



# ANKASAM

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in Pakistan-France  
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Seeking Strong Cooperation  
in South Korea-Japan  
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## ANKASAM ANALYSIS

# Charles III's Visit to Bucharest: What Messages the United Kingdom is Sending?

According to international media reports, King Charles III of the United Kingdom will pay one of his first foreign visits to Romania on June 2, 2023.[1] It can be stated that this development is of great importance as it is one of the first foreign visits of Charles III and it contains some symbolic messages. In essence, this visit can

be considered in the context of the London administration's goal of "Global Britain".

In order to clarify the aforementioned situation, it should be noted that Britain's foreign policy after leaving the European Union (EU) through Brexit has been dominated by the desire to



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reposition itself as a global power as it was before the Second World War. In this sense, the London administration wants to increase its influence in Eurasian geopolitics, which all geopolitical theories attach special importance to, and thus seeks ways to expand into Eurasia. Therefore, it can be said that Eastern Europe is the gateway to Eurasia for the UK. That is why the London administration is taking concrete steps to contain and limit Russia. Moreover, these policies are being pursued with determination despite the Prime Ministerial changes in the UK. This means that London has adopted the goal of “Global Britain” as a supra-governmental state policy.

In fact, the UK’s foreign policy both in the run-up to and during the Russian-Ukrainian War revealed the political background and global vision of the Brexit decision. Since the beginning of the war, EU countries have adopted a much more cautious stance than the United States (US) and the UK and refrained from imposing sanctions and providing aid that would affect the outcome of the war and thus draw the reaction of Russia. The EU member states even sought to ensure a ceasefire. On the other hand, the UK-US duo took a stance in favor of prolonging the war, spearheading aid to Ukraine and focusing on turning the war into a “war of attrition” for Russia.

The beginning of Britain’s policy on this issue can be traced back to the Trilateral Cooperation Alliance signed between Britain, Poland and Ukraine on February 17, 2022, days before the start of the Russian-Ukrainian War. As a matter of fact, the war started days after the aforementioned agreement, and the support provided by the UK, as well as the corridor role assumed by Poland in the aid delivered to Ukraine during the war, played a decisive role in increasing the resistance of the Kiev administration. In other words, the UK-Poland-Ukraine alliance worked in a healthy way.

On the other hand, while the war was going on, there was talk that the Trans-Dniester region could be the next target of Russia’s strategy to activate frozen conflict zones within the framework of the Near Periphery Doctrine, also known as the Primakov Doctrine, and various allegations began to be discussed in this context. Some statements have even deepened Moldova’s security concerns. It is known that there are pro-Russian separatist groups in Moldova’s Trans-Dniester Region, just like in eastern Ukraine. On the other hand, there is also a strong tendency in the administration of Kshinev to be annexed to Romania. Therefore, if Russia intervenes in Trans-Dniester by drawing Moldova into the war, it is possible that Moldova may decide to join Romania. If this decision were to be accepted by the Bucharest administration, Romania could request the adoption of Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Treaty, whereby an attack against it would be considered an attack against all allied states. This would mean a Russia-NATO conflict and therefore a Third World War.

The fact that Charles III was to visit Bucharest at a time when such a debate was taking place is a remarkable development. It seems that England was making an effort to increase pressure on Russia through Romania. At the same time, this situation also aims to increase the courage and determination of Bucharest.

In strategic terms, it can be argued that this visit had two objectives. The first one is to show through Romania that NATO’s presence in the Black Sea, and consequently the siege imposed on Russia, will be maintained. In fact, Moscow believes that NATO is encircling it through the Black Sea. The critical threshold was the NATO membership of Romania and Bulgaria, two former Eastern Bloc countries, in 2004. Therefore, one of the Kremlin’s goals for the war is to cut Ukraine’s Black Sea connection and thus prevent the Black Sea from becoming a “NATO Lake”. At this point, the King of England seems to want to send the message that NATO is committed to its Black Sea policy against Russia.

Secondly, it can be argued that the UK has a desire to expand the alliance it is trying to build on the Poland-Ukraine line in the context of its Eurasianization strategy to include Moldova and Romania. This can be interpreted as London’s attempt to create a geopolitical axis in the region. Therefore, the fact that one of Charles III’s first foreign visits will be to Bucharest reveals that Britain considers Romania as one of the key actors in its Eurasianization strategy.

As a result, Charles III made one of his first foreign visits to Romania, demonstrating the importance he attached to this country. Thus, the London administration, on the one hand, signaled that NATO would continue its strategy of encircling Russia through the Black Sea, and on the other hand, showed that it wanted to expand the Poland-Ukraine axis to include Moldova and Romania.

[1] “Update: King Charles III Reportedly Expected in Romania on June 2”, Romania Insider, <https://www.romania-insider.com/king-charles-expected-romania-june-2023>, (Date of Accession: 16.05.2023).



## ANKASAM ANALYSIS

# The Significance of Japan in the Changing Conjuncture of the Asia-Pacific Region

It can be claimed that the Asia-Pacific region is at the centre of the global competition for influence and power struggle. The presence of China and North Korea and the interest of the United States of America (USA) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in the region due to these states are the most important reasons for this situation.

Moreover, it can be said that Japan is both one of the most important and most prominent states in the region. As a matter of fact, Japan

is the third largest economy in the world.[1] Moreover, it can be argued that Tokyo has recently become the most prominent actor in the Asia-Pacific in terms of both its geopolitical and geostrategic position and its growing military power. In addition to all of these, Japan's foreign policy is undergoing a serious breakthrough process. Indeed, Tokyo's foreign policy has assumed a very proactive structure.

To exemplify this situation, Japan joined the United Nations Security Council in 2023 as a non-perma-



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nent temporary member.[2] In this regard, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida stated that Tokyo will aim to contribute to and increase the functionality of the United Nations (UN) and will work on the realization and expansion of UN reforms.[3]

On the other hand, Japan has assumed the G7 Presidency for 2023.[4] In this framework, it was also decided to hold the G7 2023 Summit in Hiroshima.[5] It can be stated that all these developments are evidence of Japan's rising and increasingly proactive foreign policy. This is because the current developments make Japan a state that is increasing its importance, influence and impact both regionally and globally. Therefore, it can be asserted that Tokyo's positioning is crucial in the competition between Washington and Beijing and Japan has become a more effective actor in the eyes of the West.

It is also known that NATO is planning to open a liaison office in Japan.[6] Indeed, NATO's stated aim here is to achieve closer co-operation and co-ordination with Australia, South Korea and New Zealand in the Asia-Pacific. The plan also envisages both NATO and Tokyo working together against cyber threats, disruptive technologies and disinformation.[7] This demonstrates that Japan is seen as a key ally by NATO.

At the same time, the West sees Tokyo as a key actor in the containment of China. This key actor concept may enable Japan to assume a central role in the Western struggle against China and North Korea. Indeed, the US and NATO may be aiming for a Japan-centred struggle in the Asia-Pacific.

To conclude, it can be said that the Asia-Pacific region is the geography where the security dilemma is experienced the most. It can also be argued that following the developments in Japan's foreign policy, a large part of global security dynamics can be evaluated through this region. Therefore, it can be predicted that the polarization in the region will increase and the possibility of hot conflicts will rise.

[1] "How Japan Become the Third Largest Economy in the World Japanese Economic Miracle From the 1950s to 1990s", Data Driven Investor, <https://medium.datadriveninvestor.com/how-japan-become-the-third-largest-economy-in-the-world-ba28f6ea0dc7>, (Date of Accession: 16.05.2023).

[2] "Japan to be Tested as Nonpermanent U.N. Security Council Member", The Japan Times, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2023/01/02/national/politics-diplomacy/japan-un-security-council-tested/>, (Date of Accession: 16.05.2023).

[3] "Japan's Foreign Policy to be Tested by China, Russia as Non – Permanent UN Security Council Member", South China Morning Post, <https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/politics/article/3205412/japans-foreign-policy-be-tested-china-russia-non-permanent-un-security-council-member>, (Date of Accession: 16.05.2023).

[4] "Japan, UK Sign 'Hugely Significant' Defence Deal", Al Jazeera, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/1/12/japan-uk-sign-hugely-significant-new-defence-deal>, (Date of Accession: 16.05.2023).

[5] "Chinese Warships Sail Around Japan as Tensions Rise Ahead of G7 Summit", Cable News Network, <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/05/11/asia/chinese-naval-flotilla-japan-intl-hnk-ml/index.html>, (Date of Accession: 16.05.2023).

[6] "NATO Planning to Open Japan Office to Deepen Asia – Pacific Ties – Report", The Guardian, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/may/03/nato-planning-to-open-japan-office-to-deepen-asia-pacific-ties-report>, (Date of Accession: 05.05.2023).

[7] "NATO to Open Japan Office, Deepening Indo-Pacific Engagement, Nikkei Asia, <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/Indo-Pacific/NATO-to-open-japan-office-deepening-Indo-Pacific-engagement>, (Date of Accession: 05.05.2023).





## ANKASAM ANALYSIS

# Philippines' "Dangerous" Equilibrium Game in Foreign Policy

On January 4, 2023, Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos visited Beijing to improve relations with China, and the two sides agreed to strengthen economic ties and resolve their maritime disputes through "friendly consultations".<sup>[1]</sup> Immediately thereafter, the United States of America (USA) increased its consultations with the Philippines in order to take relations with the Philippines one step further in the field of defense and agreed with the

Manila administration to establish four additional military bases in the country on February 2, 2023. <sup>[2]</sup> Not long after, Marcos visited Tokyo and signed a security agreement with Japan.<sup>[3]</sup> In this context, it was agreed that the Japanese Self-Defense Forces would provide more training, humanitarian and disaster assistance to the Philippine Army. This agreement could create a broad legal framework for easier deployment of Japanese forces in the Philippines.



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China's growing claims to Taiwan raise the strategic importance of the territories around the island, which belong to Japan and the Philippines. Manila's decision to give the US more bases on these strategic islands could have a profound impact on regional security. Likewise, the Philippines' signing of agreements with Japan on joint education, humanitarian and disaster relief is a preparation for a possible crisis in Taiwan. By first rapprochement with China and then forging partnerships with the US and Japan, the Philippines is pursuing a "dangerous" balancing act in its foreign policy. In Manila's search for this critical balance, the Washington-Tokyo axis seems to be gaining weight. This is because the Philippines' security-based moves as a result of Western pressure could provoke a strong reaction from China.

The main dispute between the Philippines and China is over jurisdiction in the South China Sea. In 2016, Manila won an arbitration case against China based on the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Beijing, however, refused to implement the ruling, stating that it is not a signatory to this convention. Therefore, for the last seven years, tensions between the two states over the South China Sea have continued to escalate. In December 2022, in the latest escalation, the Manila administration lodged a diplomatic protest with Beijing. In the incident, Chinese coast guard vessels forcibly seized the remains of a missile (belonging to China) that had fallen near an island claimed by the Philippines and drove Philippine vessels away from the area.

Shortly after this dangerous rapprochement, Marcos visited Beijing in an attempt to reduce maritime tensions and prevent potential conflicts, during which the two sides agreed to keep dialogue open at all times and to continue "friendly consultations". The fact that the Philippines, which had strengthened its dialogue with China in order to appease it, took a step forward in its military cooperation with the US and Japan a month later is a sign that the balance in its foreign policy has begun to shift. This is because such military partnerships provoke China.

Beijing claims that Washington is provoking Manila and Tokyo against it. In this context, the US is trying to drive a wedge between the Philippines and China. There is already a security agreement between the Philippines and the United States. As it will be recalled, US Vice President Kamala Harris, who visited Manila in November 2022, emphasized the "unwavering" commitment of the Philippines to the 1951 agreement, which stipulates that the United States will provide military assistance if the Philippines is subjected to any aggression in the South China Sea.<sup>[4]</sup> It was also an important warning to China. In his statement in Manila, Harris implicitly or explicitly threatened China. In other words, the US is trying to deter China by saying that it will protect the Philippines and Japan to the end.

