic politics, even though its democratic nature was debated, especially under Vladimir Putin.

As Russia reappeared in the international system, it took over some of the USSR's roles from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)-Warsaw Pact conflict. Russia has several important red lines against capitalism, which seeks to contain communism.

One of them is the absence of a NATO member on its border. The US continued its expansion along the Black Sea. For Putin, who challenged the US unipolar system in various ways, Ukraine's NATO membership was seen as unacceptable. Thus, the Ukrainian war became inevitable. In this situation, it would not be surprising if the relations between Russia, which keeps the historical legacy alive, and Serbian nationalists, who dream of a Greater Serbia, are back on the agenda. For this reason, the Republika Srpska, which still considers itself part of Serbia, awarded Putin the Order of the Republika Srpska for his patriotism and love for the Republika Srpska.[4]

It is inevitable for the US to support Ukraine, as it does not want to give its powerful rivals in the international system a free space to act. Ukraine, which has received both economic and military support from the US since the Russia-Ukraine War, is taking steps in favor of the US against Russia's declining prestige. This situation has led Ukraine to interpret the awarding of a prize to Putin as "a terrorist rewarding a terrorist." [5]

Unable to unite with Serbia in the current situation, the Serbs in Bosnia have found the right to represent themselves with a different political structure, the Republika Srpska. However, it cannot be said that they have given up their ultimate goal. Looking at Russia's relationship with the Serbs, it is understood that Russia has not given up on the Balkans. Especially under the leadership of Dodik, it can be said that political instability in domestic politics has reached a high point. The moves of Dodik, who stands out with his separatist rhetoric and close relations with Moscow, have a negative impact on the foreign policy of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The United States has expressed its discomfort with this close relationship in light of the Order of Republika Srpska awarded to Putin.[6]

With the spread of the liberal system and the relative entrenchment of democracy, governance has become much more important than traditional public administration. The healthy functioning of democracy is crucial for the prestige of a state. Although prestige is not a constitutive element of the state such as sovereignty, it is very important for the recognition that strengthens the practice of statehood and provides its declaration.

States that can fully integrate democratic values and ensure governance demonstrate these values to the international public through various soft power instruments such as educational diplomacy, religious diplomacy, cultural diplomacy and humanitarian diplomacy. In this way, they will be able to gain recognition and enter various collaborations in line with their interests.



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Seeking Strong Cooperation on the Albania-China Line

Recently, it is seen that the relations between Tirana and Beijing have developed rapidly. Albania is an important country in the Balkan geography due to its geopolitical position. Especially considering the importance of the Balkans in the Belt and Road Project that China wants to realize, the breakthrough that Beijing wants to make in Albania becomes even more important. The Balkan geography is home to 135 projects worth at least 32 billion euros that are already linked to China.[1]

On the other hand, the fact that Albania has a coast to the Mediterranean, the Ionian Sea and the Adriatic is an element that increases the interest in the country. In particular, Albania's Adriatic coast causes Beijing to attach importance to Southeast

Europe as a gateway to the Mediterranean. Therefore, Albania is of critical importance for the development of China's project. In other words, Tirana is being touted as a potential nexus point on European routes for Beijing's Belt and Road Project.

On the other hand, Albania is a member of the 16+1 platform, where China aims to increase business and investment opportunities with Central and Eastern European countries. In this context, it is seen that the trade volume between Beijing and Tirana has increased recently. Albania's third largest import partner is China. Furthermore, although Albania is a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and wants to join the European Union (EU), it attaches importance to



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its relations with China. Moreover, in addition to having historical ties with Beijing, Tirana also aligns with China's "One China Principle." [2] Therefore, the historical ties between China and Albania and Tirana's adaptation to Beijing's foreign policy play an important role in the acceleration of relations between the two countries.

In addition to all these, it is worth mentioning the instruments used by China to increase its influence in Albania. Economy is the main factor in this. By increasing its investments in Tirana, Beijing is trying to make the Albanian economy increasingly dependent on it, especially in sensitive industries, and ultimately wants to expand its influence in Albanian politics. Another way China uses to increase its influence in Albania is to strengthen its image in Albanian society. In this context, Beijing aspires to promote China's economic and political model by reaching out to the Albanian community on a large scale. [3]

As can be understood, China is using two main tools to increase its influence on Albania. These are economic investments and the strengthening of cultural ties. It can be argued that Beijing uses these elements as a tool to strengthen its political relations with Albania.

On the other hand, Albania's decision to abolish visas with China on December 27, 2022 was an important development in terms of the improvement of relations between the two countries. This has made Albania the second country among the Balkan countries to abolish visas for China after Serbia. In particular, this move by Albania was described as a move that contradicted the policy of the union at a time when it started accession negotiations with the EU. [4] Therefore, it can be foreseen that this development will have a negative impact on the process of Tirana's integration with Brussels. It can also be argued that economic reasons influenced Albania and China's decision to take such a decision. China is seen by some governments in the Western Balkan countries as a reliable source of financing for economic development.

In this context, China's infrastructure projects in Albania have gained importance in recent years. In September 2016, Chinese company Geo-Jade Petroleum paid 384.6m euros for a concession to extract oil from the Patos-Marinza field, Albania's largest oil production field. [5] As can be expected, China's investments in Albania are crucial for the development of Tirana's political relations with Beijing.