As the US tries to fuel the potential crisis in Taiwan, the regional states suffer the most. This is why states such as the Philippines, Japan, Australia and India have anticipated this danger and have always sought ways to get along with China. In fact, the United States and its regional allies are well aware of the importance of maintaining dialogue with China. Moreover, Southeast Asian countries are highly economically dependent on China. The states of the region, and the Philippines in particular, have benefited greatly from China's investments in the Belt and Road Initiative. Thanks to these projects, China has become the Philippines' most important trading partner and source of foreign direct investment.

Apart from disputes in the South China Sea and China's growing territorial claims, there is no major threat to the Philippines' national security. Taiwan, which is located very close to the Philippines, can be seen as a crisis artificially magnified by the US and Japan. Whether this issue is a real threat to the Philippines is a question mark. However, the US presents the Taiwan issue as a threat and pushes the Philippines to take a front against China. According to this narrative, if China seizes Taiwan and is not responded to appropriately, Beijing's next target will be Japan and the islands belonging to the Philippines. This is because Beijing is following Moscow's lead and



trying to unilaterally change the rules-based international order. The Philippines is also shifting towards the US and Japan axis due to the perceived “Chinese threat”.

Already utilizing air bases in the Philippines, the US plans to deploy its naval ships at a naval base near Manila in the near future.[5] These moves are part of the US strategy to contain China. But what is interesting is that the Philippines is inevitably drawn into this “dangerous strategy”. The extent to which these security partnerships with the US and Japan will benefit the national security of the Philippines is questionable. This is because such security cooperation resembles the politics of blocization. Southeast Asian countries, on the other hand, are composed of countries that observe regional power balances and advocate centralization. In this context, the Philippines has made efforts to stay out of the US-China rivalry for many years. However, as tensions over Taiwan escalate, the Manila administration finds it difficult to maintain a policy of balance in its foreign policy.

As a result, it is thought that the Philippines will stay away from participating in the military alliances led by the US, Japan and the UK in the Asia-Pacific. However, it is not possible to say that the Philippines will definitely not be part of this axis. Many people did not expect that India, for example, would plan to meet with NATO. However, this has already happened. Therefore, there may be unexpected developments in the region. It does not seem like a rational choice for the Philippines to completely confront China. However, it should not be forgotten that states have difficulty in making rational decisions, especially in times of crisis.

[1] “China and Philippines Vow to Handle Maritime Tensions with ‘Friendly Consultations’”, FT, <https://www.ft.com/content/e54a08d3-f3c5-4cf7-bcff-d153a0ad8b1c>, (Date of Accession: 08.02.2023).

[2] “US Secures Deal on Philippines Bases to Complete Arc Around China”, BBC, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-64479712>, (Date of Accession: 08.02.2023).

[3] “Philippine President Marcos Jr Visits Japan As Security in Focus”, Al Jazeera, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/2/8/philippine-president-marcos-visits-japan-with-security-in-focus>, (Date of Accession: 08.02.2023).

[4] “Kamala Harris, Filipinler’le Savunma Anlaşmasına ‘Sarsılmaz’ Şekilde Bağlı Olduklarını Söyledi”, Anadolu Ajansı, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/dunya/kamala-harris-filipinlerle-savunma-anlasmasina-sarsilmaz-sekilde-bagli-olduklarini-soyledi/2744152>, (Date of Accession: 08.02.2023).

[5] “Güney Çin Denizi, Çin ile Kıyıdaş Ülkelerin Egemenlik İhtilaflarının Odağında”, Anadolu Ajansı, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/dunya/guney-cin-denizi-cin-ile-kiyidas-ulkelerin-egemenlik-htilaflarinin-odaginda/2780153>, (Date of Accession: 08.02.2023).



## ANKASAM ANALYSIS

# Attractive Region for China: Middle East

China, which has an important history in the history of civilization, succeeded in making its name known in the world economy with the development policies implemented in the economy after the end of the Cold War period in the early 1990s and it has become the world's strongest economy after the United States of America (USA). With the motivation given by

its economic power, the Beijing administration has tried to develop its relations with different geographies, giving importance to its foreign policy. Due to the reasons arising from its energy needs, it has turned to the Middle East region, where tensions are not lacking in its foreign policy relations and which is always among the targets of global powers.



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As it is known, Deng Xiaoping, who came to power after Mao, brought many changes with him. Inherited from Mao, China had some successes with the Cultural Revolution, but left a bad economy to the next government. Setting goals to strengthen and develop its economy, China introduced the concept of quadruple modernization, which includes agriculture, industry, science and technology, and national defense, in order to achieve this at certain stages. Deng wanted to adopt the liberal economy model in China's economic policies, but he was also worried about the consequences of this. For this reason, it managed its economic policies in an extremely slow and controlled manner. In this context, Deng has started to make China's statist and closed economy open to the outside by slowly but surely turning it into a market economy. Therefore, a pragmatic understanding has been adopted since the benefit of China was taken into consideration in the decisions taken on behalf of the country's economy during the Deng period.

As a result of giving priority to the Middle East in diplomatic relations realized in foreign policy, China started arms trade in the Iran-Iraq War and built its relations with Iran, which continues today, on solid foundations in this period. One of the most important reasons for the strong continuation of the relations between China and Iran is the Iran policy of the United States (USA).

Due to the increase in energy needs since the early 1980s, China has tried to improve its relations with oil-rich countries and gain the trust of these states. Although the oil agreements between China and Iraq became invalid after the US intervention in Iraq, new agreements were signed with the Iraqi Kurdish Regional Government, which was established in Northern Iraq and In 1993, China became definitively an oil importer as a result of its diplomatic efforts.

Besides Arab countries, Beijing has also developed successful diplomatic relations with Israel, which was the first country to recognize China in the Middle East. Acting with a rhetoric that sided with the Arab countries in the Middle East in the early periods, China over time strengthened its relations with Israel in many fields, especially in agriculture, terms of access to technology it needs. Especially after Mao, thanks to Deng's reformist approaches, the relations between the parties have gained increasing momentum and developed.

One of the important steps taken to strengthen the Middle East-China relations was the establishment of the China-Arab Cooperation Forum in 2004. In 2006, during the visit of King of Saudi Arabia Abdullah bin Abdulaziz Al Saud to China, important agreements were signed between the two countries on energy imports. In this period, besides the development of economic relations between China and the Middle East, China within the scope of soft power; It has also carried out studies to become attractive in the Middle East in terms of both ideological, cultural and institutional factors.

On the other hand, the Arab Spring, which increased the tension in the Middle East and was an important turning point for the region, caused many countries, especially global powers, to change their foreign policies. Caught unprepared by the uprisings that took place with the Arab Spring, China adopted the principle of not interfering in the internal affairs of the states, as is the case with its foreign policy in general in its relations with the Middle East. Although the change of authoritarian governments after the uprisings and the role of the USA in the region worried China, China took an active part in the resolution of the problems in the Middle East region.

During the Syrian Civil War, it is possible to see the effects of China's presence in the Middle East clearly. Especially after the end of the war, it is seen that China has come to the forefront with both humanitarian and economic agreements on behalf of the reconstruction of Syria.

In addition to all these, recently China; He made important diplomatic progress in his relations with the Middle East countries. For example, on the occasion of the LNG Agreement signed between China and Qatar on November 21, 2022, China has guaranteed its liquefied natural gas supply for 27 years. The resumption of diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran on March 10, 2023 was welcomed by the countries of the region and further strengthened the relations between China and the Gulf states. Because the Beijing administration has undertaken the role of mediator in the normalization process.

As a result, since China aims to grow without disturbing any country in its foreign policy, it primarily aims to ensure that its energy supply is secure. Undoubtedly, the most important factors determining the relations of China's foreign policy, which is the most important production center in the world, is the issue of meeting the need for energy and raw materials. For this reason, it is seen that Beijing focuses on developing and deepening its relations with Middle Eastern capitals.





## ANKASAM ANALYSIS

# Afghanistan's Increasing Role in CPEC

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is the main component of relations on the Beijing-Islamabad line. Sub-projects within the scope of CPEC; It is of great importance in terms of China-Pakistan connection and regional integration. Beijing and Islamabad agree that Afghanistan should be included in the project. In this context, the parties have developed various dialogues with the Taliban, which has been ruling the country since August 2021.

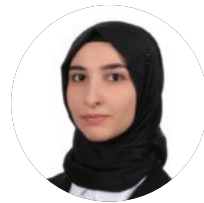
The 5th China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Foreign Ministers Dialogue, held on May 9, 2023, had important consequences for Afghanistan's role in CPEC. In a statement on May 16, 2023, Taliban Deputy Foreign Minister Hafiz Zia Ahmad stated that he has decided to join CPEC, which will

support landlocked Afghanistan becoming a trade hub and attracting investment.[1]

Ahmad also stated that the decision in question is part of the commitment of the Taliban administration to provide foreign funds to the country damaged by the conflicts. In addition, Ahmad used the following statements:[2]

"CPEC will help us be part of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and bring different projects to Afghanistan in the energy, rail and other sectors."

The inclusion of Afghanistan in CPEC is not a new topic of discussion. As you can remember, this issue has come up before. However, a process is being passed at the point of taking



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concrete steps by taking action. Because in September 2022, allegations were discussed that a highway going to Uzbekistan would be built between Peshawar and Kabul.[3] Afghanistan's role within the CPEC is expected to yield major benefits in regional connectivity and national development.

With CPEC, the connection to be established with the Vahan Corridor in the northeast, Pakistan in the south and Tajikistan in the north will provide Pakistan with the "shortest route to Central Asia via Afghanistan". In addition, it will also facilitate China's access to Central Asia. Therefore, it can be said that the inclusion of Afghanistan in CPEC has strategic importance in terms of China and Pakistan's Central Asian policy.

Its location causes the issue of regional connectivity to be at the center of policies towards Afghanistan. Being at the crossroads of South Asia and Central Asia gives Afghanistan a strategic value. Especially for China, this geopolitical position is critical. However, Kabul's presence in CPEC will enable easier access to Central Asia, as well as turning China's interest in Afghanistan's resources and reserves into tangible gains through various projects.

Efforts to include Afghanistan in regional connection projects also reveal the importance of the country. The Chabahar Port Project, which includes Afghanistan-India and Iran, can be given as an example to the aforementioned initiatives. At this point, it can be said that Afghanistan has witnessed regional and global competition due to its role.

As a matter of fact, in the projects in question, it has been acted with the aim of providing the South Asia-Central Asia connection. For example, the New Silk Road Initiative is a project that the USA brought to the agenda in the 2010s. Chabahar Port Project is based on the triple transit agreement between the mentioned countries.[4] The comfort of regional connection that Afghanistan will provide indicates that much more initiatives will be taken if stability and security are fully ensured in the country.

When the subject of being included in CPEC is evaluated in terms of Afghanistan, it can be said that the project is important in terms of providing commercial opportunities and contributing to economic stability. This, in turn, may strengthen the image of the Taliban administration in the country and internationally. At the same time, depending on the progress of the project, the expectations of the Taliban to strengthen relations and improve recognition will increase.

On the other hand, Afghanistan's inclusion in CPEC will bring along a process in which investments in the country's infrastructure will increase. This means an increase in the Chinese presence in the

country. Therefore, it is possible that the terrorist organization DAESH, which has come to the fore with attacks on Chinese investments as well as anti-Talibanism, will mobilize.

In addition to all these, it can be expected that various radical groups will enter a new period of mobility. In this sense, while Beijing concentrates on projects and investments; On the other hand, it will try to provide security guarantee. At this point, it is likely that steps will be taken to increase military-security cooperation with the Taliban.

As a result, it is seen that Afghanistan's regional location and geostrategic importance cause security and stability problems. Despite various compelling factors, steps are being taken within the scope of inclusion of Afghanistan in CPEC based on different foundations, primarily regional connectivity and national interests. Afghanistan, with its critical role in South Asia, could become a strategic actor within CPEC. Afghanistan's participation in the project; The development of cross-border trade will serve sustainable development by making a positive contribution to the economic integration of all three countries. For this reason, the developments are also very important for China and Pakistan.

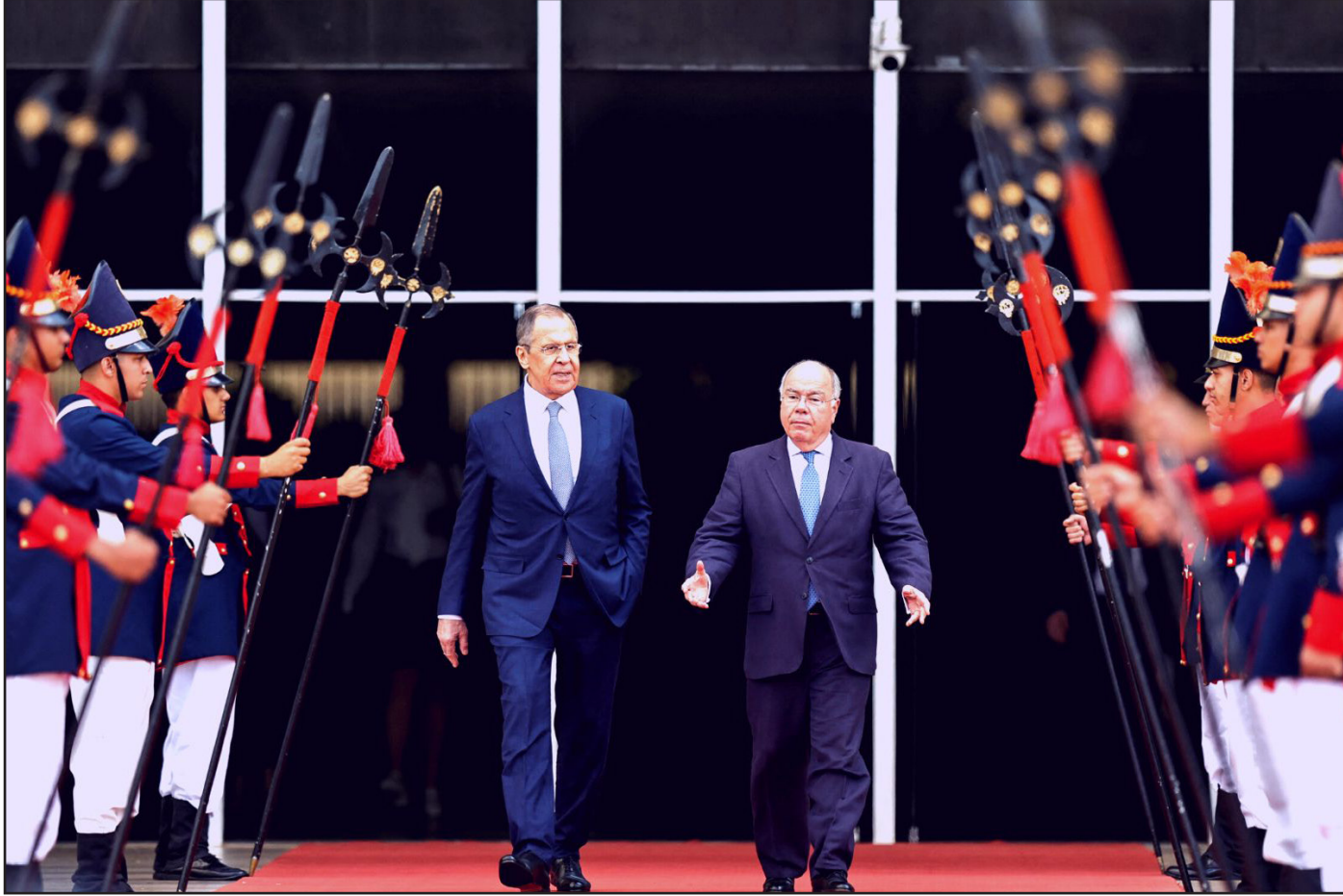
[1] "Afghanistan Decides to Join Multi-billion China Pakistan Economic Corridor", Mena, <https://menafn.com/1106260135/Afghanistan-decides-to-join-multi-billion-China-Pakistan-Economic-Corridor>, (Date of Accession: 17.05.2023).

[2] Ibid.

[3] "Extension of CPEC to Afghanistan could Link Infrastructure Across Continent", The Rhird Pole, <https://www.thethirdpole.net/en/regional-cooperation/extension-of-cpec-to-afghanistan-could-link-infrastructure-across-continent/>, (Date of Accession: 17.05.2023).

[4] "Why Afghanistan Should Join COEC", The Diplomat, <https://thediplomat.com/2017/05/why-afghanistan-should-join-cpec/>, (Date of Accession: 17.05.2023).





## ANKASAM ANALYSIS

# Lavrov's Visit to Latin America and Multipolarity

Throughout political history, Latin America has been one of the regions with the strongest left-wing winds. For this reason, it became an important area of competition between the United States of America (USA) and the Soviet Union during the Cold War. While the US intervened to maintain its influence in the region, the Soviet Union supported various ideological groups.

Acting on the legacy left by the Soviet Union in Latin America in the post-Cold War period, the Moscow administration strengthened its relations with the countries in the region in a short period of time. Especially after Hugo Chavez came to power in Venezuela in 1999, the rising anti-US leftist wave gave Russia a significant room for maneuver.



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As China has also increased its influence in Latin America through various agreements and initiatives, the influence of the US in Latin America has been openly discussed. The victory of Luis Arce, who is close to Morales, in the first election held after the coup against Bolivian President Evo Morales, who is known for his leftist identity, in 2019 showed that an important threshold had been crossed. On the other hand, left-wing figures came to power in the Latin American countries of Colombia and Brazil. These developments have brought about the strongest period for the left in Latin America.

As it is known, the Moscow administration is going through a difficult period politically, economically and militarily with the Russia-Ukraine War. Latin America is one of the regions that the Kremlin administration is trying to develop various alliances and relations in order to overcome Western sanctions. In this context, it is necessary to draw attention to the visit of Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov to Latin America.

Between April 17-21, 2023, Lavrov visited Brazil, Venezuela, Nicaragua and Cuba. During this visit, Lavrov met with the heads of state of these countries and the Bolivian ambassador to Venezuela. Lavrov's main argument during his meetings was that the Western power in the world is weakening and a revolution is taking place with the emergence of a new multipolar system.[1]

The first stop of Lavrov's visit was Brazil. Although Brazil is the largest state in Latin America, it does not show a stance close to the USA regarding the Russia-Ukraine War. In addition, Brazilian President Lula da Silva has a closer stance towards Russia and China than the United States. Brazil, which does not participate in the sanctions imposed by the USA, is one of the most important markets in Latin America for Russia, which is in economic difficulties. On the other hand, Russia is trying to disturb the USA, which disturbs it in Ukraine, in Latin America, which it sees as its backyard. Looking at Washington's statements criticizing the Lula administration regarding the visit, it can be said that Lavrov has been successful in this regard.[2]

Lavrov's second stop, Venezuela, is an important country both in world politics and in Latin America. In the New World Order established after the Cold War, the first leftist reaction in Latin America emerged in this country. However, former Venezuelan President Chavez and current President Nicolas Maduro have been subjected to repeated assassination and coup attempts by the US. While the US has failed in these attempts, Russia has increased its influence in the country with its support.

In the aftermath of the Russia-Ukraine War, Venezuela regained importance for the US as the West was facing an energy crisis. Therefore, there have been various contacts between Venezuela and the US. Nevertheless, the main reason for Maduro to remain in power today is the support he receives from Russia. In this context, it can be stated that the relationship between Moscow and Caracas will continue to be strong. Lavrov's visit was already an indication of this.

After Venezuela, Lavrov traveled to Nicaragua. Given Nicaragua's troubled relations with the United States, the country has become an important ally for Russia. Moreover, Russia is deepening its relations with Nicaragua in many areas, from defense to peaceful nuclear energy.[3] This will be a great gain for Russia. Because Nicaragua is both located in the region where the American continent meets and is important for the planned Nicaragua Canal.

Cuba is a state of critical importance for Russia. Because it is a country governed by leftist values next to the US and has been resisting various sanctions for many years. In this respect, the country, which is seen as the symbol of the anti-US front, is one of the most important actors of the rising criticism against the Western-centered world. In fact, according to Lavrov's statement, Cuba fully understands the reasons behind Russia's war against Ukraine. Moreover, the Havana administration,[4] which condemns the sanctions imposed on Russia, is important for Moscow as it opposes the Washington-centered world system.[5]

As it can be understood, it is obvious that Russia and China are in an advantageous position compared to the USA in the region. Despite the sanctions and reactions of the Washington administration, Russia's influence in Latin America is increasing. For example, the Russian State Nuclear Energy Corporation Rosatom signed a contract with Brazil on May 4, 2023 for the supply of natural uranium.[6] The fact that these signatures were made despite the US is extremely important.

As a result, during his visit to Latin America, Lavrov signed several agreements on various issues such as energy, agriculture and investment. Although the agreements were important gains for Russia, the main purpose of Lavrov's visit was to ensure that Latin America pursues a more independent foreign policy in the face of increasing polarization in world politics. In this way, multipolarity will gain more support across the world, the Western-centered system will be questioned and the US influence in the region will weaken. Brazil's power, Venezuela's energy resources, Nicaragua's geopolitical position and Cuba's ideological symbolism are important in the process of multipolarity debates in world politics. It can be said that the policies of an actor with strong relations with regional states will gain even more power.

[1] Kirk Randolph, "Lavrov in Latin America: Russia's Bid for a Multipolar World", USIP, <https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/04/lavrov-lat-in-america-russias-bid-multipolar-world>, (Date of Accession: 09.05.2023).

[2] "Brazil's Welcome of Russian Minister Prompts U.S. Blowback", Politico, <https://www.politico.com/news/2023/04/18/brazil-russia-ukraine-kirby-blowback-00092485>, (Date of Accession: 09.05.2023).

[3] "Lavrov Will Discuss Strategic Partnership with Government of Nicaragua", TASS, <https://tass.com/politics/1606317>, (Date of Accession: 09.05.2023).

[4] "Lavrov Thanks Cuba for 'Full Understanding' on Ukraine Invasion", France 24, <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20230420-lavrov-thanks-cuba-for-full-understanding-on-ukraine-invasion>, (Date of Accession: 09.05.2023).

[5] Dave Sherwood, "Russia's Lavrov in Havana on Latin America Drive to Shore up Support", Reuters, <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/russias-lavrov-havana-latam-drive-shore-up-support-2023-04-20/>, (Date of Accession: 09.05.2023).

[6] "Rosatom's Subsidiary Inks Contract to Supply Uranium to Brazil", TASS, <https://tass.com/economy/1613765>, (Date of Accession: 09.05.2023).



## ANKASAM ANALYSIS

# Current Developments in Russia-Kyrgyzstan Military Cooperation

Russia has strong ties with the Central Asian countries. Recently, there have been two critical developments in Moscow's relations with the regional capitals, and these developments shape the balances in the region and the foreign policy steps of the actors. The withdrawal of the United States of America (USA) from Afghanistan has been determining factor in the security dimension of Russia's influence in Central Asia. Second factor is the Russia-Ukraine War. Russia, on the other hand, is trying to create a power that balances the Western influence in Central Asia in the context of these developments. The Kremlin's most important tool in this regard is the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO).

Russia, as a reflection of its interests in the countries of the region, strives to keep security-based cooperation at a high level. As a matter of fact, on May 8, 2023, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Kyrgyzstan President Sadr Japarov came together before the Russian Victory celebrations. During the meetings the leaders announced that they would "develop" their military facilities in the Kyrgyzstan, an ally of Moscow. The Kremlin said in its statement:[1]

"The heads of state emphasized the importance of strengthening the Kyrgyz Republic's armed forces and developing Russian military facilities on its territory."