Furthermore, Albania and China signed an agreement on the abolition of visas on January 17, 2023. Albania's Foreign Ministry said the agreement was proposed by China and would have a positive impact on increasing contacts between citizens of the two countries. Moreover, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that this development will serve as an incentive to strengthen bilateral relations in all areas of common interest. [6]

Consequently, Albania is seen by China as an important component within the framework of the Belt and Road Project. One could argue that Beijing's primary goal over Tirana is to increase its influence economically and then strengthen its influence in the country's politics. However, the fact that Albania is a member of NATO and wants to become a member of the EU is a serious obstacle for China.

[1] "China in the Balkans: Controversy and Cost", Balkan Insight, <https://balkaninsight.com/2021/12/15/china-in-the-balkans-controversy-and-cost/>, (Date of Accession: 18.01.2023).

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[5] Ibid.

[6] "China, Albania Sign Visa-free Travel Agreement, Albanian Daily News, <https://albaniadailynews.com/news/albania-china-sign-agreement-on-visa-waiver-1/>, (Date of Accession: 18.01.2023).



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The Place of South Asia in the South Korean Indo-Pacific Strategy Document

The strategy document, which is expected to be published by South Korea at the end of 2022 and provides critical information and ideas about Seoul's strategy towards the Asia-Pacific Region, was published on the official website of the Foreign Ministry, on December 28, 2022 under the name of "Free, Peaceful and Prosperous Indo-Pacific Region". [1] This document consists of 43 pages in total and includes 4 sections. The document is of great importance as it reflects South Korea's geopolitical, geoeconomic and geostrategic approach to the Indo-Pacific Region.

As a matter of fact, in the last part of the second part of the document titled "Vision, Cooperation Principles and Regional Scope", regional-based strategies are discussed. At this point, the evaluation made on South Asia is very

important both for the security perspective of South Korea, its cyclical attitude in the region and the future of the Indo-Pacific Region, especially since it points to a geography with high conflict intensity.

In this context, before evaluating the South Asia part of the document, it is stated that the South Korean administration has developed strong dialogues with the West, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the United States of America (USA) globally, especially on the Asia-Pacific Region. It can be argued that it has built strong alliance relations with those actors. Therefore, within the framework of the section, it can be interpreted that the regional interpretation of Seoul will not be far from the scope of Western-based idea generation.



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In this context, when we look at the relevant part of the document, the section titled South Asia first states that the region is home to more than 24% of the world's population, and has important roads connecting West and East Asia, seas and land. For this reason, it has been mentioned that the region has a significant growth potential.

At this point, it was said that South Korea would develop closer relations with the South Asian Region and provide more support to key partners in the region. This situation can be read as Seoul's value to the South Asian Region and the actors in the region in the security architecture of the Asia-Pacific Region. It can be argued that South Korea aims to establish a prosperous situation in the South Asian Region in terms of both national, regional and global security.

In addition, a special place is given to India in the following section. Indeed, India is the world's fifth largest economy.[2] However, it can be said that India is a rapidly growing country with a strong growth potential. Because it was mentioned in the document that Seoul would deepen its strategic cooperation with New Delhi.

On the other hand, it was emphasized that India shares common values with South Korea and is one of the leading countries in the region. Emphasis on shared value can be interpreted as South Korea's intention to cooperate with India through its opposition to North Korea and China. Currently, there are many border-related problems between New Delhi and Beijing. As such, it can be argued that South Korea and India have common security concerns and interests. It can be stated that this situation creates an important opportunity for Seoul.

Afterwards, it was stated that India has a very high growth potential due to being the second largest economy in the world and its technological power in the context of information and space technologies.

In addition, it is known that South Korea is a very important technological power and is home to many technology brands. When an evaluation is made in this way, it can be thought that Seoul aims to make a breakthrough in establishing a technology-based partnership with New Delhi. Considering both Seoul's potential to produce technology and China's global technological competition with the West and the West alliance over the chip industry, it can be argued that such a cooperation will create an advantageous situation for both actors. In addition,

this situation may also benefit Seoul and New Delhi in terms of restricting Beijing's global and regional technological influence.

In the following part, it has been said that South Korea will strengthen its cooperation with India both in foreign policy production and in defense. As such, it can be stated that Seoul wants to build an alliance in the context of security and common values.

In the last part of the South Asian section of the document, it is underlined that South Korea will develop cooperation with Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal and other South Asian countries on the basis of interdependence, through trade, investment and development support. While India was specifically mentioned in the previous section, the mention of Pakistan here, albeit briefly, can generally be read as Seoul's action on the region with the aim of pursuing a multi-vector policy and not neglecting any actor. At the same time, the mention of other countries can be considered as an indicator of South Korea's multi-vector policy.

In addition, the regional organizations of which South Korea is a member, the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), were mentioned and it was emphasized that more contributions would be made to these organizations within the scope of regional cooperation. As a matter of fact, this is not only for the states but also for the regional welfare of South Korea. At the same time, it can be said that it shows the importance it gives to organizations.

As a result, it can be argued that the Seoul administration has assigned a serious role to South Asia within the scope of its goal of a free, peaceful and prosperous Indo-Pacific Region. In this context, it can be stated that the emphasis on India is of great importance both in terms of competition with China and technological progress.

[1] "Strategy for a Free, Peaceful and Prosperous Indo-Pacific Region", Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Korea, <https://www.mofa.go.kr/viewer/skin/doc.html?fn=20221228060752073.pdf&rs=/viewer/result/202212>, (Date of Accession: 08.01.2023).

[2] "Top Heavy: Countries by Share of the Global Economy", Visual Capitalist, <https://www.visualcapitalist.com/countries-by-share-of-global-economy/#:~:text=Just%20five%20countries%20make%20up,Japan%2C%20India%2C%20and%20Germany,> (Date of Accession: 15.01.2023).

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29 January 2023

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



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

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