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As known, the military cooperation in Bishkek-Moscow relations was provided through the CSTO. In its statement, the Kremlin stated that the two countries are trying to “deepen their military and technical cooperation” as well as their economic and cultural relations in order to “reach a new level of integration.”[2]

Russian and Kyrgyz leaders discussed bilateral relations by holding a phone call in April 2023. In addition to the issues of equities in Eurasia and the integration process, the parties brought up the intention to increase partnerships. Emphasizing the determination to strengthen Russia-Kyrgyzstan relations regarding this meeting, the Kremlin announced that they agreed to continue personal contacts.[3]

Russia-Kyrgyzstan relations, which have the nature of strategic partnership, are also strengthened through joint institutions such as Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and SCTO. The military structure of the aforementioned institutions also creates institutional commitment in terms of security relations. Moreover, the increasing of the importance of Kyrgyzstan within the framework of regional integration initiatives makes the country attractive for Moscow.

With this, there has been a joint Russian military base in the country. The aforementioned base consists of several parts. There is an airbase of SCTO Collective Rapid Reaction Forces in Kant, a naval facility in Issyk-Kul, a seismological center in the southern town of Mailuu-Suu, and a communication center in the town of Chaldybar, near the Kyrgyz-Kazakh border. The four facilities were united in single entity called the Russian Joint Military Base in 2012.[4]

Russia's step towards the development of its military capabilities and facilities in Kyrgyzstan can also be considered in this context. It can also be said the two countries aim to reach a new level of integration. Therefore, along with economic and cultural relations, the military and technical partnerships are also being deepened. It can be foreseen that various initiatives in this direction will continue in the future. Moscow aims to increase its military engagement with central Asian countries, especially military influence over Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Russia's military presence in these countries gives Moscow advantages in developing security cooperation and expanding its sphere of influence.

The two countries have taken similar steps in the past to improve their military cooperation. In 2019, Bishkek and Moscow agreed to expand the borders of the Russian base in Kyrgyzstan. Innovations regarding the use of base came to force within the framework of the agreement that took place during Putin's visit to Kyrgyzstan.[5]

In January 2022, it was stated that two anti-aircraft missile regiments and more than 1,300 pieces of weapons and military equipments would be supplied within the scope of the development of Russian military bases in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.[6]

Consequently, Bishkek and Moscow came to the fore with the joint military exercise they held in February 2023. The joint military exercise within the scope of the CSTO exemplifies the military-security dimension of Russia's Central Asian policy.[7] Not only developing the military bases, the Moscow administration also exerts influence on Bishkek's military capabilities through the joint military exercises. Thus, it can be said that the Bishkek-Moscow security partnership has been improved through the CSTO. It can be said that Central Asian countries are trying to take steps within the scope of CSTO in order to respond to the increasing security threats in parallel with the developments centered in Afghanistan. This can be associated with the aim of maintaining its position as a top-level security platform in the region against the thought that the CSTO is not effective enough.

[1] “Russia to ‘Develop’ Its Military Facilities in Kyrgyzstan”, The Defense Post, <https://www.thedefensepost.com/2023/05/08/russia-military-facilities-kyrgyzstan/>, (Date of Accession: 09.05.2023).

[2] Ibid.

[3] “Russian, Kyrgyz Presidents Discuss Bilateral Relations, Eurasian Integration”, Anadolu Agency, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/russian-kyrgyz-presidents-discuss-bilateral-relations-eurasian-integration/2868265>, (Date of Accession: 09.05.2023).

[4] “Bishkek, Moscow Agree to Expand Russian Base in Kyrgyzstan”, RFERL, <https://www.rferl.org/a/russian-military-base-in-kyrgyzstan-under-focus-at-putin-jeenbekov-talks/29847265.html>, (Date of Accession: 09.05.2023).

[5] Ibid.

[6] “Russian Military Bases in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan to Receive More Than 70 Pieces of Weapons This Year”, Asia Plus, <https://asiaplus.tj.info/en/news/tajikistan/security/20220125/russian-military-bases-in-tajikistan-and-kyrgyzstan-to-receive-more-than-70-pieces-of-weapons-this-year>, (Date of Accession: 09.05.2023).

[7] “CSTO Countries to Hold Military Drills in Kyrgyzstan Later This Year”, Anadolu Agency, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/world/csto-to-countries-to-hold-military-drills-in-kyrgyzstan-later-this-year/2819569>, (Date of Accession: 09.05.2023).



## ANKASAM ANALYSIS

# Developments in the Trans-Afghan Transport Corridor and Afghanistan

Central Asian countries see Pakistan and India as important countries as they actively implement a multi-vector foreign policy approach. In turn, both Islamabad and New Delhi see the region as a valuable geography in terms of surface and underground riches and corridors. This provides an impetus for relations to gain momentum. In the process of strengthening relations between the parties, regional actors are demonstrating a strong common will. Undoubtedly, this has an impact on Afghanistan.

One of the factors shaping the relations between the regions is the developments centered on Afghanistan. Due to the opportunities offered by the projects, Afghanistan is becoming

more involved in regional collaborations and projects. The first example of this is the shipment of liquefied natural gas (LNG) from Turkmenistan to Pakistan by road via tankers. The opening of this line has been celebrated in Afghanistan. [1] In the next period, energy resources will be sent to Pakistan and India on the occasion of the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India Natural Gas Pipeline Project (TAPI). However, in order not to waste time and to strengthen economic relations, energy is also transported by road today.

After the withdrawal of the United States (USA) from Afghanistan, ensuring relative security and stability in the country has been encouraged



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aging for the implementation of various projects. One of these projects is the Trans-Afghan Transport Corridor. The corridor in question will allow the establishment of the shortest geographical connection between Uzbekistan and Pakistan through Afghanistan. In addition, thanks to the Tirmiz-Mazar-i-Sharif-Kabul-Peshawar route, both Uzbekistan, Central Asia and Afghanistan will be able to reach the oceans from the shortest route.

Uzbekistan and Pakistan have shown a strong will for the implementation of this project. The Afghanistan policy of the parties is also strongly influenced by the idea of implementing the Trans-Afghan Transport Corridor. Because the strong bond that will be established between Uzbekistan and Pakistan will increase the achievements not only of the two states and Afghanistan, but also of Central and South Asia. For this reason, a pragmatic foreign policy is being implemented based on a win-win approach towards Afghanistan.

In this context, various steps are being taken and resources are being sought for the financing of the project. However, it is suggested that there are uncertainties about the fate of the project due to both the financing issue and the threat elements in Afghanistan. However, a recent development has shown that the project is continuing slowly but decisively. Because Uzbekistan Railways, which made a statement on May 13, 2023, announced the opening of a project coordination office in Tashkent. According to the statement, the main function of the office is to establish close cooperation between Uzbekistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan in order to develop feasibility studies and accelerate railway construction, and to coordinate measures. [2]

On the other hand, one of the goals of opening the office is to speed up the practical implementation of the project and give continuity to the process. The opening ceremony was attended by Ismatulla Irgashev, Special Representative of the President of Uzbekistan Mr. Shevket Mirziyoyev to Afghanistan, Ahmed Farooq, Ambassador of Pakistan to Uzbekistan and Bakht-ur-Rehman Sharafat, Chairman of the Railway Administration of Afghanistan. In his statement, Irgashev stated that the opening of the office was a step that would speed up the process. Farooq stated that the connection between the peoples will be strengthened on the occasion of the development of the region and while connecting Central Asia to South Asia, mutual trade opportunities will be created with the countries of the Sea of Oman at the same time. Sharafat stated that since the opening of the office will provide direct communication, the states will be organized

more effectively and drew attention to the fact that it will be possible to move the natural resources of Russia and Central Asia to South Asia. [3]

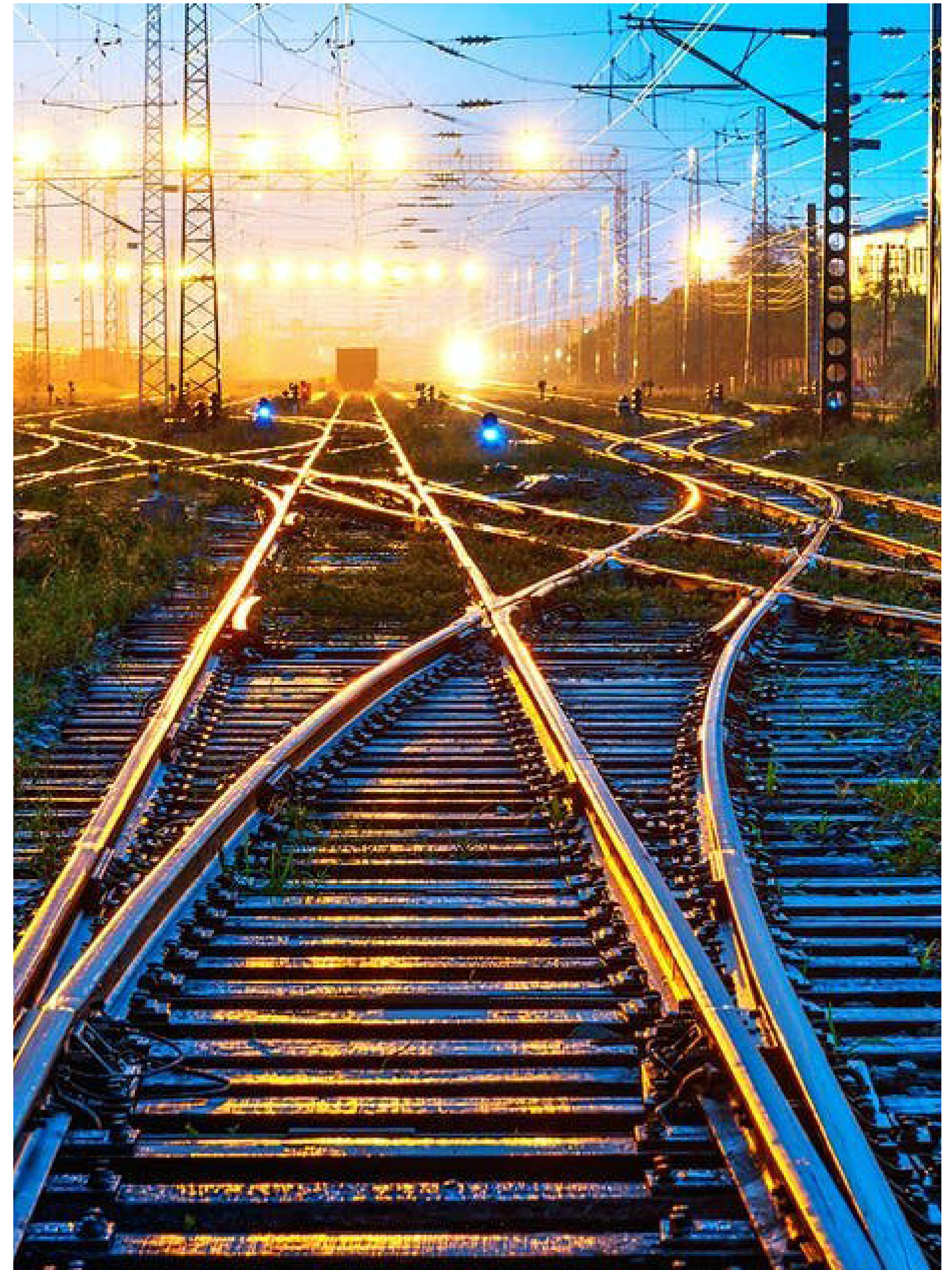
As it can be seen, all three states have various goals and interests within the framework of the Trans-Afghan Transport Corridor. It can be said that the first priority is to reach new markets, establish relations that will ensure their economic development, facilitate energy trade, increase their geopolitical gains, generate new economic revenues and provide employment. However, the project in question is not limited to just three states. As Sharafat points out, the project will also connect Russia to South Asia. In fact, the extension of the line to India will bring about a significant geopolitical and geoeconomic shift in Asia.

All in all, there are various debates on the Trans-Afghan Transport Corridor. However, the steps taken show that the project will be realized, albeit slowly. At this point, Uzbekistan and Pakistan are the main actors playing an encouraging role in the project. Afghanistan supports the corridor despite its limited political and economic capacity. Uzbekistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan will be the main beneficiaries of the realization of the corridor. However, other Central Asian states, Russia and the Gulf states will also gain significantly. Increasing the capacity of the project and the number of countries it addresses will be a great benefit for Afghanistan, which is trying to increase its political and economic capacity. In parallel, it is possible to say that Afghanistan will participate more strongly in other regional projects.

[1] Bibi Amina Hakimi, "Export of Turkmenistan Gas to Pakistan Via Afghanistan Has Begun: Officials", Tolo News, <https://tolo-news.com/index.php/business-183175>, (Erişim Tarihi: 17.05.2023); "Turkmenistan Starts Supplying Liquefied Natural Gas to Pakistan Through Afghanistan", AKI Press, [https://akipress.com/news/706025:Turkmenistan\\_starts\\_supplying\\_liquefied\\_natural\\_gas\\_to\\_Pakistan\\_through\\_Afghanistan/](https://akipress.com/news/706025:Turkmenistan_starts_supplying_liquefied_natural_gas_to_Pakistan_through_Afghanistan/), (Date of Accession: 17.05.2023).

[2] "Uzbekistan Hosts HQ for Trans-Afghan Train Project", Eurasianet, <https://eurasianet.org/uzbekistan-hosts-hq-for-trans-afghan-train-project>, (Date of Accession: 17.05.2023).

[3] "Toshkentda O'zbekiston-Afg'oniston-Pakistan Yangi Temir Yo'l Liniyasini Qurish Loyihisini Muvofiqlashtirish Ofisi Ochildi", O'zbekiston Temir Yo'llari, [https://www.railway.uz/uz/informatsionnaya\\_sluzhba/novosti/33876/](https://www.railway.uz/uz/informatsionnaya_sluzhba/novosti/33876/), (Date of Accession: 17.05.2023).







## ANKASAM ANALYSIS

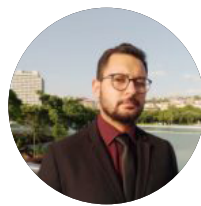
# Rising Tensions over Taiwan: China's Taiwan Struggle

The island of Taiwan is of great geopolitical importance for both China and the United States of America (USA). Although China and the United States have different reasons for attaching importance to the region, there is a common point where their goals intersect. This point is that both Washington and Beijing do not want to leave the island to a rival. This is because the island is of geostrategic importance for the US, which wants to contain China. From China's perspective, the island is an indivisible part of China, but it is also important for both the US containment strategy and its location in the South China Sea.

At this point, it should be noted that the Taiwanese government is aware of this rivalry between the US and China and shapes its own survival strate-

gy accordingly. As a matter of fact, Taiwan, which has close relations with the US against China, tries to balance China by using the US. In 2022, after the visit of Nancy Pelosi, the then Speaker of the US House of Representatives, official visits to Taiwan were intensified.

In addition to visits, the US cooperates with Taiwan in many other areas, including diplomacy. For example, on April 5, 2023, US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken stated that a unilateral action against Taiwan would hit all countries in the world. [1] In addition, on May 9, 2023, Blinken stated that the United States called on the WHO to allow Taiwan to participate as an observer in the annual meeting of the World Health Organization (WHO) scheduled for May 21, 2023.[2]



**Elcan TOKMAK**

In addition to the Washington administration, which has positive relations with Taiwan, many Western states also organize visits to Taipei from time to time. These visits, whether they are organized by the government or not, draw the reaction of the Beijing administration. For example, on December 11, 2022, Koichi Hagiuda, a senior official of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party in Japan, paid a visit to Taiwan.[3]

In addition, on 4 December 2022, a delegation of MPs, including former Australian Deputy Prime Minister Barnaby Joyce, visited the island. With the news that the said visit will take place, Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese stated that the delegation was not related to the government and that there had been visits to Taiwan at the level of parliamentarians before.[4]

Despite the statement by the Australian Prime Minister, an article published in the Chinese-owned media outlet Global Times argued that Albanese could not escape responsibility by saying that the delegation had nothing to do with the government. In the same article, it was written that even if Albanese could not prevent the delegation as Prime Minister, he should have stated that the government was against the visit.[5] As can be seen, Beijing objects to undertakings that are likely to contravene the "One China Principle".

In addition to these visits, South Korean leader Yoon Suk-yeol stated in an interview with Reuters that "The Taiwan Issue is not just a problem between China and Taiwan, but it is a global problem like the North Korea Issue." [6] This naturally drew China's reaction and Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Sun Weidong conveyed to the South Korean Ambassador that Beijing was uncomfortable with the situation, calling it "completely unacceptable".[7]

China also issued various warnings against Taiwan leader Tsai Ing-wen's visit to the United States on April 5, 2023,[8] and after the visit, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said the following:[9]

"If we want to maintain peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait, we must firmly oppose the island's independence and separatism."

On the other hand, on May 9, 2023, former UK Prime Minister and member of parliament Liz Truss announced that she would visit Taiwan and said the following:[10]

"Taiwan is a beacon of freedom and democracy. I look forward to personally showing solidarity with the people of Taiwan in the face of the increasingly aggressive behavior and rhetoric of the regime in Beijing."

In conclusion, the Asia-Pacific is home to many political fault lines. Perhaps the most dangerous of these is the Taiwan Question. Emerging in 1949 after the People's Republic of China (PRC) declared its independence and deepening after the PRC took over the permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council in 1971, the issue deeply affects the security of both the region and the world. The island, which the US cannot afford to lose due to the geopolitical struggle in the region, is also indispensable for China.

[1] "A Chinese Unilateral Move on Taiwan Would Hit 'Literally Every Country on Earth,' Blinken Warns", Euronews, [www.euronews.com/my-europe/2023/04/05/chinese-unilateral-action-on-taiwan-would-hit-literally-every-country-on-earth-blinken-war](https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2023/04/05/chinese-unilateral-action-on-taiwan-would-hit-literally-every-country-on-earth-blinken-war), (Date of Accession: 05.04.2023).

[2] "US Urges WHO to Invite Taiwan to Observe May Meeting", Reuters, [www.reuters.com/world/us-wants-who-invite-taiwan-observe-may-meeting-blinken-2023-05-09/](https://www.reuters.com/world/us-wants-who-invite-taiwan-observe-may-meeting-blinken-2023-05-09/), (Date of Accession: 09.05.2023).

[3] "Japan MP in Taiwan Says 'China threat' Needs More Military Spending", Pars Today, [parstoday.com/en/news/world-ii90678-japan\\_mp\\_in\\_taiwan\\_says\\_china\\_threat\\_needs\\_more\\_military\\_spending](https://parstoday.com/en/news/world-ii90678-japan_mp_in_taiwan_says_china_threat_needs_more_military_spending), (Date of Accession:11.12.2022).

[4] "Government and Opposition MPs to Visit Taiwan as Part of Australian Parliamentary Delegation", ABC News, [www.abc.net.au/news/2022-12-03/australian-mps-to-visit-taiwan-parliamentary-delegation/101730950](https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-12-03/australian-mps-to-visit-taiwan-parliamentary-delegation/101730950), (Date of Accession: 03.12.2022).

[5] "Albanese Criticized for Insincerity on Improving Ties with Beijing Amid His Attempts to Distance Himself from Taiwan-Visiting Delegation", Global Times, [www.globaltimes.cn/page/202212/1281102.shtml](https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202212/1281102.shtml), (Date of Accession: 04.12.2022).

[6] "China Lodges Complaint over S Korean President's Taiwan Comments", Aljazeera, [www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/4/23/china-lodges-complaint-over-s-korean-presidents-taiwan-comments](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/4/23/china-lodges-complaint-over-s-korean-presidents-taiwan-comments), (Date of Accession: 23.04.2023).

[7] Ibid.

[8] John Ruwitch-Emily Feng, "Taiwan's President Tsai Meets Kevin McCarthy Despite China's Warnings", [www.npr.org/2023/04/05/1167872114/kevin-mccarthy-taiwan-president-tsai-meeting-california-china](https://www.npr.org/2023/04/05/1167872114/kevin-mccarthy-taiwan-president-tsai-meeting-california-china), (Date of Accession: 05.04.2023):





## ANKASAM ANALYSIS

# Strengthening Relations Between Turkmenistan and India

Turkmenistan and India are neighboring countries located in the regions of Asia, with the potential for multifaceted development of their relations. The ties between the two countries are shaped by security, energy, and corridors. This situation creates a strong win-win relationship between the parties. Indeed, Turkmenistan's energy resources and India's increasing economic power are the most important factors in strengthening the relationship between the two actors.

Due to the escalating tensions in world politics and attacks by various terrorist groups, security is among the main topics in the relations between Ashgabat and New Delhi. It can be said that both states have adopted a similar approach during the United States' withdrawal process from Afghanistan. As Ashgabat administration has a Permanent Neutrality Status and embraces a secular understanding in its governance, it has tried to strengthen its relations with Afghanistan from a pragmatic per-



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spective. During this process, Turkmenistan has sent humanitarian aid to Afghanistan to end the crises and prevent various threats from gaining ground.

Initially, New Delhi did not support the U.S. withdrawal, but later, it established contacts with the Taliban in a pragmatic framework and sent various humanitarian aids to the country. Nowadays, both states aim for the neutralization of radical elements in the region, the establishment of an inclusive governance in Afghanistan, and the involvement of Afghanistan in various projects.

On the other hand, when it comes to India and Turkmenistan, the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India Gas Pipeline Project (TAPI) comes to mind. TAPI is an energy project that will connect Central Asia with South Asia. Within the scope of this project, Turkmenistan plans to transfer a significant amount of natural gas to India. Both the administrations of Ashgabat and New Delhi want this project to be implemented as soon as possible, and the strong connection established through energy will contribute to a robust win-win relationship. In this context, the security factor is of great importance. One of the countries that the TAPI passes through is Afghanistan, and the security of this country will contribute to the economic and energy security of Turkmenistan and India.

Another important aspect in the relations between the parties is corridors. As is known, it is important for India that the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) becomes operational. India aims to reach Russia and European countries through the INSTC, thus accessing both the European markets and Russia's energy resources through a shorter route and at a lower cost. By acting with a global vision, India will accelerate its process of evolving into a significant power. In this regard, Turkmenistan is located on one of the three routes of the INSTC in the Caspian region. Additionally, within the framework of the INSTC, Ashgabat serves as New Delhi's gateway to Central Asia.

The corridors factor in bilateral relations not only enables India to reach new regions but also allows Turkmenistan to expand into new geographies. In this context, Sunil Mukundan, the Managing Director of India Ports Global Limited, visited Ashgabat to attend the conference titled "International Transport and Transit Corridors: Linking and Development 2023 (ITTC 2023)" held on 3-4 May 2023. During the visit, Mukundan stated that cooperation could be established for the transportation of Turkmen goods to Southeast Asia and beyond through India.[1]

Mukundan mentioned that they have been in talks with various companies regarding the export of goods using Turkmenistan's International Turkmenbashi Port and emphasized the importance of creating interconnectivity and mutual dependence between the countries. He stated that several Indian businessmen could come to Turkmenistan, and the countries could purchase each other's products. Furthermore, he expressed that India could provide connectivity services for the transportation of Turkmen goods beyond South Asia.[2]

The statements and proposals made by Mukundan carry great importance both in bilateral relations and within the framework of the INSTC. Firstly, New Delhi aims to provide a secure route to Ashgabat and demonstrate that the established relations will not be based on unilateralism, emphasizing its willingness to assist in accessing new markets. In this case, while Turkmenistan increases its economic gains through new markets, India will also transform into an important port in the Pacific. On the other hand, within the framework of the INSTC, it is understood that India considers actively utilizing the corridor in a bidirectional manner, going beyond it being a one-way route.



Furthermore, India seeks to bring balance to the mutual trade that will be shaped in Turkmenistan's favor due to the energy it will import under the TAPI project. Additionally, an important factor that should not be overlooked is China's intensified relations with Turkmenistan. As known, there are strong relations between Ashgabat and Beijing in terms of energy, economy, and corridors. India aims to balance China by establishing a win-win relationship with Turkmenistan.

[1] "Туркменистан сможет отправлять товары в Юго-Восточную Азию при содействии Индии", Centralasia.news, <https://centralasia.news/21339-turkmenistan-smozhet-otpravljat-tovary-na-rynki-jugo-vostochnoj-azii-pri-sodejstvii-indii.html>, (Date of Accession: 16.05.2023).

[2] "Индия готова содействовать Туркменистану в продвижении товаров на рынки Юго-Восточной Азии", SNG.FM, <https://sng.fm/26551-indija-gotova-sodejstvovat-turkmenistanu-v-prodvizhenii-tovarov-na-rynki-jugo-vostochnoj-azii.html>, (Date of Accession: 16.05.2023).



## ANKASAM ANALYSIS

# The Strategy of Britain Desiring to Become a Global Power Again

Britain, which was one of the dominant powers of Europe and the world for many years, lost its feature of being a global power as a result of the Second World War and the Suez Crisis in 1956. Against this, the United States of America (USA) came to the fore and assumed the leadership of the Western World. In the period after 1990, while the USA turned into the only superpower in the world; the "Soviet threat" on Europe has disappeared. In such an environment,

the London administration entered a process of rapprochement with Beijing. In fact, England has been accepted as one of the two centers of the Belt-Road Project announced in 2013. Later, during the visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping to London in 2015, it was stated that bilateral relations were experiencing a "golden age" within the scope of trade and investment.[1]



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In the said period, a center called European Geostrategy divided the actors in the world into four categories as super, global, regional and local power in a study it prepared in 2014. In this study, the USA is defined as the only superpower. Britain was classified as the only global power. France, China, Russia, Japan, Germany, Australia, Canada and India are included in the regional power category in the list.[2]

In the world, which is in the process of continuous development and change, the process of shifting power centers from the West to the East has accelerated. Especially as power centers such as Beijing, Moscow and New Delhi emerged; the capacity of capitals in Europe to influence world politics, economy and security has begun to weaken. This situation brought to mind the thought that the categories in the study prepared by European Geostrategy also changed.

Especially as Beijing is rising rapidly; it can be said that London, Paris and Berlin lost momentum. Many allies of the USA, especially in Latin America and Asia, have started to establish strong relations with China. Africa, on the other hand, has turned into a competition area. This situation has strengthened the perception that the Western World has weakened and that the world system has evolved into a bi-polar/multipolar structure. In addition, the fact that states such as India, Indonesia and Malaysia act more independently and converge with actors such as Russia and China against Western powers has revealed that the centers of power are changing.

The decline of the West's influence over other countries has led to the discussion of the international order. Although the main country negatively affected by this is the USA, it is possible to say that England is also disturbed. Because England, which is accepted as a global actor in the power category, has either lost its feature of being the only global power or has regressed from global power to regional power within the framework of changing equations. One of the most concrete examples of this is India's economic overtake of England.

It can be said that the London administration has recently made a policy change in order to eliminate the aforementioned disturbance, to prevent the rising powers in the East and to become a global power again. In this context, England, which acted together with China for a while within the scope of the Belt-Road Project, has recently started to take an open stance towards China. In this sense, AUKUS, which was carried out together with the USA and Australia, draws attention as one of the most concrete steps taken by England against China.

Britain, which wants to surround China with AUKUS, is one of the states that has adopted the toughest stance against Russia since February 2022. In this context, one of the main centers and supporters of the sanctions applied to Moscow with the Ukraine War, the military aid given to the Ukrainian Army and the anti-Russian propaganda was again England. In this process, England tended to increase its influence in Europe by using the Russian threat argument. The security and defense-based agreements that England made with European actors at different times are indicative of this.

In this context, England follows two strategies in order to become a single or a global power again. The first of these is to get closer with the USA and follow a common policy. Because the London administration thinks that it can rise to a global power position or eliminate its rivals thanks to the superpower USA. For this reason, England, which carries out a common strategy with the USA in AUKUS, refrains from taking political steps that will cause conflicts of interests with this country in various parts of the world.

The second strategy determined by England has a geopolitical perspective. England was one of the main powers in the India-Gulf Region-Suez Canal-Cyprus Island-Greece line during the period when it was influential in world politics, economy and security. During periods of colonialism, when a significant part of the world trade was carried out through the Suez Canal, London both maintained its existence in its colonies and areas of influence and ensured the security of the goods it transferred to its country on the Mediterranean route.

The London administration, which wants to regain its power in its colonial past, is now trying to build a sphere of influence on a similar line. First of all, Britain, which published the "2030 Roadmap" document with India on January 4, 2021, revealed that it wants to develop political, economic, cultural relations and security-based cooperation between the two countries.[3] The emergence of a similar tension between China and India in relations with Britain accelerated the rapprochement on the London-New Delhi line.

On the other hand, London, which wants to get closer with the Gulf countries and strengthen the ties between them, wants to sign a free trade agreement with the Gulf Cooperation Council.[4] In addition, an intensification is observed in the relations of England with the Greek Cypriot Administration of Southern Cyprus (GCA) and Greece. Because, in December 2022, a Strategic Cooperation Agreement was signed between England and the GCA.[5] In addition, in February 2023, a defense and security agreement was signed between London and Athens for the purpose of strengthened defense partnership.[6]

As a result, Britain has suffered a significant loss of power over the last ten years. Because the new centers rising in Asia have shaken the influence and capacity of London in world politics. This situation fueled the desire of the London administration to reach its power during the colonial period. At this point, England, which took a hard line against Russia and China, seems to focus on building a line of influence from India to Europe, as it was during the colonialism period. However, it can be said that because of not having enough capacity to realize this, England got closer to the USA and developed a strategy compatible with the policies of this country.

[1] "China, Britain to Benefit From 'Golden Era' in Ties-Cameron", Reuters, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-britain-idUSKCN0S-B10M20151017>, (Date of Accession: 08.02.2023).

[2] George Allison, "Study Finds UK is Second Most Powerful Country in the World", UK Defence Journal, <https://ukdefencejournal.org.uk/study-finds-uk-is-second-most-powerful-country-in-the-world/>, (Date of Accession: 08.02.2023).

[3] "2030 Roadmap for India-UK Future Relations", <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/india-uk-virtual-summit-may-2021-roadmap-2030-for-a-comprehensive-strategic-partnership/2030-roadmap-for-india-uk-future-relations>, (Date of Accession: 08.02.2023).

[4] "UK- Gulf Cooperation Council Trade Negotiations Update: December 2022", <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-gulf-cooperation-council-trade-negotiations-update-december-2022>, (Date of Accession: 08.02.2023).

[5] "Ertuğruloğlu: "İngiltere'nin GKRY ile Savunma ve Dış Politikayı da Kapsayan Stratejik İş Birliği Kurma Cihetine Gitmesi Kaygı Verici"", Kıbrıs Türk, <https://www.kibristurk.com/haber/ertugruloglu-ingilterenin-gkry-ile-savunma-ve-dis-politikayi-da-kapsayan-stratejik-is-birligi-kurma-cihetine-gitmesi-kaygi-verici-6145>, (Date of Accession: 08.02.2023).

[6] "UK and Greece Seek Strengthened Defence Partnership", Gov.uk, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-and-greece-seek-strengthened-defence-partnership>, (Date of Accession: 08.02.2023).





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# Equations of Security in China and Asia-Pacific

The Asia-Pacific Region attracts attention because of the presence of a state like China that challenges the United States of America (USA), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and thus the Western hegemony. At the same time, security-based issues that come to the agenda due to issues such as Taiwan and the South China Sea also increase the interest in the region. Undoubtedly, one of the parties to the aforementioned problems is China.

At this point, it can be said that the main purpose of the West and the USA is to surround China. Because the USA applied the containment strategy against the Soviet Union during the Cold War and obtained an advantageous result as a result of this strategy.[1] Because it can be said that countries such as South Korea, Japan, Australia, New Zealand and Vietnam are important regional allies of the USA.



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"The instability created by China's activities" is shown as the reason for the unity and legitimacy of the Western alliance in the Asia-Pacific. At this point, US Ambassador to Japan Rahm Emanuel said that Beijing's actions consolidated the Western alliance and increased the unity of the states included in this alliance. At the same time, Emanuel said that China should not be surprised if other countries take their own deterrent steps and deepen military ties with Washington's allies in Asia.[2]

The general conjuncture in the Asia-Pacific Region; It is built through alliances, collaborations and exercises. As a matter of fact, this brings along the polarization policy in the region. As a matter of fact, the region is already divided into two. As a Western alliance, there is a blockade led by the USA and in which the above-mentioned countries are located. On the other hand, China, which objects to Western hegemony, deepens its cooperation with various actors. On the other hand, the moves and discourses of both sides against each other cause a provocative situation rather than a deterrent. As a matter of fact, China's policies in the region expand and deepen the Japan-USA equation and relations.

Moreover, it does not seem possible to reach a reconciliation in the short term without preferring the means of negotiation and diplomacy in the region. Because all kinds of actions and discourses create a security dilemma and this makes the regional security equation fragile.

To give an example of the situation in question, a state-owned weapons developer in Taiwan introduced five new domestic military unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) on March 14, 2023, in line with its goals of increasing its symmetrical warfare capabilities in anti-Chinese point of view. Eric Chi, Taiwan Aviation Systems Research Division Manager, stated that the new UAVs are of different sizes and equipped with combat or surveillance capabilities, and that the devices are designed to be used by different units of the Taiwan Army. [3]

As a matter of fact, China's seeing Taiwan as its red line and the efforts of the USA and NATO to use this situation to their advantage increase the concerns about the security in the region. At this point, it can be argued that the West is trying to pressure Beijing more and more through Taipei, and by this means, it wants to wage a struggle against China regionally. This raises the possibility of a hot conflict. At the same time, it can be said that this situation provokes China more against the USA and NATO.

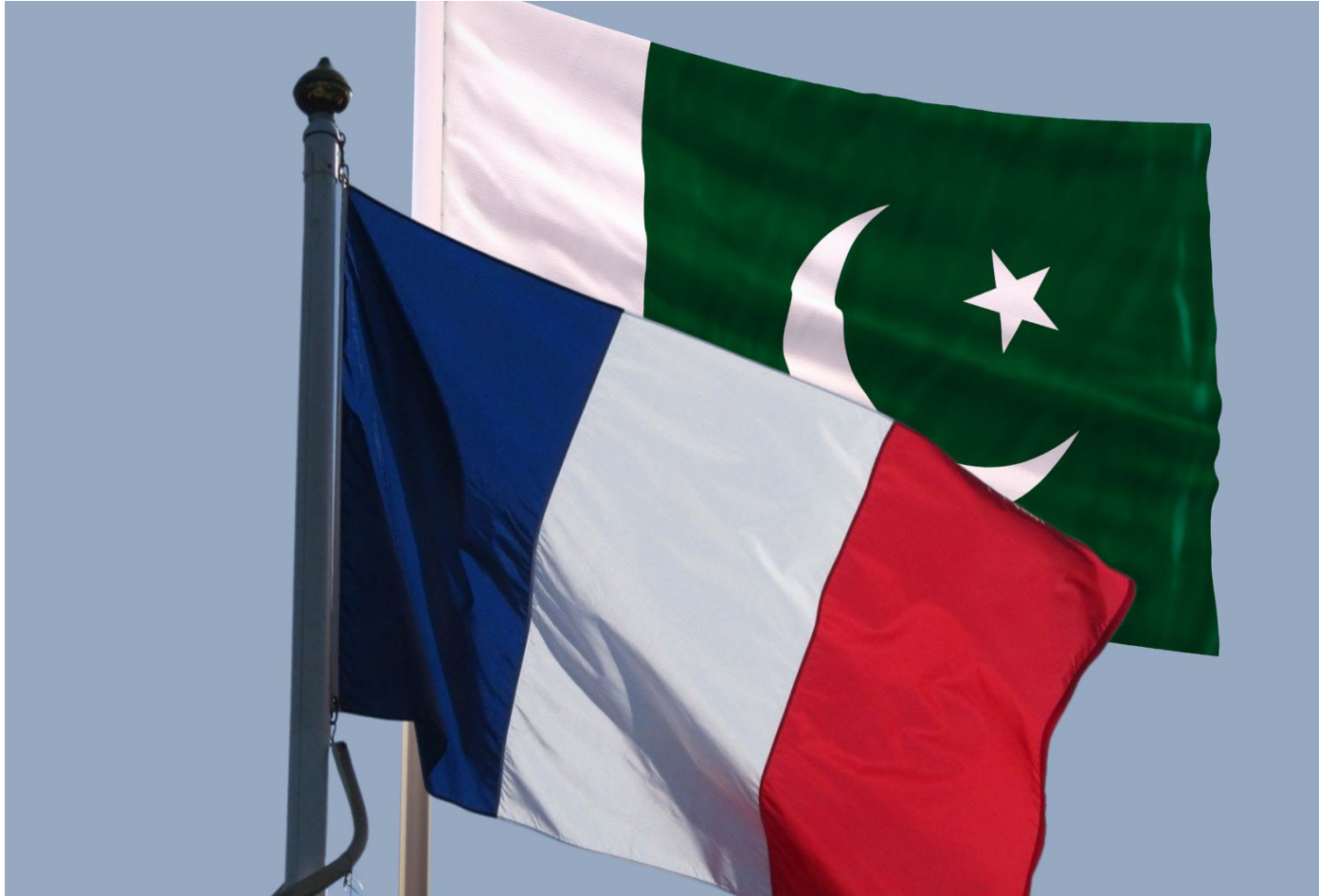
On the other hand, it is a question mark how long the West will continue this pressure. Because China emphasizes that Taiwan is the red line at every opportunity. For this reason, it can be thought that the increasing pressure of the West will find a stronger response each time than the previous one. This can be interpreted as the conjuncture in the region will become more and more tense.

As a result, it can be predicted that security issues arising over China will be discussed more frequently due to the pressure of the West. This indicates that the rivalry between the USA in particular and the West and China in general will escalate. Naturally, the fragility of the regional security environment seems inevitable.

[1] "The History of Containment Policy", Thought Co, <https://www.thoughtco.com/definition-of-containment-2361022>, (Date of Accession: 12.04.2023).

[2] "Exclusive: China's 'Attacks' Unite Region Against Beijing, US Ambassador to Japan Says", Cable News Network, <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/03/08/asia/us-ambassador-japan-emanuel-interview-intl-hnk>, (Date of Accession: 12.04.2023).

[3] "Taiwan Unveils Its New Combat and Surveillance Drones as China Threat Grows", Cable News Network, <https://edition.cnn.com/2023/03/14/asia/taiwan-china-military-drones-unveiled-hnk-intl>, (Date of Accession: 12.04.2023).



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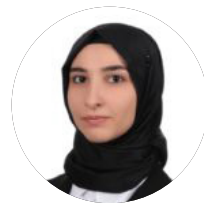
# New Developments in Pakistan-France Cooperation

After Shahbaz Sharif became the Prime Minister of Pakistan, the Islamabad administration started to accelerate its relations with the Western World. In this context, France is one of the countries where ties have been strengthened. Indeed, Paris is also known to be interested in Asian geography. Therefore, France is interested in developing relations with Pakistan.

The 14th round of Pakistan-France bilateral political consultations was held in Paris on February 10, 2023. Pakistan was represented by Deputy Foreign Minister Asad Majeed Khan, while the French delegation was led by Anne-Marie Descôtes, Secretary General of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs. On the way to

deepen their ties, the sides signed a "Bilateral Cooperation Roadmap." They also agreed to enhance cooperation in energy, IT, agriculture and livestock, tourism, and other sectors. They also had a comprehensive exchange of views on bilateral, regional and international issues. [1]

There has been a recent development in the Paris-Islamabad partnership. The two sides have been getting closer not only through political consultations but also through economic activities. International initiatives also play an essential role in the rapprochement of the two countries. The September 20, 2023, meeting between the leaders of the two countries on the sidelines of the 77th General Assembly



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of the United Nations (UN) is a case in point. The joint statement issued after the meeting can also be interpreted as an indicator of the development of France-Pakistan relations. [2]

During the meeting, French President Emmanuel Macron and Sharif agreed to work together to revitalize Pakistan's economy. The Sharif-Macron meeting has a special significance in terms of Pakistan's foreign policy steps as well as giving momentum to bilateral relations. It was the first time in seven years that the Prime Minister of Pakistan met with the leader of a strategic European country. [3]

One element that has increased the closeness between the two sides is humanitarian aid. For example, France has supported Pakistan in the aftermath of the floods by pledging large amounts of humanitarian aid. On January 9, 2023, at the International Conference on Climate Resilient Pakistan held in Geneva in partnership with the Government of Pakistan and the UN, the French Development Agency announced projects worth up to 386.5 million dollars to rebuild Pakistan. [4]

The foundations for this conference were laid during the Macron-Sharif meeting. Therefore, it can be said that the consultations between the two countries have opened new doors. Therefore, the signed "Road Map" can be expected to pave the way for new beginnings. In this sense, it is possible to predict that the positive relationship dynamic that has been on the rise on the Paris-Islamabad line will continue to develop. Indeed, it has been decided that the 15th round of political consultations will be held in Islamabad in 2024. [5] This means a year of strengthening partnerships and preparing for the next meeting. At the same time, it is also seen that the meetings have become a routine.

In the context of the shift in international attention towards Asia, Paris' policy steps have also diversified and evolved. In this sense, the ties with Islamabad are also related to the current conjuncture. In other words, the Pakistani government's relations with the United States of America (USA) and its policy towards the Western World also influence the developments. On the one hand, France's actions can also be considered within the framework of the policies of the European Union and European countries. In this sense, it can be claimed that Paris is trying to assert itself.

On the other hand, France-Pakistan relations can also be considered in the context of Paris' Asia-Pacific policy. France has a significant presence in the region. France has seven overseas territories. It is also known that more than one million French citi-

zens are in the region. [6] In this sense, developing relations and strengthening partnerships with Pakistan can be read as one of the sub-strategies of the Indo-Pacific strategy. Pakistan is also an important strategic point for the security of overseas territories and access to the region. Islands like Mayotte and La Reunion off Mozambique are geographically close to Pakistan. Focusing on improving the existing defense and military cooperation with Pakistan can also be considered in this context.

Another aspect of military cooperation is the aim to strengthen cooperation in the fight against terrorism. Currently, Pakistan is going through a challenging period in terms of security and stability. The terrorist organization Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) has increased its attacks across the country. At this point, it is known that the US has frequently voiced its verbal support to Islamabad against the TTP terrorist organization. It can be said that France also reflects the attitude of Western actors. Therefore, Islamabad may want to develop security-based cooperation steps with Paris.

All in all, relations between France and Pakistan have a positive momentum. Political consultation meetings are also effective in strengthening partnerships in various fields. France's position as an important European actor, the importance of Pakistan in Paris's strategic goals for Asia-Pacific geopolitics, and Islamabad's desire to strengthen its ties with the Western World are all influential in the development of Paris-Islamabad relations.

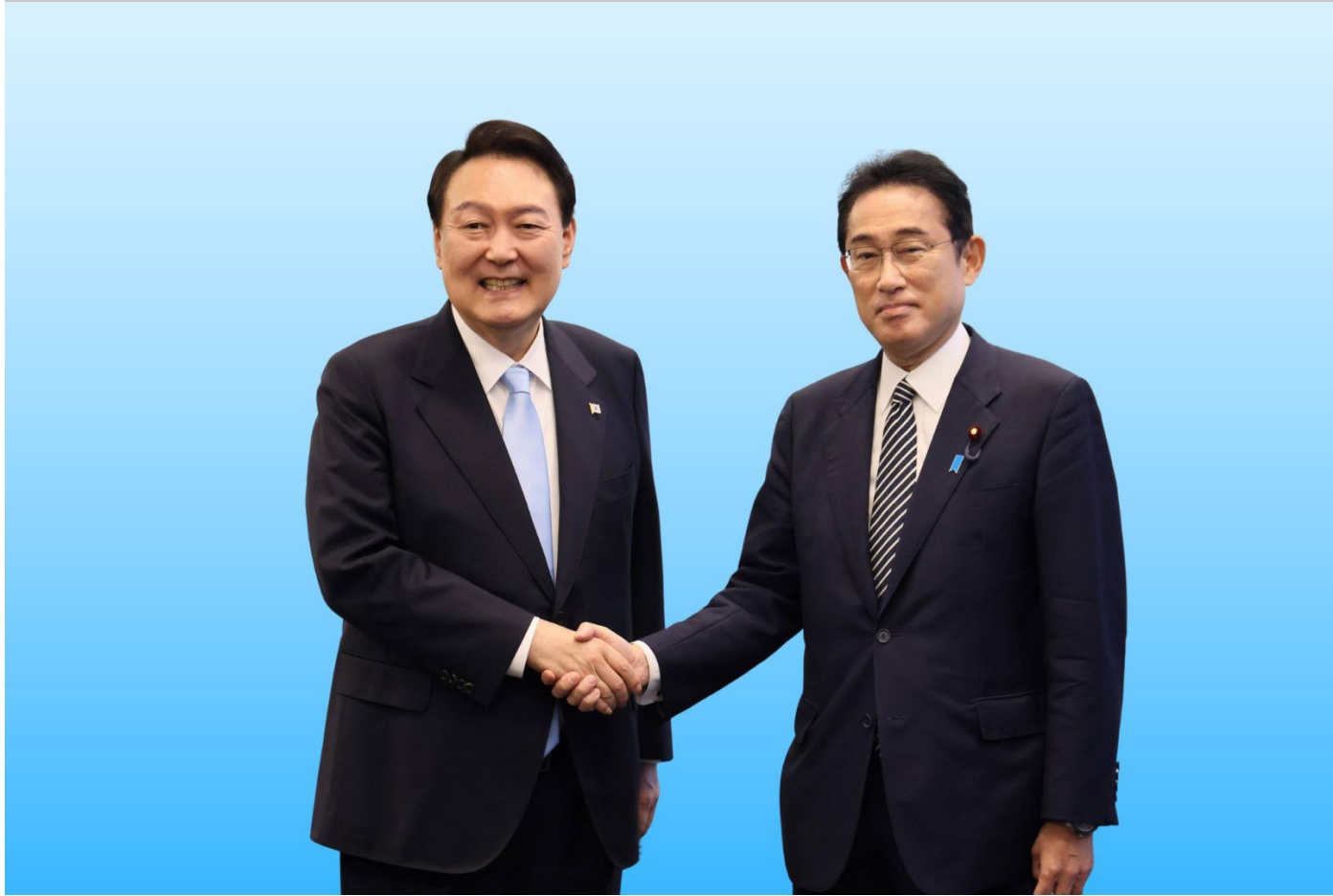
[1] "Pakistan, France Sign 'Roadmap' for Deepening Ties", Tribune, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2400501/pakistan-france-sign-roadmap-for-deepening-ties>, (Date of Accession: 13.02.2023).

[2] "PM Shehbaz Meets President Macron, Other Leaders as UNGA Opens", Pakistan Today, <https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2022/09/20/pm-meets-french-president-macron-austrian-chancellor-on-sidelines-of-unga-session/>, (Date of Accession: 13.02.2023).

[3] "France to Help Pakistan 'Revive' Economy", Tribune, <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2377578/france-to-help-pakistan-revive-economy>, (Date of Accession: 13.02.2023).

[4] "France's Macron Pledges \$10.7M in Humanitarian Aid for Pakistan", Anadolu Agency, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/frances-macron-pledges-107m-in-humanitarian-aid-for-pakistan/2783652>, (Date of Accession: 11.02.2023).





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# Seeking Strong Cooperation in South Korea-Japan Relations

South Korea and Japan are two states that have faced many problems for many years in the context of bilateral relations. Many of these problems are issues arising from the Japanese colonial period; solution has been lagging. For example, the issue of forced labor compensation went through a long and volatile period until the resolution of Tokyo and Seoul on March 6, 2023. In addition, in the recent period, relations have gained a more and more warm atmosphere and gained a positive momentum. It is seen that the perception of common securi-

ty is effective both in the formation of relations and in the formation of a positive atmosphere.

As it is known, the increasing cooperation and military activity of Seoul and Washington in the region triggers the threat perception of North Korea, and therefore North Korea sees South Korea-United States of America (US) cooperation as a threat to itself. With the effect of this cooperation, North Korea is increasing its nuclear activities on the Korean Peninsula Day by day. From the point of view of Japan, the devel-



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opment of South Korea-US cooperation is important because it creates opportunities for rapprochement between states that are allies of the USA.

Although the increased contacts of the parties due to the aforementioned reasons sometimes arouse concerns due to the conflicts that have not yet been resolved, these contacts continued without any interruption thanks to the common sense of both countries. The most striking of these problems is the Takeshima/Dokdo Island Problem. Although the aforementioned problem caused tension between the two countries from time to time, it did not cause a break in the course of relations. As a matter of fact, neither the textbook incident that centered on the Takeshima / Dokdo Island Problem, which caused the protest of South Korea on March 28, 2023[1] nor the visit of South Korean politicians to the troubled island, which caused Japan's protest on May 3, 2023,[2] influenced the course of diplomacy.

As mentioned before, both Seoul and Tokyo were more willing to increase bilateral contacts, as the security perception triggered by North Korea's activities put pressure on the parties. In this context, after the meeting of the heads of state on March 16, 2023, on March 21, 2023, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida invited his Korean counterpart, Yoon Suk Yeol, to Tokyo for the G-7 Summit.[3] On April 14, 2023, the 13th Tripartite Defense Talks were held in Washington, and the USA, South Korea and Japan condemned North Korea for its nuclear activities and the parties agreed to deepen their security relations against the nuclear threat of North Korea.[4]

On April 17, 2023, South Korea and Japan held defense talks for the first time in five years. In the talks, the threat of North Korea and the cooperation processes with the USA in the region came to the fore.[5] Despite the existing problems, the contacts with the USA and at the bilateral level reveal that Tokyo and Seoul desire to develop better relations both in terms of security, economy and politics.

After the meeting on April 17, 2023, on April 28, 2023, the Ministry of Finance of South Korea announced that its country was invited by Japan to the G7 Finance Ministers Meeting.[6] In addition, after the meeting between the Finance Ministers on May 2, 2023, after seven years, South Korea and Japan announced that they agreed on the continuation of the financial dialogue.[7]

In addition to all these developments, a meeting was held on April 13, 2023 between South Korean Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Park Bo-gyoon, and his Japanese counterpart, Saito Tetsuo, where necessary steps for the development of tourism were discussed.[8] Therefore, it can be said that a positive atmosphere has formed between the parties in the field of economy in parallel with the fields of politics and security.

Finally, a meeting took place between Japanese Prime Minister Kishida and South Korean Prime Minister Yeol on May 7, 2023.[9] Speaking after the opening ceremony, Yoon said that the cooperation and coordination to be developed between Japan and South Korea is not only for these two countries; he stated that it would be a profitable situation for the whole world. Kishida, on the other hand, expressed her sadness by pointing to the Japanese colonial period and underlined that many people are faced with a very difficult situation to bear. In addition, the two leaders announced that they agreed to send experts to the nuclear power plant on the issue of discharging the water of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, which has been on the agenda for a long time.[10]

As a result, the Seoul and Tokyo governments, which have been trying to solve their problems for a long time due to the threat perception shaped around the nuclear activities of North Korea, have come a long way in this regard as of 2023. Not just in a political sense; Although the two states, which show the will to deepen their relations in the economic and military dimensions, encounter various problems from time to time, it is obvious that these disagreements do not seriously affect the relations. The relations between the two states, which are allies of the USA, are gaining a new dimension.

[1] "South Korea Lodges Protest with Japan over New Textbooks' Descriptions", The Japan Times, [www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2023/03/28/national/japan-south-korea-textbook-protests/](http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2023/03/28/national/japan-south-korea-textbook-protests/), (Date of Accession: 28.02.2023).

[2] "Japan Protests South Korean Politician's Landing on Disputed Islands", Kyodo News, [english.kyodonews.net/news/2023/05/c1320d89d2fa-japan-protests-s-korean-politicians-landing-on-disputed-islands.html](http://english.kyodonews.net/news/2023/05/c1320d89d2fa-japan-protests-s-korean-politicians-landing-on-disputed-islands.html), (Date of Accession: 03.05.2023).

[3] "Japan's PM Invites President Yoon to Attend G7 Summit in May", KoreaNet, [www.koreana.net/NewsFocus/policies/view?articleid=230238](http://www.koreana.net/NewsFocus/policies/view?articleid=230238), (Date of Accession: 21.03.2023).



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# Steps to Consolidate Strong Cooperation in China–Central Asian Relations

China is described as a potential hegemonic power in the evaluations regarding the global power struggle. Despite this, the Beijing administration does not display a confrontational character in transforming its economic development, which is called the “Great Chinese Miracle”, into political influence; on the contrary, it presents an approach that does not interfere with the internal affairs of other states, respects their territorial integrity and sovereignty, and develops win-win relations by building cooperation bridges, not blocks. In this sense, China, rather than seeking a hegemony; it advocates a multipolar world order in which no

single power is hegemonic in the international system. As a matter of fact, the statements and actions of the Beijing administration also point to this.

In this respect, it can be stated that the Belt and Road Initiative announced by Chinese President Xi Jinping in 2013 is a concrete output of Beijing’s effort to build bridges of cooperation. Central Asia, on the other hand, is one of the geographies to which the Beijing administration attaches importance, both due to its place in the said initiative and its location in the close vicinity of China. Because of this importance,



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the Beijing administration has developed the China–Central Asia Summit (C+C5) format. Six meetings were held at the level of Foreign Ministers within the framework of this format, and finally, the first leaders’ summit in the C+C5 format was held in Xian, Shaanxi Province, China, on 18–19 May 2023. The announcement that the next leaders’ summit will be hosted by Kazakhstan in 2025[1] shows that the Beijing administration is determined to move its relations with Central Asian capitals to a much more institutional basis.

As can be expected, in order to make predictions about the future of China’s relations with the Central Asian states, it is necessary to examine the decisions taken in the meetings between the leaders on 18–19 May 2023 and the messages given at the summit. Because at the meetings in the city of Xian, there have been many developments that will shape the relations of the Beijing administration with the regional capitals.

### Bilateral Contacts and Decisions Taken

First of all, if we need to talk about Kazakhstan, it is possible to state that the relations between the parties tend to expand and deepen. Because Kazakhstan and China agreed to build a modern gas-chemistry complex in the Atyrau Region. Following the implementation of the said agreement, the facility in question is Asia’s largest; it will be the fourth largest facility in the world. It has also been announced that the parties will cooperate in copper processing facilities.[2] This means that China will continue to contribute to the economic development of Kazakhstan. In addition, the parties; decided to expand cooperation in fields such as trade, economy, oil and gas, petrochemicals, energy, finance, transportation and transit, science and education.[3]

On the other hand, the relations between the two countries are not only in the economic sense; develops culturally. As a matter of fact, Kazakhstan and China have also signed a memorandum containing a declaration of intent to establish joint cultural centers.[4]

Of course, it can be said that Kyrgyzstan will also improve its relations with China. Because there is a strong will on both sides. For this reason, the two countries signed the Treaty of Good Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation, which completely ended the border disputes.[5] Thus, the border of approximately 1,000 km became clear on the line.

On the other hand, within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative, China is also making efforts to include Kyrgyzstan, which is

the missing link of the Middle Corridor,[6] into the initiative. For this reason, there is a Beijing administration that has focused on the construction of the China–Kyrgyzstan–Uzbekistan Railway Line since September 2022. Undoubtedly, with the completion of this railway, China’s access to Europe will be facilitated. However, the construction of the railway line will increase the geoeconomic and geostrategic importance of Kyrgyzstan. In this context, on the occasion of the C+C5 Summit, a tripartite document planning the next steps of this project was signed.[7]

As expected, the aforementioned project is also in the interests of Uzbekistan. Because strengthening regional connections will serve to increase the influence of the Tashkent administration in regional and global politics and will increase its economic gains. However, the contacts on the Beijing–Tashkent line are not limited to this. Moreover, through the summit, Uzbekistan signed contracts with three Chinese companies to invest 4 billion dollars to develop solar power plants.[8] This development reveals that energy has an important place in the relations between the two countries. In Tajikistan, the parties decided to expand mutually beneficial cooperation within the framework of the “Common Future Community Initiative” and on the basis of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, inviolability of borders and non-interference in internal affairs.[9] In addition, 25 documents aimed at expanding bilateral cooperation were signed and it was decided to organize joint exercises on the fight against terrorism.[10]

On the other hand, China has focused on improving its relations with Turkmenistan. As a matter of fact, many memorandums of understanding were signed, envisaging to develop bilateral cooperation, on the occasion of the contacts that took place. Thus, leaders; committed to expanding partnerships in trade, economy, energy, transport, investment and other fields.[11]

As can be understood from the agreements signed on the occasion of the meetings between the leaders, China’s relations with Central Asian countries are developing in a multidimensional way from the Belt and Road Initiative to solar energy. The point that draws attention here is the message that the security factor will come to the fore in cooperation on the Beijing–Dushanbe line and the announcement that the parties will organize joint exercises. This is not only in terms of economic, political and cultural relations of China; at the same time, it points out that it will follow a more active policy in Central Asia in terms of security policies.



Messages Given at the Summit

In addition to the contacts at the level of leaders, the messages given at the summit reveal that the ties between China and Central Asia will be strengthened. In this context, during the opening speech of the summit, Xi revealed the Beijing administration's expectations regarding the region with the following words:[12]

"Ethnic conflicts, religious struggles and cultural divisions are not the main agenda of Central Asia. The peoples of Central Asia seek unity, tolerance and harmony. No one has the right to cause disagreements and conflicts and to derive political benefits from it."

As can be seen from the above statements, China cares about the stability of the region. For this reason, Xi said, "We will strongly object to foreign powers' intervention in the internal affairs of the countries of the region and to stage colorful revolutions." found in the statement.[13] And this is Beijing's role in Central Asia, not just commercially; means that it will also exist with security-based cooperation. However, China does not ignore the economic dimension of cooperation. In this sense, China, which cares about the development of the region, announced that it will give 3.8 billion dollars financial support to the development projects in the region. [14] Because the development of Central Asia will also strengthen the Belt and Road Initiative.

At this point, it should be emphasized that the states of the region are also satisfied with the relations with China. For example, the President of Kazakhstan, Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, emphasized the stability of Central Asia in terms of security while expressing Kazakhstan's expectations for China, and said, "The trade volume between Kazakhstan and China has reached 31 billion dollars and we agreed to increase it to 40 billion dollars." Found in the statement.[15]

President of Kyrgyzstan, Sadyr Japarov, pointed out that more than 10 mechanisms and platforms will be created to expand cooperation, "I am confident that these documents meet the interests of our countries and the common interests of long-term development." he said.[16]

President of Uzbekistan, Mr. Shavkat Mirziyoyev, implying that the states of the region act in accordance with the reality of the multipolar world, said:[17]

"In the face of increasing conflict and unpredictability in international relations, we provide mutual support for each other and build a prosperous future together for our peoples."

Similarly, Tajik President Emomali Rahmon expressed his belief that the China-Central Asia Summit will strongly take both bilateral relations on the Beijing-Dushanbe line and regional cooperation to a new level.[18]

President of Turkmenistan, Serdar Berdimuhamedov, stated that the Ashgabat administration attaches importance to the summit and said, "We will closely follow the implementation of the initiatives and proposals put forward by the heads of state at the Central Asia-China summits." he said.[19]

As a result, the C+C5 format takes China's relations with Central Asian states to a new level. These relations are based on mutual interests; it points to a comprehensive cooperation from economy to security. For this reason, it can be stated that the relations carried out at both bilateral and regional level tend to expand, deepen and institutionalize.

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# ANKASAM IN PRESS

**24 May 2022**

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



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

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